



Number 97

Spring 2011



British Association for Applied Linguistics

Registered charity no. 264800

Promoting understanding of language in use.

<http://www.baal.org.uk>

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Membership

Individual Membership is open to anyone qualified or active in applied linguistics. Applied linguists who are not normally resident in Great Britain or Northern Ireland are welcome to join, although they will normally be expected to join their local AILA affiliate in addition to BAAL. Associate Membership is available to publishing houses and to other appropriate bodies at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Institution membership entitles up to three people to be full members of BAAL.

Chair (2009 - 2011)

Guy Cook
Centre for Language and Communication
Faculty of Education and Language Studies
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
g.cook@open.ac.uk

Membership Secretary (2010-2012)

Jo Angouri
University of the West of England, Bristol
Department of English, Linguistics and Communication
Frenchay Campus
Coldhambour Lane
Bristol BS16 1QY
jo.angouri@uwe.ac.uk

Membership administration

Jeanie Taylor, Administrator
c/o Dovetail Management Consultancy
PO Box 6688
London SE15 3WB
email: admin@BAAL.org.uk

Dear BAAL members,

Welcome to the Spring 2011 issue of *BAALNews*.

This is a period of transition for *BAALnews*. As announced previously, the BAAL Executive Committee took the decision to move towards an electronic newsletter. Over the years, the production of the newsletter was one of the most expensive items in BAAL's annual budget, and the EC felt that the money is better spent elsewhere in order to support our organisation and its mission.

You will receive this issue in two formats: the new electronic PDF, and, a bit later, the traditional printed copy. This is due to some logistic issues resulting from the transition process. All future issues will be produced in-house, which does not only make it free, it also allows for tighter turn-around times in the production process. We will also build an archive of newsletters on the re-designed BAAL website:
<http://www.baal.org.uk>

The current issue includes some important pieces of information: an update in BAAL's involvement with AILA and the forthcoming REF can be found in Guy Cook's Chair's Report. Caroline Tagg introduces this year's BAAL/CUP seminars, and Tilly Harrison provides an update on BAAL's newest SIGs: Intercultural Communication (IC) and Testing, Evaluation and Assessment (TEA).

And last but not least, Dawn Knight's update on this year's BAAL conference in Bristol and a reminder of an important date: the deadline for the receipt of abstracts is Tuesday 5th April 2011.

With best wishes,

Sebastian Rasinger

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Jeanine Treffers-Daller (Local
Conference Contact)

Esther Daborn (Co-opted Member
(CLIE Representative)

The association is in very good shape. With over 700 members, we are the biggest professional association of linguists in the UK. Our finances are in good shape; our publicity is effective; our views are promoted in relevant fora; our conferences are successful; our SIGs are various and active; BAALmail is an invaluable daily source of information. Many thanks, as always, to the very dedicated and hard-working members of our Executive Committee who make this situation possible.

We have a number of initiatives to put this strength to good use, concentrating particularly on expanding the activities and scope of the association, lobbying government and other bodies, providing financial support for those in need, and publicising the important potential role of applied linguistics in society at large.

We do however need the constant help of the membership in actively promoting the association. I hope that members will communicate our strength and dynamism when opportunities arise in discussions with people outside the association. I hope also that you will tell academic colleagues who might be interested of the many benefits of membership.

Research Excellence Framework.

Membership of the sub panels has now been announced, and is available on the REF website. As I reported in the last newsletter, we made several nominations to the three most relevant panels for our members: Education, English Language and Literature, and Modern Languages and Linguistics. I am pleased to see

BAAL nominee Susan Hunston on the English Language and Literature Panel, and BAAL nominees Florence Myles and Jenny Cheshire on the Modern Languages and Linguistics panels. I do have concerns however about the under representation of applied linguistics on the Education Panel, and I have written to the chair of the Education Panel and to the REF administration to express these concerns.

UCGAL

The University Council for General and Applied Linguistics was launched at a pleasant event at the British Academy earlier this year, and the Council, under the able leadership of Ros Mitchell, is already active on behalf of the wider linguistics community on a number of fronts. We are affiliated to the council, wish it success, and look forward to working closely with it.

Bristol Conference

This year's conference promises, as always, to be of very high quality. Important new features are the two invited colloquia, established deliberately to broaden our appeal and scope by supporting areas which are have been under-represented at our conferences in the past. This year's colloquia are on Systemic Functional Linguistics and Clinical Linguistics. We also hope to welcome successful applicants for our various scholarships, as this is a particularly important to use of BAAL funds. I hope members will take any opportunity which arises to inform potential applicants of the possibilities for funding. (Details are on our website,

but please do enquire if you need more information.)

AILA

The AILA conference will take place in Beijing in late August this year, very closely followed by our own conference in Bristol at the beginning of September. I hope as many members as possible will be able to attend both. We will be well represented in Beijing, both in presentations, and at AILA meetings.

One controversial AILA matter however concerns the activities of AILA Europe, one of the many recently established regionalised sub-groups of the international association. I have severe reservations about the regionalisation of an international association, and with the agreement of the Executive Committee, sent the following statement to AILA Europe at the end of October 2010.

"The British Association's absence from AILA Europe meetings and discussions also reflects the view of our executive committee that the regionalisation of AILA is undesirable. Our view is that once an international organisation becomes regionalised, it is no longer international by definition, and loses its key function of encouraging members to communicate across rather than within regional boundaries.

I hope you will not misunderstand this position as unfriendliness. Indeed, we are very keen to make and maintain links with other applied linguistics associations in

Europe, but no more or less than with organisations in any other part of the world. We support AILA for its internationalism, not for its regionalism."

Phonics Consultation

CLIE, The Committee on Linguistics in Education (a joint Committee of BAAL and the Linguistics Association of Great Britain) responded to the DfE's rather narrow and ill-informed proposals for phonic screening of Year 6 children in British Primary Schools.

In essence, the response argued that, while phonics screening has an important role to play in assessing some aspects of children's reading, an exclusive emphasis on phonics can marginalise other important aspects of reading ability. Many thanks to the BAAL members who contributed their views during the drafting of the response, and in particular to Catherine Walter and other members of CLIE who put it all together so efficiently. The CLIE response (endorsed by the BAAL and LAGB Executive Committees and sent to the DfE) is now available on the CLIE website at

<http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/ec/clielop.htm#2011phonics>

Guy Cook

28 February 2011

Five seminar proposals were received, and I am pleased to say that we were able to offer all the co-ordinators some funding towards their proposed seminars. The proposals came from the University of Bristol, Oxford Brookes University, Sheffield Hallam University, Queen Mary University of London, and the University of Southampton. They were reviewed by four raters from the BAAL Executive Committee, who provided critical and constructive feedback.

Three proposals have been awarded a £750 grant (plus a £500 float). These are the University of Bristol, Oxford Brookes University and Sheffield Hallam University. Details of their proposed seminars are as follows.

University of Bristol

European Dialogue for Sign Language Learner Corpora and CEFR

To be held in June 2011

Co-ordinator: Dr Maria Mertzani

This is a three-day event which aims at bringing together scholars who have

experience and interest in the use of sign language (SL) corpora with learners and teachers (hearing and/or deaf) of SLs as second languages, and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Oxford Brookes University

Reflection in the Round: Discourses and Practices of Reflection in HE

To be held in early July 2011

Co-ordinators: Dr Paul Wickens and Dr Jane Spiro

This one-day seminar seeks to develop a dialogue between practice-based and theoretical-based researchers of reflective practice in the context of UK HE; and to develop an awareness and understanding of the nature of the discourse/s of assessed reflective writing and the practice of such assessment in UK HE pedagogy and in broader national standards and policy.

Sheffield Hallam

Language, Education and Disadvantage: a response to the deficit model of children's language competence

To be held on 19th-20th April 2011

Co-ordinators: Dr Karen Grainger and Dr Peter Jones

The aim of the seminar is to bring together scholars whose research challenges the 'deficit' view of working class language patterns that were prevalent in the 1960s and 1970s and which have re-emerged in recent trends in linguistic and educational research. When applied to educational policy and practice (as they currently are), they are potentially damaging and need to be

challenged. It is the aim of this seminar to be the first step in that direction.

The remaining two proposals from Queen Mary, University of London, and the University of Southampton were offered a £500 float, and are hopeful that they can obtain other funding to supplement this and proceed with the proposed seminars. Details of these are as follows.

Queen Mary, University of London

News, Talk and Text: Approaches and Challenges

Co-ordinator: Dr Colleen Cotter

To be held on 29th April 2010 (to be rearranged!)

The primary objectives for this seminar are three-fold:

- 1) to officially launch the UK branch of the seminal NewsTalk&Text research group, based at the University of Ghent in Belgium, with which the seminar coordinator is affiliated as a research associate;
- 2) to showcase new research in the field of 'media linguistics'; and
- 3) to provide workshop opportunities highlighting both ethnographic methodology and computer-assisted writing process analysis, drawing on small-team 'media immersion' field activity in the immediate London area.

The larger outcome is to situate the NewsTalk&Text research enterprise in

London, while extending its scope and potential beyond the southeast.

University of Southampton

Multilingualism in Education

Co-ordinators: Dr Gabriele Budach and Dr Julia Hüttner

Date to be fixed

Schools are a primary locus of multilingualism in two quite diverse ways; on the one hand, they are the place where societal multilingualism meets the monolingual educational system. On the other hand, schools are the place where multilingualism is traditionally first encountered by mainstream children and teenagers and is overtly fostered through foreign language instruction. Socio-linguistic research has traditionally focused on the lack of representation of societal multilingualism in school settings, whereas research on language learning and teaching has focused on the achievement of multilingual competencies in the languages established in the curriculum. The aim of this seminar is to promote a dialogue between these two areas in order to highlight potential methodological and theoretical synergies.

Congratulations to all the co-ordinators and others involved in the organisation of these five seminars. Calls for papers and other announcements relating to these seminars will be made in due course.

Two New SIGs in BAAL

In 2009, two new special interest groups, Intercultural Communication (IC) and Testing, Evaluation and Assessment (TEA) were suggested to the BAAL Executive Committee. They were given the go-ahead for a probationary year in 2010 and a start-up grant of £200 towards setting up an inaugural event.

Both new SIGs successfully staged an event – coincidentally both in Nottingham (IC SIG at Nottingham Trent University on 27th and 28th May 2010 and TEA SIG at the University of Nottingham on 12th November 2010). They also both had a focus at the BAAL Annual Meeting in Aberdeen (IC SIG had a colloquium and TEA SIG a half day track).

Having read their reports of the year's activities with their accounts and membership information, the BAAL Executive Committee decided in January 2011 to grant both SIGs the status of a full BAAL SIG. The Association now has ten special interest groups, the other eight being: UK Linguistic Ethnography Forum, Corpus Linguistics, Psycholinguistics, Language Learning and Teaching, Multimodality, Language In Africa, Gender and Language, Vocabulary.

If you feel there is an area of interest to Applied Linguists that is not catered for in the above range and which would have a strong enough following to sustain an annual event, please contact Tilly Harrison (Tilly.Harrison@warwick.ac.uk) for information about how to set up a new SIG.

Tilly Harrison

BAAL 2011 University of the West of England, Bristol (1st – 3rd September 2011)

BAAL 2011 will be held at the University of the West of England Bristol (UWE). The conference theme is ‘The Impact of Applied Linguistics’ and plenary speakers include Diane Larsen-Freeman (University of Michigan), Guy Cook (Open University) and Rick Iedema (University of Technology, Sydney). The conference is being organised by Jeanine Treffers-Daller, Jo Angouri and other staff from the Department of English, Linguistics and Communication with the support of the Bristol Centre for Linguistics (BCL).

BAAL 2011 will take place at Frenchay Campus, the main University Campus which lies about four miles north of Bristol city centre. Buses to the campus take around 10 minutes away from Bristol Parkway Train Station, which is a short journey from the main Temple Meads station. There are also good links to Bristol International Airport from various national and international destinations.

We are confident Bristol will also do its best to contribute to a memorable conference. Located in the South West of England, Bristol is a very energetic a quirky city, which was one of six cities shortlisted for the European Capital of culture in 2008. Bristol enjoys a unique location close to the coast and countryside and is within a 2 hour train journey of London (120 miles from West London). There is a lot to see and do in this wonderful city, check out our

website to get a taste of some of Bristol's highlights, such as Brunel's Suspension Bridge over the Avon Gorge and the SS Great Britain!

Abstracts for papers, posters and colloquium contributions are welcome in any area of Applied Linguistics, should be interesting and innovative in some way, and should be of scholarly and academically good quality and indicate clearly objectives, method(s), and results where appropriate. Abstracts which address the conference theme will be particularly welcome.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF ABSTRACTS: 5 April 2011

Please go to the BAAL conferences webpage for a more detailed call for papers and to submit your abstract:
http://www.baal.org.uk/baal_conf.html

Future Conferences:

The BAAL executive committee is also now inviting host bids for the annual BAAL conferences in September 2014 and September 2015 (refer to the following website for the exact dates and a check-list of requirements for this: http://www.baal.org.uk/baal_conf.html).

If you are interested in hosting the annual conference, please submit a detailed host bid addressing all the

points in the check-list. In addition to the host bid, please send me BAAL Meetings Secretary a detailed breakdown of predicted incomings and outgoings, in two versions:

- a) for university venue and accommodation,
- b) for hotel/conference venue and accommodation.

Examples of a host bid and breakdown of costs are available on request. The deadline for host bids is the 22nd April 2011.

Dawn Knight

Jaworski, A. & Coupland, N. (2006)
(eds.) *The Discourse Reader*. London:
Routledge. ISBN: 0-415-34632-0
(pbk). 560 pages.

The Discourse Reader contains an integrated and structured set of original papers, many of which, such as Harvey Sack's 'The baby cried. The mommy picked it up,' are now regarded as both classics in the field and required reading at both undergraduate and Master's levels. In fact, Sack's key paper and several others will be instantly recognisable to the general reader of applied linguistics. As *The Discourse Reader* deals with close analysis and wider social and political themes, for the specialist this text is almost certainly the definitive source; it would be surprising not to see it on the bookshelves of the lecturer in this field. Following a wide-ranging introduction containing various perspectives on such matters as narrative and critical discourse analysis, this title launches into the first of its six parts, each consisting of several chapters and ending with practical tasks that a lecturer might set for their class.

The first part, titled 'Discourse: meaning, function and context,' is focused on theoretical frameworks and the development of perspectives. As this includes Grice on implicature and his rule-of-thumb maxims, and Austin on utterances, it does not, as the editors' introduction suggests, make for easy reading, although both do provide a useful grounding for what is in store in later chapters. Another no less taxing paper in part one is that by Gumperz on socio-cultural knowledge in

conversational inference, made more accessible by his anecdotes of ticket collectors on planes, and claims of rudeness on the part of London bus ticket collectors asking for 'exact change.' His conclusion is that our interpretation and understanding in such threatening circumstances as these largely come down to aspects of prosody plus paralinguistic cues.

Part two begins with a paper on the politics of social science, one which looks at positivism versus relativism and then looks briefly at ethical issues of research, in particular the problems of deceiving those we research. This part moves on to cover other methods and resources for analysing discourse, and spends much time dealing with another research hot-potato - transcribing speech, including a key paper in this field by Atkinson and Heritage who outline Jefferson's now widely accepted transcript annotation. This is followed by Ochs, who further considers the transcription process by looking in particular at page lay-out and non-verbal behaviour. Perhaps on more esoteric, but startlingly pertinent topics, this part closes firstly with a look by Van Leeuwen at Sound, that explains such matters as the distance from which a soft whisper may be necessary, and a paper by Graddol who explores the construction, in relation to audience, of the label on a wine bottle.

Dealing next with sequence and structure, the third part of *The Discourse Reader* looks at conversation analysis, with papers firstly on transforming experience into it, and analysing

narrative, and then Pomerantz on illustrations of preference for agreement / disagreement in conversation. In their 'Opening up Closings' Schegloff and Sacks explore how we tend to signal that we have really had enough of talking to someone. This part closes with Schiffrin on the several varied uses of *Oh* in conversation.

Part four concerns negotiating social relationships, starting with Malinowski's brief and enlightening paper on what he describes as 'free, aimless social discourse', nowadays more technically described as 'phatic communion,' and which looks at comments such as 'Nice day!' i.e. language used by people simply enjoying or wanting to enjoy each other's company. Following key papers by Goffman on 'Face', and Brown and Levinson on face in relation to politeness, Holmes continues, admittedly with some rather fruity data, on how firstly men, and then women, tend to respond when agreeing and disagreeing with each other. Papers closing this particular part look at speech act theory using data from a medical examination and interviews, another on why the weather is such a common topic in talk, and finally one on 'visual interaction', involving the communicative function of posters such 'Your Country Needs You!' encouraging recruitment in the army.

The penultimate part of *The Discourse Reader* focuses identity and subjectivity. Following a paper by Hall on the media and its representation of racism, comes data illustrating the intimacy of medical examinations, and tales of torture. Other

chapters in this fifth part concern gender, in which firstly Cameron outlines how young males construct their heterosexual identity, then in her follow-up paper on the relationships between gender and language in the workplace of call-centres. Power, ideology and control are themes which end this title. While firstly Bourdieu reflects on language and symbolic power and acceptability, Foucault next looks at how over the last three centuries we have very slowly become more comfortable in writing on matters of sexuality. Following these are papers on language used to incite and injure, the denial of racism, and accounts of arguments on a British radio talk show.

Tightly-structured *The Discourse Reader* certainly is; wide-ranging, too. And therein perhaps lies my only major criticism of this excellent text: whilst containing some absolutely key papers, most noticeably on conversation analysis, face and politeness theory, I felt others on less mainstream aspects of discourse analysis, such as sound and images, might have been omitted. As it stands, though, this title would almost certainly be on the intended book-list of a linguist facing a long period in desert-island circumstances.

Wayne Trotman

*The Institute of Technology, Izmir,
Turkey*

Griffiths, P., Merrison, A. J. & Bloomer, A. (2009). *Language in use: A reader*. London: Routledge. ISBN: Pb 978-0-415-44205-3. £22.99. Hb 978-0-415-44204-6. £80.00. 381 pages.

Language in use: A reader is a book which can be used independently or alongside the volume *Introducing Language in use*, a textbook which the editors produced in 2005. This reader is a volume designed to introduce students to some important topics in linguistics through original papers rather than students relying solely on textbooks. The readings used vary from 'classic' linguistic papers to more recent contributions. The editors believe, as I do, that students should be encouraged to read about language and linguistics in the words of those carrying out the work, rather than through others' interpretation of the issues. My experience of student reading is that many are hesitant to stray away from introductory textbooks and anything which encourages this should be welcomed.

The reader contains 29 readings which have been grouped into four parts. Each part starts with an introduction about the research area, and each reading contains a short section with background information on the topic and the setting of the reading. The reader also contains a detailed bookmap at the beginning of the book, which shows which readings are linked as well as individual bookmaps at the start of the four individual parts. There are also icons within all of the readings which cross-reference to the textbook mentioned

above. At the end of each chapter, there are 'now, think, do!' sections which students and/or tutors can use as part of seminar work, and information about further reading if students want to follow up any of their reading.

The readings in part 1 (Language and Interaction) look at language use in our daily lives. This part is split into two sections – the first looks at interactive language usage and language being used for 'doing things'. Across four readings this section includes work by Sacks on question-answer pair parts and agreement; a review of Grice's work and how others have misinterpreted it by Davies; an introduction to Clark's theoretical perspectives on language analysis, including Austin's Speech Act Theory and Grice's Cooperative Principle by Barry and Merrison; and an example of applying ideas from linguistics to the real world from the concept of misunderstandings by Butters. The second section in the first part is concerned with language use for defining social selves. These readings include a discussion of linguistic behaviour and impoliteness by Mills; a discussion of effective caring for the elderly through consideration of the construction social identities and social reality by Grainger; and the performance of non-engagement by university students by Benwell and Stokoe.

Part 2 is entitled 'Language Systems' and considers the shared options which all speakers have to use in order to communicate effectively. These readings examine the different elements of our language system and how we can

examine these to help us understand how people communicate effectively. The first reading, by Plag, deals with the mental lexicon and more specifically on the storage of suffixes and how these can be used in word coinage. The second reading is an introduction of the main phonetic and phonological differences in varieties of British English by Hughes et al. which allows us to compare regional variation and how to identify such features. Halliday's discussion of form and meaning, and the fact that language users know what they want to say before they decide how to say it forms the third reading of this part.

The fourth reading, by Sutton-Spence and Woll, introduces students to language use in a different modality, that of British Sign Language (BSL), and how some structures, such as the topic-comment structure can differ greatly from English, and illustrate that syntax and form can be closely linked in BSL. The fifth reading, by Milroy, is an alternative approach to the history of English and challenges students to question previous research. The reading by Goatly on metaphorical language and its interpretation in everyday language is the sixth reading and the final reading in this section is an analysis of a variety of English, that of Singaporean English (Singlish) and how this differs from Standard English and the importance of such varieties for language users as part of their identity.

The readings in Part 3, Language and Society, are all concerned with the influence of social context on language choice. Register, style and linguistic

variation are illustrated by looking at language use in context. The first reading in this part is by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller and introduces students to many of the main notions of sociolinguistics and how this field of study can be approached. The second reading by Bialystok examines bilingualism and literacy via phonological awareness and whether having a second language can aid in reading proficiency. The reading by Crystal examines the different circles in which English is used around the world and what this means for the future of English. This topic is further examined in the fourth reading by Wright which investigates the history of English (and other) language teaching in Vietnam in relation to its history. Turner, in the fifth reading, examines the danger of losing languages in a society where a dominant language can take over. Fairclough's discussion of Saussure's *langue* and *parole* in relation to social variation forms the sixth reading of this section, and the final reading is an empirical look at language variation by McEnery, who investigates how British men and women swear differently.

In the fourth part of this reader, language use within the individual, rather than among individuals, is examined. Language and the Mind examines how language is stored in the brain and whether the investigation of language acquisition, use and loss can inform us about how the brain works in relation to language. The first reading, by Opler and Gjerlow, informs readers about the different ways researchers have examined the brain and how language is

used to investigate whether language is localized within the brain. The reading by Goodwin, Goodwin and Olsher is a study of communication by an individual who has suffered severe language loss after a stroke. Readings three (Pinker), four (Farrar), five (Diessel), and six (Haskell, Macdonald and Seidenberg) look at the language usage of children acquiring language (and the parents accompanying them) to consider whether such acquisition is the result of nature or nurture, and whether children can be assisted in their learning process by correction and reinforcement. Reading seven by Kress and van Leeuwen investigates the role of different modes of communication, such as the visual one, and the role this plays in language acquisition. The final reading of this part, and of the reader, is that by Nicholls, Searle and Bradshaw and illustrates how experiments are carried out and used in order to examine the role of vision in speech perception.

Although this book is aimed at undergraduate students, it is not an easy book. Some of the readings are, naturally, quite complex. Students may be challenged by the methods, analysis and style of these readings but will learn much from them. This reader will encourage students to move from textbooks to study more independently and focus on subjects of their interest. Although students may not want (or need) to read this book in its entirety, they will be able to use it as a valuable tool to further their knowledge. The useful introductions, further reading and links to *Language in Use* make this a good resource book. Tutors will also be

able to incorporate the readings and exercises into both introductory and more advanced linguistics courses.

Natalie Braber

Nottingham Trent University

Ortega, L. (2009) Understanding Second Language Acquisition, London: Hodders Education, ISBN 9780340905593, 304 pages, £20

Understanding Second Language Acquisition is an eminently useful, thorough and elaborate overview of the most important debates in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The book aims to cover all the key areas of SLA from age and crosslinguistic influences to motivation and social dimensions of second language (L2) learning. Although the author considers graduate students as the book's main audience, it certainly is also a highly valuable resource for academics teaching and researchers investigating different aspects of SLA.

Understanding Second Language Acquisition is laid out in a well-organised and well structured manner. The language used is engaging and straight forward and the arguments are all cogent, coherent and at the appropriate level for the intended audience. As the book is organized in such a way that reading and understanding any individual chapter is independent of reading the others, readers with a range of aims and needs

will benefit from it. More frequent use of visual aids and information organizers such as tables and figures could have undoubtedly facilitated readers' interaction with the text and made the book more appealing.

The book is divided into 10 chapters, each with a careful summary of the research conducted in the corresponding area, an evaluation of the theoretical and/or methodological issues emerging from the research and a discussion of how the findings may be interpreted in the wider context of SLA. The final section of each chapter contains a succinct summary of the key points as well as suggestions for further reading.

In Chapter 1, Ortega successfully introduces SLA and situates it in a wider landscape of language sciences. Through defining the key terms and by illuminating the interdisciplinary nature of SLA, she portrays a meaningful and understandable picture of the field, highlights the differences between first language acquisition, bilingualism and SLA and discusses the challenges SLA faces. She briefly problematises the monolingual bias in contemporary SLA. However, she does not expand on this controversial topic in any more detail.

The amount and diversity of research evidence discussed in Chapter 2 implies that age has been a very attractive subject over the history of SLA. In this chapter, Ortega skilfully explains significant aspects of age in L2 learning and expands on issues such as critical and sensitive period, rate of L2 learning and ultimate attainment. Through an

analysis of classic examples of highly successful adult language learners, she argues that although achieving native-like levels of pronunciation and morphosyntax is not impossible, it might be extremely difficult for the majority of adult L2 learners. Issues central to evaluation of attainment, e.g. biases and challenges inherent in L2 testing and assessment, perhaps deserved a fuller discussion in this chapter.

Chapter 3 is a concise summary of 40 years of research on crosslinguistic influence on SLA. In this chapter, a number of universalities of L2 development including negation, question formation, and overuse and underuse are sufficiently and meaningfully discussed. Transfer is presented as a highly complex and multilayered phenomenon and readers are advised to take this complexity into account while dealing with it in SLA. An abundance of examples in this chapter certainly contributes to the readers' better understanding of the chapter.

Chapter 4, the linguistic environment, is built on discussions of how internal and external factors interact with and influence L2 learning. Drawing on a cognitive-interactionist perspective, Ortega argues that attitudes, input, interaction and output are the four important environmental ingredients of SLA. She contends that the list would only be complete if attention to form is also added. In this chapter she examines a number of interactional activities, e.g. negotiation for meaning and output modifications, and concludes that they

all facilitate psycholinguistic and metalinguistic processes in L2 learning provided they occur under optimal conditions.

Drawing on principles of an information-processing perspective, in Chapter 5 Ortega presents a succinct account of the role of cognition in SLA. Discussing processes such as proceduralization and automaticity and models such as limited capacity model of attention, the chapter opens new horizons to understanding how L2 learning takes place and how it develops. Despite their abstract and intricate nature, issues such as attention, awareness and symbolic and associative learning are clearly introduced and intelligibly discussed. Discussions of an emergentist perspective in this chapter, however, seem to be relatively restricted.

By looking into issues inherent in development of learner language, Chapter 6 conceptualizes the characteristics of interlanguage processes and provides readers with a valuable insight into “a tradition that emphasizes general cognitive explanations for the development of L2 morphology and syntax” (p. 141). The chapter highlights a range of differences between nativist and general cognitive perspectives to language learning, and challenges both by inviting them to find ways of examining and perhaps recognising learner language in its own right, rather than viewing it as an imperfect version of the target grammar.

Whilst Chapters 2 to 6 examine the universal influences and dimensions of L2 acquisition, Chapters 7 to 9 review individual characteristics of language learners, e.g. aptitude and motivation. In chapter 7, research on foreign language aptitude is presented and its prime principles and assumptions are introduced. The chapter further reviews the inherent problems in researching language aptitude, e.g. its partially known relationship with intelligence and learning difficulties. Given that research on L2 aptitude faces fundamental challenges including stakeholders’ resistance against its findings, the chapter seems perhaps a little too optimistic about the future of aptitude research.

Chapter 8 sets out to investigate a highly prolific area of investigation, i.e. motivation, and depicts it in its chronological journey over the past decades. The carefully discussed and lucidly presented summary of research on L2 motivation in this chapter is in my view one of the best in SLA literature.

Affect and other individual differences, e.g. personality, learning styles and learner orientation to communication are other aspects of SLA discussed in Chapter 9. Contrary to a common belief that recognizes individual differences as an area already exhausted, this overview demonstrates the substantial potential of this topic for SLA research.

The last chapter, Chapter 10, portrays the social turn in SLA and represents it by discussing its roots in social constructivism and socioculturalism. It

discusses a range of new horizons to L2 learning in the social context and concludes that language learning is never just about language; it is ultimately about transforming learners' lives. Although in this chapter crucial issues germane to social aspects of L2 learning such as identity, access, participation and power relationships are suitably discussed, the range and influence of the social dimensions of L2 learning implies that this area could have been examined in greater depth.

I agree with Ortega that "This book is about SLA, its findings and theories, its paradigms and its questions for the future" (p. 2). Additionally, this book is one of the few that thoroughly examines SLA for a graduate audience and is thus a welcome contribution to understanding the extent and depth of research in this area. I have no hesitation in suggesting that all universities with a TESOL, Modern Foreign Languages and/or Applied Linguistics group would find this book extremely valuable.

Parvaneh Tavakoli

London Metropolitan University

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