

Second Language Learning and Teaching

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Krystyna Drożdżał-Szelest · Mirosław Pawlak
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Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Second Language Learning and Teaching

Studies in Honor of Waldemar Marton

 Springer

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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 Cieślicka 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 Niżegorodcew 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 Drożdżiał-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 Drożdżiał-Szelest
Mirosław Pawlak

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