

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition

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**Theory and Practice
of
Second Language Acquisition**

Vol. 3 (2), 2017

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Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Preface (<i>Danuta Gabryś-Barker, Adam Wojtaszek</i>) | 5 |
|---|---|

Articles

| | |
|---|----|
| Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel | |
| The Role of Social Support Systems in Adolescent Foreign Language Learning | 11 |
| Anna Bąk-Średnicka | |
| Pre-service Teachers' Attitudes Related to Family Involvement in Light of Their School Placement Experience | 29 |
| Małgorzata Szupica-Pyrzanowska, Katarzyna Malesa | |
| Are They Part of the Equation? – Foreign Language Teachers vs. Language Attrition. A Diagnostic Study | 49 |
| Ewa Cieślicka, Arkadiusz Rojczyk | |
| Self-reported vs. Self-rated Pronunciation in a Non-native Language | 69 |
| Konrad Szcześniak | |
| Benefits of L1–L3 Similarities. The Case of the Dative Case | 87 |

Reviews

| | |
|--|-----|
| Kurt Braunmüller and Christoph Gabriel (Eds.). (2012). <i>Multilingual Individuals and Multilingual Societies</i> (John Benjamins) – by Larissa Aronin | 113 |
| Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Mirosław Pawlak (2017). <i>Willingness to Communicate in Instructed Second Language Acquisition. Combining a Macro- and Micro-Perspective</i> (Multilingual Matters) – by Danuta Gabryś-Barker | 121 |

Preface

We resolved to start publishing *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition* despite the fact that Poland has a strong position in second language acquisition research and that quite a large number of monographic publications in this area come out every year—often published abroad with *Multilingual Matters* or Springer, among others. However, there was no academic research-oriented journal devoted to the theory and practice of SLA which would be widely available to Polish academia. Following the publication of the first issue, however, it became clear that its scope would attract submissions from not only Polish scholars but also international academics. Thus far, *TAPSLA* has featured articles by such renowned contributors as David Singleton, Larissa Aronin, Jean-Marc Dewaele—and many other scholars representing innovative movements in SLA research worldwide. The journal has become a venue for the exchange of ideas for academics at home and abroad, focusing on often unresearched issues and fairly new developments in SLA studies. The Editorial Board consists of both Polish and foreign experts in the area, and represents the wide range of research interests of its members. All updated information on the journal is available on the University of Silesia in Katowice, Institute of English webpage at www.ija.us.edu.pl (via a special link) and the journal webpage at <http://www.journal.us.edu.pl/index.php/TAPSLA>.

The present issue opens with an article by Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel “The Role of Social Support Systems in Adolescent Foreign Language Learning,” the main focus of which is on the role family, teachers, and peers play in the academic success of adolescent FL learners. Research on social support, though not very extensive, unanimously demonstrates that social support influences learners’ resilience to the stress generated by FL learning situations. It contributes to the adolescent’s development of self-esteem, autonomy, and building social competence, among many other effects. The article overviews theoretical assumptions and selected studies on social support. Also, Anna Bąk-Średnicka,

in her text “Pre-service Teachers’ Attitudes Related to Family Involvement in Light of Their School Placement Experience,” focuses on social support issues in relation to partnership between teachers and parents. The author reports on an empirical study conducted among pre-service EFL teachers on the effects of their collaboration with their learners’ parents and its visible effectiveness and impact on their learners’ success. The author stresses that despite the ministerial guidance for teacher training programmes, hardly any time is devoted to developing trainees’ awareness of this issue, thus more emphasis should be put on it in teacher training curricula. The main concern of the article by Małgorzata Szupica-Pyrzanowska and Katarzyna Malesa, entitled “Are They Part of the Equation? – Foreign Language Teachers vs. Language Attrition. A Diagnostic Study,” touches upon the problem of language competence deterioration in the case of foreign language teachers. The pilot study carried out in a group of MA students working as primary school EFL teachers revealed the plethora of factors contributing to the stagnation and even regression in their language competences. The authors, aware of the pilot nature of their study, suggest ways of researching the issue more thoroughly. The next article by Ewa Cieślicka and Arkadiusz Rojczyk, “Self-reported vs. Self-rated Pronunciation in a Non-native Language,” also focuses on non-native FL competence and, more precisely, on a non-native accent. In their empirical study, the authors observed that there were no visible differences between the way advanced students of English assessed their accent in English in general and, later on, how they rated it on the basis of their own recorded performance. The authors conclude that one’s self-image as expressed by the subjects of the study is a fairly stable characteristic. Konrad Szcześniak, in his article “Benefits of L1–L3 Similarities. The Case of the Dative Case,” discusses the influence of structural similarities between the Polish (L1) of a speaker and Portuguese (his/her L3). The author observes that the students are aware of similarities between L1 Polish and L3 Portuguese dative constructions and, indeed, positive transfer does occur in their performance. At the same time, it is not as frequent and widespread as might have been expected due to existing similarities in the dative case constructions of these two languages. The author discusses the reasons of this phenomenon.

The present issue of the journal inaugurates a new Reviews section with two recommendations. The first book review included is by Larissa Aronin. She fully endorses the value of Kurt Braunmüller and Christoph Gabriel’s (2012) edited volume *Multilingual Individuals and Multilingual Societies* published by John Benjamins, which is an interesting collection of twenty-five articles on multilingualism as described from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, and recommends it as a valuable source for researchers in the field of multilingualism. The other book review included in this issue is by Danuta Gabryś-Barker. It presents a very recent volume by Anna Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Mirosław Pawlak (2017), entitled *Willingness to Communicate*

in Instructed Second Language Acquisition. Combining a Macro- and Micro-Perspective and published by Multilingual Matters. This monographic volume focuses on individual learner differences, contextual factors, and their impact on FL learners' willingness to communicate. It is an important publication for both SLA researchers and FL classroom practitioners.

We hope that this issue of the journal will be of interest to researchers working in the field of second language acquisition. We would like to invite Polish and foreign academics to share their scholarly research with us by submitting their work to the *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition* journal, published by the prestigious Polish academic publisher, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego (University of Silesia Press).

Danuta Gabryś-Barker
Adam Wojtaszek

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74

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