

Second Language Learning and Teaching

Krystyna Drożdżał-Szelest
Mirosław Pawlak *Editors*

Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Second Language Learning and Teaching

Studies in Honor of Waldemar Marton



Springer

Krystyna Drożdżał-Szelest · Mirosław Pawlak
Editors

Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Second Language Learning and Teaching

Studies in Honor of Waldemar Marton



Springer

Editors

Krystyna Drożdżiał-Szelest
Faculty of English
Adam Mickiewicz University
Poznan
Poland

Miroslaw Pawlak
Faculty of Pedagogy and Fine Arts
Adam Mickiewicz University
Kalisz
Poland

ISSN 2193-7648

ISSN 2193-7656 (electronic)

ISBN 978-3-642-23546-7

ISBN 978-3-642-23547-4 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-3-642-23547-4

Springer Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013934013

© Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2013

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed. Exempted from this legal reservation are brief excerpts in connection with reviews or scholarly analysis or material supplied specifically for the purpose of being entered and executed on a computer system, for exclusive use by the purchaser of the work. Duplication of this publication or parts thereof is permitted only under the provisions of the Copyright Law of the Publisher's location, in its current version, and permission for use must always be obtained from Springer. Permissions for use may be obtained through RightsLink at the Copyright Clearance Center. Violations are liable to prosecution under the respective Copyright Law.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

While the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication, neither the authors nor the editors nor the publisher can accept any legal responsibility for any errors or omissions that may be made. The publisher makes no warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein.

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Second Language Learning and Teaching

Series Editor

Mirosław Pawlak

For further volumes:

<http://www.springer.com/series/10129>

About the Series

The series brings together volumes dealing with different aspects of learning and teaching second and foreign languages. The titles included are both monographs and edited collections focusing on a variety of topics ranging from the processes underlying second language acquisition, through various aspects of language learning in instructed and non-instructed settings, to different facets of the teaching process, including syllabus choice, materials design, classroom practices and evaluation. The publications reflect state-of-the-art developments in those areas, they adopt a wide range of theoretical perspectives and follow diverse research paradigms. The intended audience are all those who are interested in naturalistic and classroom second language acquisition, including researchers, methodologists, curriculum and materials designers, teachers and undergraduate and graduate students undertaking empirical investigations of how second languages are learnt and taught.

Preface

There are few scholars who deserve a tribute as much as Professor Waldemar Marton, not only as a distinguished specialist in the field of second language acquisition and foreign language education, but also as a friend, colleague, and teacher. On the one hand, he was one of the first Polish applied linguists who published books and papers abroad, thus making a name for himself in the international arena, a task that was indeed a major accomplishment in the 1970s and the 1980s when Poland was in many ways cut off from the outside world. On the other hand, he was the first to introduce the cognitive principles of foreign language pedagogy into Poland, never being enticed by the promises of non-interventionist approaches and at all times stressing the need for systematic instruction in the formal aspects of language. Those who have known him well for many years or have had the privilege to work with him will attest that he is a great friend and colleague, someone they can always count on, someone who is always willing to help out and provide guidance, but also someone who is always a pleasure to be with on a purely social plane. Most importantly perhaps, he has always been a respected mentor, not only for doctoral students whose work he has supervised as well as less experienced colleagues, but also for undergraduates and graduates, all of whom have held him in high esteem, because of his extensive knowledge, academic work, decency, modesty, great class, or respect for others. It is indeed not often that we come across all such commendable characteristics in a single person, but it surely helps explain the recognition Professor Marton enjoys among many eminent scholars from Poland and abroad as well as the fact that, when approached, little did they hesitate to agree to make a contribution to this volume, intended as a collection of studies in his honor.

The papers included in this book have been divided into three parts, devoted to theoretical issues, empirical investigations, and classroom practices. The first part, entitled *Theoretical considerations*, opens with a contribution by Maria Dakowska, who considers the interfaces between cognitive science and foreign language pedagogy, arguing that the latter has assumed the status of an autonomous discipline. Subsequently, Michael Sharwood Smith provides his perspective on the interface debate in second language acquisition by comparing the claims of emergentist and modular positions. This is followed by three papers, the primary concern of which is to forge links between theory and practice, with Maria

Wysocka focusing on issues that need to be explored in the light of the rise of English as an international language, Hanna Komorowska demonstrating the ways in which metaphor can be used in language instruction and teacher education, and Halina Chodkiewicz considering the possibilities of accomplishing a dual focus on content and language in teaching reading in a second or foreign language. Part II, *Research projects*, brings together five papers which report the findings of research into different aspects of language learning and teaching. First, Susan Gass, Jennifer Behney, and Baburhan Uzum discuss the results of a study that sought to determine the impact of working memory capacity and inhibitory control on the effects of interactive feedback. In the next two research projects, Anna Cieřlicka puts to the empirical test the claims of idiom decomposition hypothesis, whereas Anna Michońska-Stadnik explores the relationship between the cognitive styles of reflectivity and impulsivity and the acquisition of grammar structures. Then, Anna Nięgorodcew reports the results of a small-scale study that aimed to tap learners' motivations behind their decision to sign up for English courses in different language schools, pointing to the still high regard for teaching methods. Finally, Michael Pasquale and Dennis Preston seek to gain insights into the beliefs about language instruction displayed by language teachers and learners at secondary and university levels, thereby contributing to the field of what they call folk linguistics. The last part, called *Classroom applications*, opens with the consideration of the current status of a teaching method, with Krystyna Droędział-Szelest arguing that, despite all the criticism, the concept is still needed as it helps practitioners develop their personal approach to teaching. Next, Mirosław Pawlak considers the principles of instructed language acquisition proposed by theorists and researchers as a point for reference for a tentative model of teaching grammar in foreign language contexts. In the last two papers, first, Teresa Siek-Piskozub demonstrates how simulations can be employed with the purpose of enhancing the intercultural communicative competence of future teachers of English, and, second, Roger Berry presents the inadequacies of the personal pronoun paradigm in English, emphasizing that poor pedagogic descriptions are bound to translate into ineffective grammar instruction. We hope that the multiplicity of theoretical, empirical, and pedagogic perspectives represented by the papers included in this book will ensure its relevance to wide audiences, not only scholars, but also undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students as well as teachers, and that it will also contribute to some degree to improving the quality of second and foreign language education.

Krystyna Droędział-Szelest
Mirosław Pawlak

Acknowledgments

The editors would like to express their gratitude to Professor Janusz Arabski (University of Silesia, Poland) who kindly agreed to review the papers included in the present volume. His invaluable comments and suggestions have without doubt greatly enhanced the quality of this work.

Contents

Part I Theoretical Considerations

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Foreign Language Didactics Encounters Cognitive Science | 3 |
| Maria Dakowska | |
| Only Connect: The Interface Debate in Second Language Acquisition | 27 |
| Michael Sharwood Smith | |
| Teaching English as an International Language: Problems and Research Questions | 41 |
| Maria Wysocka | |
| Metaphor in Language Education. | 57 |
| Hanna Komorowska | |
| Dual Focus on Language and Content as an Issue in L2/FL Reading Development | 73 |
| Halina Chodkiewicz | |

Part II Research Projects

| | |
|---|------------|
| Inhibitory Control, Working Memory and L2 Interaction. | 91 |
| Susan M. Gass, Jennifer N. Behney and Baburhan Uzum | |
| Second Language Learners' Processing of Idiomatic Expressions: Does Compositionality Matter? | 115 |
| Anna B. Cieřlicka | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| The Relationship Between Impulsive/Reflective Cognitive Style and Success in Grammar Acquisition in English as a Foreign Language | 137 |
| Anna Michońska-Stadnik | |
| The Appeal of the Teaching Method in the Postmethod Era: The Motivation of Adult EFL Course Participants | 151 |
| Anna Niżegorodcew | |
| The Folk Linguistics of Language Teaching and Learning | 163 |
| Michael D. Pasquale and Dennis R. Preston | |
| Part III Classroom Applications | |
| Methods in Language Teaching: Do We Still Need Them? | 177 |
| Krystyna Drożdżał-Szelest | |
| Principles of Instructed Language Learning Revisited: Guidelines for Effective Grammar Teaching in the Foreign Language Classroom | 199 |
| Mirosław Pawlak | |
| Using Simulations to Develop Intercultural Communication Competence in an EFL Methodology Seminar | 221 |
| Teresa Siek-Piskozub | |
| Metalinguistic Relativity and the Personal Pronoun Paradigm | 233 |
| Roger Berry | |
| About the Authors | 245 |

Part I

Theoretical Considerations

Foreign Language Didactics Encounters Cognitive Science

Maria Dakowska

Abstract The choice of the topic stems from the fact that Professor Waldemar Marton is the intellectual pioneer who introduced cognitive thought into Poland and developed it further while conducting his own research on foreign/second language learning and teaching within this framework. Since his first account of David Ausubel's (1968) cognitive views in educational psychology, cognitive conceptions have proliferated in the field of foreign language learning and teaching. Their potential and actual impact on our understanding of non-primary language learning cannot be overestimated. After all, language learning *is* cognitive by definition. Needless to say, in the past decades cognitivism has spread like fire not only in psychology, but also in philosophy, epistemology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence, linguistics, psycholinguistics, translation studies, psychology of communication, sociology of cognition, cultural anthropology and second language acquisition research. We are witnessing a cognitive turn in these fields and an emergence of an interdisciplinary cognitive science. The question arises as to whether or not foreign language didactics (FLD) can (or should) become a member of this alliance and if so, on what terms and bases? For one thing, the encounter mentioned in the title immediately evokes what for foreign language didactics still constitutes a sensitive issue of identity. To make matters worse, not all of the developments in the cognitive sciences are equally relevant to the concerns of foreign language didactics. For this reason, the paper aims to determine the nature of this relationship on the basis of substantive (subject matter) criteria; in other words, it is intended to: (a) discern the aspects and level of magnitude of cognitive processes investigated by the potentially relevant cognitive sciences, and (b) to discern the aspect of cognition of relevance to foreign language didactics, understood as an autonomous empirical discipline, constituted in accordance with the cognitive conception of science. For this purpose, it is necessary to identify the fundamental unity underlying human cognitive phenomena of interest to the cognitive sciences, including FLD, and discern their specific aspect which justifies a relative autonomy of FLD within the cognitive alliance.

M. Dakowska (✉)

University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

e-mail: m.b.dakowska@uw.edu.pl

1 Introduction

Cognition is a complex term which refers to a multiaspectual phenomenon with a number of levels of magnitude. In the past four or five decades, research on this phenomenon has evolved in a number of disciplines, resulting in highly specialized perspectives and conceptions. Inevitably, therefore, any concern with matters 'cognitive' is entangled in this pluralism of levels, aspects, foci of interest, perspectives, approaches and modelling strategies adopted by the cognitive disciplines which feature psychology, philosophy, epistemology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence, linguistics, psycholinguistics, translation studies, psychology of communication sociology of cognition, cultural anthropology and second language acquisition research. The purpose of this article is to evaluate the impact of these cognitive conceptions on the field of foreign language didactics (FLD), understood as a relatively autonomous empirical discipline. Such a discipline does not look for immediate transplantations of ideas and findings from its related areas, but defines their impact on the basis of its own, i.e. field-internal, criteria and in the context of its own research agenda.

The relevance of cognitive conceptions to the discipline of foreign language didactics has been my research concern for at least past two decades. The article from 1993 (Dakowska 1993) investigated the status of a *grammar rule* in foreign language use and learning and drew a distinction between a metalingual generalization about language forms and their context of use, i.e. a rule, on the one hand, and the manifestation of the available knowledge in speech production which gradually takes place in the mind of the foreign language learner, on the other. Following that, a monograph (Dakowska 1996) outlined selected models of language learning from the point of view of their function as representations of the subject matter for the discipline of foreign language didactics. This outline emphasized the role of the language learner's cognitive system as the locus of the operations of language use and learning performed by the human agent, justifying the need for anthropocentric models of language use and learning in depicting the subject matter of foreign language didactics. Their cognitive status, qualitatively different from linguistic models of language as a system of forms, derives from representing language use as human cognitive operations rather than from being merely decreed as cognitive (see also Dakowska 1997). In Dakowska (2000), a contrast was proposed between two poles of modelling language learning, i.e. the *linguistic one*, which represents the learning process as taking place in inanimate matter, developing as linearization of language forms, and the *cognitive one*, which represents language learning as taking place in a living human organism. The article from 2002 (Dakowska 2002) presented a cognitive conception of foreign language teaching as a reflection of our understanding of foreign language learning, which is cognitive by definition. A chapter in the subsequent book (Dakowska 2003) outlined what was called a 'cardinal' cognitive paradigm, which contained a list of essential recurrent tenets of the cognitive framework as well as important terminological distinctions in the use of the adjective 'cognitive' by several important authors. Critical remarks were made on some conceptions in second language acquisition (SLA) research which constructed an inconsistent 'cognitive' view

of language by way of adding some of the cognitive factors to some of the descriptive linguistic concepts referring to the notion of language as a system of forms (e.g. a rule), or underestimated the specificity of language in the cognitive system reducing language learning solely to the acquisition of a cognitive skill. The article from 2010 (Dakowska 2010) focused on the significance of the cognitive conception of science as a specialization of human cognitive interaction with the real world in the social context for foreign language didactics, a very young discipline with a very long history, still forging its own academic identity. The present contribution is based on the previously developed arguments and terminological distinctions to focus on the position of foreign language didactics, understood as a relatively autonomous empirical discipline, among the cognitive sciences, especially cognitive psychology, psycholinguistics and epistemology of science.

2 Some Key Terminological Distinctions

In view of the abundance of research which can be qualified as cognitive, it would be helpful to keep in mind the following distinct conceptual categories:

- (a) cognition as a phenomenon investigated at various levels of specificity, ranging from the neuronal level of the individual brain, unavailable to our awareness, via the intrapersonal level of mental representations, available to us as phenomenal experience and thought, to the level of interpersonal communication, i.e. cognition and behaviour as a social phenomenon;
- (b) the notion of cognitive science, the study of the mind, understood as an alliance of disciplines dealing with various aspects of cognition, regarded as an interdisciplinary and, hopefully, terminologically compatible endeavour;
- (c) cognitive perspectives or frameworks within these sciences, reflecting not only their subject-matter specificity, but also the intellectual predilections of individual researchers, e.g. artificial versus human intelligence, modular versus non-modular conceptions of language.

According to *Concise encyclopedia of psychology*, *cognition* is the term designating all the processes involved in knowing and the functioning of the mind including perception, attention, memory, imagery, language functions, developmental processes, problem solving and artificial intelligence (Corsini 1987). Two important questions can be distinguished in cognition: the contents of human knowledge and the nature of the processes of acquisition and use of that knowledge. A major theme in cognitive psychology is the constructivist claim that cognition is a highly active process, which involves selection and integration of incoming (environmental) stimuli as well as generation of knowledge by our reasoning processes. The term *cognition* is central to the field of foreign language didactics because it refers to the processes of human learning in real time, understood in terms of human information processing, whereby information is encoded, recoded, decoded, i.e. translated into other formats, as well as chunked, elaborated

upon, stored, retrieved and used—constructively as well as creatively (Barsalou 2009). In his comprehensive account of the first decades of its growth, Gardner (1985, p. 6) formulates a definition of cognitive science in the following way:

I define cognitive science as a contemporary, empirically based effort to answer long-standing epistemological questions—particularly those concerned with the nature of knowledge, its components, its sources, its development and its deployment. Though the term *cognitive science* is sometimes extended to include all forms of knowledge—animate as well as inanimate, human as well as nonhuman—I apply the term chiefly to efforts to explain human knowledge. I am interested in whether questions that intrigued our philosophical ancestors can be decisively answered, instructively reformulated, or permanently scuttled. Today cognitive science holds the key to whether they can be.

Advances in the individual cognitive sciences, especially cognitive psychology, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics and cognitive linguistics, approach language from a number of perspectives: as neuronal networking of the brain at the micro level, as an abstract system of forms for the construction of meaning, a hypothetical construct representing human language device, as well as on-line human operations of language use and learning. Language learning is cognitive by definition, but the adjective ‘cognitive’ is used in various senses. It is not unheard of in the SLA literature to juxtapose *cognitive* and *social* conceptions of language acquisition, which—to me—is not substantiated, and interpret ‘cognitive’ as equivalent to mental and individual, but in a purely linguistic sense, i.e. in the sense of formal properties of language as an artefact/outcome/product of cognitive processes (see Watson-Gegeo 2004; Seidlhofer 2003; Zuengler and Miller 2006).

From the point of view of foreign language didactics, the matter is more fundamental than taking a side in a controversy, however. The way we visualize and/or conceptualize the foreign language learner’s cognitive equipment and language processing, i.e. the psycholinguistic processes of language use and learning, determines our educational organization and strategies of foreign language teaching. Cognition—in the sense of the functioning of our cognitive system and its information processing—features prominently in the focus of interest.

3 A Brief Retrospective

According to Matlin (1994), but not only (e.g. Gardner 1985), the beginnings of the cognitive science go back to the Symposium on Information Theory held at MIT in 1956, attended by the leading American figures in communication and human sciences, who recognized the cognitive trends in various disciplines, including psychology, linguistics, computer simulations of cognitive processes, as part of a larger whole. Later Chomsky published his celebrated review of Skinner’s *Verbal behaviour*, which provided an impetus for innovative research in psychology, psycholinguistics and linguistics, subsequently leading to the emancipation of psychology and psycholinguistics from linguistics (Slobin 1971; Abrahamsen 1987; McCauley 1987). Internationally, among the founding fathers

of cognitive psychology were Anderson, Ausubel, Bartlett, Broadbent, Bruner, Miller, Neisser, Piaget and others. The initial period of its development was marked by a strong reaction to behaviourism, leading to a revision of the goals and the subject matter of psychology and significant reformulations in the definition of science. Most importantly, cognitivists showed revived interest in the mind and the brain, and recognized the significance of consciousness as a default setting in a living human being in their research (Gardner 1985; Baars 1997; Velmans 2000; Gillet and McMillan 2001; Koch 2004; Thagard 2005; Baars and Gage 2007).

Their key cognitive tenets include the inevitable interaction of the organism with its environment afforded by top-down and bottom-up processing, the centrality of mental representation, the intentional, goal-oriented, strategic properties of our cognitive functioning and behaviour, the universal human ability of chronological and feature coding, the use of schemata and other organizing structures in information processing (for the purposes of recognition, storage, retrieval and construction), the role of human cognitive curiosity as the driving force behind cognition and, most importantly, the semantic quality of our mental life, i.e. our search for meaning and sense in ourselves as well as our environment, thought and action.

As for the impact of the cognitive school of thought on foreign language teaching, it was strongly felt at the time of the Cognitive Code Learning Theory, built on the basis of Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar and Ausubel's cognitive tenets in educational psychology, introduced in Poland by Marton (1978) in his monograph *Dydaktyka języków obcych w szkole średniej. Podejście kognitywne* [Foreign language didactics in secondary school: A cognitive approach] and later in the textbook for English as a foreign language *English. Yes* by Marton and Szkutnik (1978). The Cognitive Code-Learning Theory, as well as the Cognitive Method, implemented Ausubel's (1968) theory of meaningful learning and the idea of advanced organizers in the teaching of grammar. The method stressed the role of explicit grammar rules, taught both inductively and deductively, and the use of the native language for a number of purposes; it also recommended problem-solving activities of various sorts as well as the development of vocabulary and nontrivial content in reading passages (cf. Carroll 1966; Chastain 1976; Marton 1976, 1978, 1987; Dakowska 2005). At that time, the attribute 'cognitive' in the context of foreign language teaching referred only to those teaching strategies which targeted the learner's awareness in the sense of focal attention. Such was the function of the explicit presentation of grammar rules, i.e. metalingual information about form-function mappings in the foreign language, to make the learner aware of the formal regularities in language. The underlying rationale was that the knowledge of these metalingual properties would be available for/convertible into the ability of language use. Although the method gave way to much more sophisticated advances in the field of foreign language teaching, it still has its proponents in slightly modified guises (Rychło 2008). Unlike in the early decades, however, the concept of learning in the cognitive framework has been broadened to embrace a whole spectrum of processes which make up our information processing experience, such as informal learning, e.g. perception, observation, and participation in interaction, as well as more deliberate/structured studying,