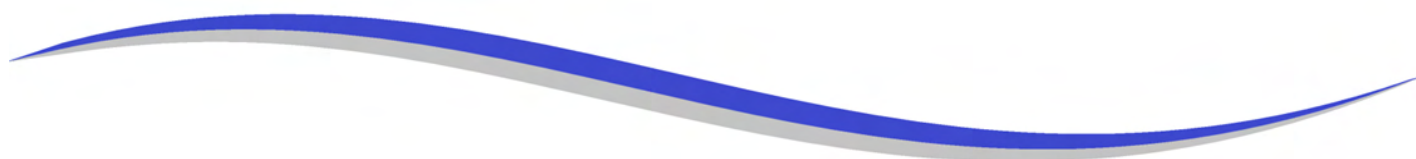




BAAL News

Issue 122
Spring 2023



British Association for Applied Linguistics

Promoting understanding of language in use.

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

Registered charity no. 264800



Editorial

Dear All,

This edition of BAAL News is a remarkable display of how BAAL members, in their various international contexts, continue to excel in their commitment to advancing research practices whilst enhancing the social value of our field.

At the beginning, you will find updates on the Annual Conference which will be hosted by the University of York, with renowned keynotes and other exciting activities. Furthermore, you will find a report from the Language, Gender, and Sexuality SIG sharing their new code of conduct in relation to EDI issues, which are at the heart of BAAL's mission and activities. The SIG illustrates the trajectory they undertook to arrive at these guidelines and welcome this as 'a positive addition to our already very supportive and welcoming community'. They also highlight that this work was conducted 'in a spirit of humility and openness, and welcome ongoing input and feedback'. Following from this, you will find a report from the Multilingualism SIG with updates on their AGM and recent elections. They also discuss their recent online event, *Heritage Language Maintenance in the UK*, which brought together several perspectives on the past, present, and possible future of community language schools in the UK.

In the next piece, Dr Declan Flanagan offers a highly critical appraisal of the ESOL provision in the island of Ireland and suggests areas for improvement in relation to the social integration of ESOL learners. This report is a passionate call for robust practices of social justice which may, in turn, grant better recognition to the lives of migrants in Ireland. Relatedly, the following report by Dr Elisebeth Barakos discusses the nature of multilingual and diverse classes in Germany mainstream education with critical emphasis on the German language support offered to non-German speaking students. This piece, too, puts the spotlight on issues of social justice and social inclusion. The next section features a discussion piece by Prof Ros Mitchell who draws on the Pit Corder lecture at the annual BAAL conference 2022 and revisits the history of applied linguistics with a focus on the diversity and vitality of our field.

Next, the new section, *Multilingualism In Focus*, comprises three engaging reports that deal directly with languages other than English and which, through their discursive nature, demonstrate the power of multilingualism in academic debates. In his Irish-infused write-up, Dr Colin Flynn offers a panorama of his research with emphasis on adult learners of Irish, unpacking the notions of motivation and attitude toward Irish and its linguistic varieties. In an exquisite mélange of Spanish and English, Dr Dario Banegas reports on a study which interrogated los muros epistemicos (the epistemic walls) that characterise our current research practices and concludes with questions and suggestions that may broaden our linguistic praxis within academic debates and knowledge exchange. Next, Ms Bérénice Darnault shares her personal and academic experience with multilingualism and navigates the fascinating complexity of her plurilingual repertoire by drawing on English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. In this piece, she also shares insights from her research on senior language learners' motivations.

The final section of this edition contains a PhD report by Ms Farida Alhjahmmed and a few book reviews which delve into critical debates about recent innovations in various research domains.

Putting together this edition of BAAL News has taught me that while our professional and/or personal lives may be complex and, at times, challenging; as members of a community of committed and just scholars, we have very good reason to persevere in our ambitions, goals, and visions. The work in this edition not only reminds us of the interdisciplinary value of our efforts but it truly pushes us to embrace or develop novel practices that will undoubtedly have transformative impact on our many research domains and society as a whole.

With warm wishes,

Sal Consoli

BAAL Conference - 2023

56th Annual Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics

23-25 August 2023



"Opening Up Applied Linguistics"

University of York, England, UK

We look forward to welcoming delegates to The University of York for the 56th BAAL Annual Conference. This year's conference theme is "Opening up Applied Linguistics". With this in mind, we aim to celebrate existing open research initiatives, which have led the way in transforming applied linguistics research by making it more accessible, transparent, reproducible and collaborative, to further realise principles of openness and inclusivity by representing a broader range of areas within applied linguistics, including but not limited to decolonizing language learning and teaching, language use in the digital age, and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and to create an accessible and inclusive conference environment.

Plenary Speakers

- Alison Phipps, University of Glasgow
- Meng Liu, University of Cambridge; Cylcia Bolibaugh, Emma Marsden, University of York
- Ibrar Bhatt, Queen's University Belfast
- Glenn Stockwell, Waseda University

Conference organisers

Zoe Handley, Ursula Lanvers, David O'Reilly, Volha Arkhipenka, Cylcia Bolibaugh, Giulia Bovolenta, Natalie Finlayson
Michelle Hunter, Emma Marsden, Junlan Pan, Nadia Mifka-Profozic

Conference email: admin@baalconference2023.com

Conference webpage: [BAAL Conference 2023 | University of York](#)



Creating a Code of Conduct for the Language, Gender and Sexuality SIG


Jai Mackenzie, (Newman University)

Given the often sensitive nature of our research, members of the language, gender and sexuality SIG have been considering for some time whether we need a more explicit set of guidelines around our events and activities. Above all, members have been keen to ensure that the group provides a welcoming space for all.

My election to the role of convenor in September 2021 coincided with BAAL's renewed emphasis on [equality, diversity and inclusion in Applied Linguistics](#). It also came at a time in which members of the LGBTQ+ community, more specifically its trans members, were facing increased threat and hostility. [A 2021 survey by TransActual](#), for example, revealed that the majority of their trans participants had experienced transphobia on social media and in the street. Within academic circles, a growing number of 'gender critical' individuals and groups were giving talks and publishing work that sought to discredit and deny trans identities, in favour of immutable sex-based roles. It seemed like the right time to move forward with a clear statement of the SIG's values, and a specific set of guidelines for upholding them.

After establishing ourselves as a new committee, we started to work on a code of conduct in mid-2022. We agreed that our key aim was to ensure all events and discussions were as safe, welcoming, inclusive and accessible as possible, with a particular emphasis on supporting our trans members, and the trans community more widely. We decided to separate our code of conduct, which would be a relatively short statement of values, from a set of event guidelines, which would include more detailed explication of how these values could be put into practice. Our events co-ordinator, Laura Coffey-Glover, volunteered to join me in the research and drafting process. Together, we took time to review existing codes and guidelines, consult relevant individuals and organisations, and reach out to SIG members for their input (which we did both at the start of the process, and after completing a first draft). We were very aware that, as a committee of four cisgender academics, our experiences were limited, and we were concerned not to make hasty assumptions about the needs of different groups, or the best ways of supporting them. At the same time, we did not want to overburden members of minority groups by directly asking for their input in the process.

One particularly useful source of information was Gendered Intelligence, a trans-led UK charity that seeks to 'increase understandings of gender diversity and improve trans people's quality of life' ([Gendered Intelligence 2022](#)). We accessed several resources from the Gendered Intelligence website, including a set of inclusive toilet signs, and guidelines on gender inclusion for frontline staff. We also approached the organisation directly, and were lucky that the director of professional and educational services, Simon Croft, volunteered to meet us. Several themes from our discussion with Simon came to feature prominently in our final code of conduct and event guidelines. For example, Simon underlined the importance, especially for such a small and valued community, of beginning from the assumption that everyone is *acting in good faith*. This was a significant point because we believe this is overwhelmingly the case with our members, and we did not want people to feel nervous about taking part in discussions. We therefore stated clearly, in both the code and guidelines, that members should join us in good faith and kindness, and assume that others are doing the same. We nevertheless followed this statement with explicit guidelines on what action should be taken by chairs and organisers if discussion is seen to be heading in a hostile direction.



We also talked through our concerns with Simon around the potential for the code and guidelines to be negatively received. We were aware that, in line with ‘gender critical’ views, some people perceive a conflict between the needs and rights of trans people, and those of women more generally. Further, some scholars take the view that ‘academic freedom’ should surpass concerns around discrimination and exclusion. Both viewpoints were antithetical to the position we took as a committee. Simon directed us to influential organisations (such as [the UN](#) and [Council of Europe](#)) who support the position that, as we phrased it in our code, ‘the barriers faced by women, girls and LGBTQ+ people are intersecting and mutually reinforcing’. He also pointed to the work of Grace Lavery, who discusses the important distinction between ‘academic freedom’ and ‘freedom of speech’ on [her blog](#). Those with a discerning eye may notice that our code of conduct anticipates and wards off potential critique on these matters, and our position is both influenced and supported by these resources.

Although this discussion has centred largely on making the SIG a safe and welcoming place for our transgender and non-binary members, our values extend to all members, especially those in minoritized groups. Our event guidelines seek to highlight issues that may affect the participation of members who are disabled, who have religious commitments, dietary requirements, or caring responsibilities, to give a few examples. We hope that the code and guidelines will be a positive addition to our already very supportive and welcoming community. Nevertheless, we enter this process in a spirit of humility and openness, and welcome ongoing input and feedback. On this note, we state explicitly at the start of both documents that they should be reviewed at least every three years, and we look forward to seeing how they are developed in the future.

You can access our code of conduct and event guidelines [here](#).

Additional resources we consulted:

[BAAL language policy SIG code of conduct](#)

[Blue Badge style website](#)

[Feminist Gender Equality Network \(FGEN\) code of conduct](#)

[Gender Identity Research and Education Society \(GIRES\) website](#)

[IGALA 11 safe space and inclusive participation guidelines](#)





BAAL Multilingualism Special Interest Group (SIG) Annual General Meeting and Annual Event

By Sara Ganassin (Newcastle University); Alexandra Georgiou (University of West London); Froso Argyri (University College London); Alexandra Shaitan (Birkbeck University)

The BAAL Multilingualism SIG aims to develop a community of researchers in applied and sociolinguistics with expertise in multilingualism and linguistic diversity. The promotion of multilingualism as an asset to the society is at the core of the activities of the SIG and it informs our activities and events. In this issue, we briefly report on our Annual General Meeting (AGM) as well as on the SIG online annual event “*Heritage Language Maintenance: identifying challenges across educational settings*” (December 2022).

Annual General Meeting

The Multilingualism SIG’s Annual General Meeting took place on the 4th of May 2022 and its eight members participated online (Siân Preece, Petros Karatsareas Lina Adinolfi, Salman Al-Azami, Effrosyni Argyri, Alexandra Georgiou, Sara Ganassin, and Alexandra Shaitan). During the meeting, the attendees thanked Petros Karatsareas and Siân Preece for setting up and leading the SIG successfully as well as Lina Adinolfi, Barbara Mayor and Salman Al-Azami for their generous support and contributions to the SIG committee as they stepped down formally at this point. The Chair presented the annual report for the year 2020-21; this was prepared by the committee and each member had the opportunity to report back and reflect on their responsibilities within the Committee. Also, the SIG members elected a new committee. The nominations were put to a vote and unanimously agreed. The new roles are presented below:

Convenor: Froso (Effrosyni) Argyri

Treasurer (acting) & Events Coordinator: Sara Ganassin

Membership/Communications Secretary (acting) & Ordinary member: Alexandra Shaitan

Ordinary member (website coordinator & social media): Alexandra Georgiou

It was agreed that the next AGM would be held in June or July 2023.

Heritage Language Maintenance in the UK

The online event that was held on the 8th December 2022 entitled “*Heritage Language Maintenance: identifying challenges across educational settings*” brought together 45 participants including researchers in applied linguistics and education, teachers, and members of the general public with an interest in heritage language maintenance. It focused on four keynote speakers where practitioners and researchers came together to talk about different aspects of community language education and heritage language maintenance. Amongst others, the definition of heritage language proposed by Cho et al. (1997) as: ‘the language associated with one’s cultural background and it may or may not be spoken in the home’ (p. 106), acknowledges how community members may feel a sense of affiliation to a certain language regardless of their proficiency.


The publication of the Swann Report in 1985 represented an important turning point in terms of heritage language maintenance. Although it explicitly advocated a 'multicultural approach' to be adopted by mainstream schools to tackle exclusion and underachievement of migrant and minority children, the Swann Report also recommended that ethnic minority communities should be directly responsible for transmitting their own languages and cultures (DES, 1985). In recent decades, studies on heritage language maintenance in the UK have highlighted a renewed and increased openness and interest within mainstream education in including these languages and cultures within their wider curriculum. However, it is evident that the responsibility for maintaining them still resides in community schools as independent institutions and it is, therefore, placed within the communities themselves (Ganassin, 2020).



As event organisers, we were interested in how community schools (also termed as heritage language, complementary and supplementary schools) play a central role in the lives of the communities who run them. We were also interested in discussing how these schools function as educational settings in their own right with potential to offer examples of 'good practice'. Our guest speakers, Dr Anthony Thorpe, Ms Maksi Anna Kozińska, Dr Jim Anderson and Ms Parvaneh Delavari, shared their research expertise on heritage language maintenance, the challenges that surround community-based programs, and possible ways forward.

Anthony Thorpe's (University of Roehampton) talk '*Researching leading and managing heritage language schools*' looked at the experiences of the schools through the lens of educational administration. Despite the fact that heritage language schools form a substantial sector within the UK education system, researchers have often neglected issues around management and leadership. The talk identified challenges for leading and managing these schools along with a research agenda to move things forward.

In his talk titled '*Heritage Language Maintenance: identifying challenges across educational settings*' Jim Anderson (Goldsmiths, University of London) explored new perspectives and opportunities that have emerged in recent years leading to a change in the mindset towards heritage languages. Rather than focussing exclusively on preserving heritage, an important shift is seen internationally towards notions of repertoire, multicompetency, inclusivity and plurilingual identities as reflected in recent research trends.



Speaking from a perspective of practitioner and researcher, Maksi Kozinska (Anglia Ruskin University) shared insights about '*Polish heritage language education in England – challenges and opportunities*'. According to the 2022 Census, Polish is the third most-spoken first language in English schools after English and Urdu. However, very few students decide to take formal examinations for which little support is often provided. The talk explored the perspectives of thirty A-level and GCSE Polish teachers from various Polish heritage language schools in England on the challenges they face, their needs, and their relationships with mainstream education.

Finally, in her talk '*Rustam School: a complementary school like no other*', researcher and teacher. Parvaneh Delevari (Rustam Persian School and Middlesex University) offered practical examples of teaching and activities at Rustam Persian School. She shared lessons learnt by the school and some of the challenges that Persian schools have encountered, including issues around the recognition of students' language skills through formal qualifications.

You can find a recording of the event as well as other resources on the [BAAL Multilingualism SIG website](#).

We look forward to seeing many BAAL members at our next event.

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ESOL Provision and Integration: An Island of Ireland Perspective

By Declan Flanagan (INTO Queen's University, Belfast).


Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) profession find themselves at the centre of political debates concerning citizenship, cohesion, and integration. The latter is constantly intertwined with post-Brexit educational and global displacement discourses and is conceptualised in different ways: indoctrination, empowerment, and emancipation (Brown, 2021: 875; See Table 1 Below). Taking Scotland as an example, Brown's emancipatory model is deemed best practice and underpins the Scottish National ESOL Strategy (2015) vision and objectives. However, Brown (2019) concedes that the impact of Scottish ESOL provision is primarily limited to the empowerment of individual learners and has little effect on addressing structural inequalities or injustices due to institutional factors.

Table 1. The emancipation continuum.

| Concept | Indoctrination | Empowerment | Emancipation |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| <i>Immigration Model</i> | Assimilation | Integration Through Social Capital | Inclusion |
| <i>Educational Approach</i> | Prescriptive Curriculum: Content selected to develop learners' capacities to meet the needs of dominant forces in society. | Needs-based Curriculum: Content aims to develop knowledge and skills that allows learners to reach their potential within existing power structures. | Co-created Curriculum: Learners identify/select content that allows them to critically engage with existing societal structures, and develop skills to effect change. |
| <i>Features</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pre-determined content and outcomes -Tasks socialise learners into subordinate positions -Existing structures/values presented as positive -Teacher dispenses knowledge as dictated by syllabus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Content selected to develop skills for life, work and further study -Tasks relate to real-world situations and address learners' practical needs -Little/no critical engagement with social justice issues -Teacher dispenses knowledge according to perceived learner needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Content negotiated between learners and teacher -Tasks develop critical thinking skills -Learners encouraged to identify and challenge social injustices -Learning is multidirectional, between students and teacher and also among students |



Mishan (2019) states that the Republic of Ireland (ROI), having observed the experiences of so-called multiculturalism with diverse cultural influences in the UK and Scandinavia, is doubtful of embracing an emancipatory form of integration. Instead, a more acceptable understanding of integration, along with an emphasis on English language proficiency, recognises the rights of migrants to express their own culture in a manner that does not conflict with the fundamental values reflected in the Irish constitution and law. This would indicate an interpretation of the 'two-way process' model that retains a more traditional, indoctrinated, assimilative nature. Given the island of Ireland's history of famine, war, emigration and diaspora, it would not be inaccurate to suggest it could generate recognition of refugees and asylum seekers as politically and economically persecuted Irish of other times. In addition, its perceived, self-professed long history of refugee protection has the potential to create relationships of consonance, rather than dissonance, between 'Irish' national identity and potential others, that might foster unconditional hospitality grounded in "national collective experience". This, however, is not the case due to a competing discourse of 'Irish' exceptionality that has found traction and therefore convenes some refugees and most asylum seekers into the same category. A distinction has been made between an industrious 'Irish' diaspora that contributed positively to nation-building (America, UK) and non-European refugees, proliferated by media, as deficient, opportunistic cheats, spongers – come to capitalise upon a post-conflict, prosperous island of Ireland.




The arrival and prompt support of Ukrainian refugees would strengthen this argument due to the growing discussion of a two-tier refugee system (global refugees versus Ukrainians) taking hold, with media and politicians proclaiming that given the Island of Ireland's history of grief and loss, Ukrainians should be embraced as diaspora, 'new Irish' not refugees. Providing only targeted support to [new-geo-political] refugees seems paradoxical, given one group of beneficiaries appears privileged in providing integration services and support over other groups, despite similar needs.

Flanagan and O'Boyle, (2021) identify ESOL provision as "fundamental" to community integration and social cohesion, recommending a significant increase in funding. However, as an enabler of integration, ESOL remains ineffective - its potential to move beyond an educational vacuum and bring about real educational and subsequent social and economic change is not being understood, considered, or recognised North or South. ESOL continues to be entrenched and marginalised, struggling to establish and define itself as a distinctive skill. Therefore, its conventional perception as a complementary educational subcategory compared to core academic strands (primary, secondary, tertiary and ESL) prevails (Flanagan and O'Boyle, 2021). The existing provisions - lacking policy and strategy, enable those with low language proficiency levels to be pathologised and viewed as deficient and individuals' funds of knowledge (skills, knowledge, work experience) are of minimal value and overlooked.

Both ESOL landscapes reflect and facilitate an assimilationist form of integration, where adult learner needs are ignored, there is a lack of accountability, and learning is a choice, and learners take full responsibility for their education. As a result, ESOL provision continues to manifest and be contextualised within an EFL/ESL context targeting middle-class, aspiring standard English users, modelled on white 'Irish' speakers from the global northern hemisphere and is assessed through conformity to white, middle-class ways of speaking and writing (Badwan 2022). In addition, teaching methods and approaches are developed in the 'Global North'; the teaching focuses on aspirational, neo-liberal, anti-collective/community, care-free topics in textbooks with glossy designs. Its theoretical tools are constructs developed in a narrow range of contexts, generalised to the rest of the world as grand theories and universal truths (Badwan 2021). Finally, its ontological stance views English as an idealised monolithic system that can be imagined as an 'industrial skill'. As ESOL practitioners, it is necessary to be made aware of and question the conditions under which it becomes possible, acceptable and considered communicatively competent to continue to be dictated by reductive ideologies. These ideologies regress to constructs, i.e., ideal/monolingual 'native speaker' linguistic prescriptivism, outdated, often radicalised notions of appropriateness. This denies many learners access to power, deprives them of voice, renders their identities and histories invisible, and creates dangerous 'literacy monsters' that shame and demotivate learners and ultimately push them out of the education system (Badwan 2021). Therefore, it is critical future ESOL policies and strategies, North and South, focus on equality and equity of opportunity – acknowledging what is required is an approach that negates the conditions in which ESOL learners are not just living but learning, growing and rebuilding their lives.

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“SprabÜ – Sprachliche Bildung am Übergang von Vorbereitungs- zu Regelklasse” Language education during the transition from preparatory to mainstream class: students in lower-secondary education in Germany

By Elisabeth Barakos (University of Hamburg)

Project duration: 01.01.2020 – 31.12.2022, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). [Project Webpage](#)

Although migration does not represent an unknown phenomenon for the German education system, new migration from 2015 onwards has presented schools and teachers with challenges over how to best educate newly arrived students with little or no knowledge of German. In response to these migration trends, Germany has introduced and expanded the provision of preparatory classes. In Hamburg, these newly arrived students attend so-called international preparatory classes (IVK) which offer support German language education for about a year before they transition into the monolingually-oriented regular school system. Such classes are highly heterogenous in nature and constitute a vital space for social and multilingual learning (Barakos & Plöger 2020). At the same time, they constitute a segregated and exclusionary form of schooling. The subsequent transition to regular class is considered particularly challenging from an educational, linguistic, and social justice perspective and may merit further investigation.

Taking the case of preparatory classes of two district schools in socially disadvantaged areas of Hamburg, the SprabÜ project investigates the transitions from preparatory to mainstream classes, with a particular focus on language learning. On the one hand, the study focuses on the language learning opportunities the schools implement for the students; on the other hand, the study tracks students’ practices and experiences with a focus on how they can make use of the linguistic repertoires they bring to school, as well as teachers’ perspectives and practices in navigating the heterogenous IVK classroom. The project uses a reflexive institutional-ethnographic approach (Plöger & Barakos 2021) that problematises and visualises the various voices and practices of social actors (e.g., teachers, students, social workers) engaged in these complex transition processes. SprabÜ uses ethnographic research methods (i.e., participant observation, informal conversations, qualitative interviews, learning materials, photos) to investigate which perspectives, practices, and structural conditions underlie and influence the design of language education and the transition from preparatory to mainstream classes.

The study provides in-depth insights into the pedagogical and didactic approaches of qualified teachers who design IVK lessons for students with complex educational and social trajectories and varied socio-emotional needs. We document a range of strategies that teachers employ to create a non-discriminatory and inclusive learning environment in an exclusionary setting. Such strategies include multilingual teaching and learning, differentiated instruction, and partial integration of students into mainstream classes. At the same time, the results point to the structural limitations of the pedagogical work of committed IVK teachers. There is considerable lack of qualified human resources and time allocated to IVKs, which, in turn, requires enormous socio-emotional care and language work for these teachers to remedy the existing structural challenges that underlie the school system (Barakos 2022). There is also evidence of institutional discrimination generated by this segregated IVK system that runs parallel to mainstream class.

The reconstruction of students’ transition processes has shown that it is often not German language skills or the length of time spent in the IVK classes that determine the point of entry into a mainstream class. Rather, it is structural barriers such as the school’s capacity, group sizes, teachers’ readiness, and mutual agreement and accountability within school management that deny full student inclusion.

In a comparative study (Plöger 2022), it became clear that an inclusive model, in which new arrival students attend a regular class from the beginning and are thus completely immersed into the mainstream system, holds potential for overcoming institutional discrimination. The prerequisite for such a model of schooling is an inclusive approach to teaching development that serves the needs of all students, including those who are just starting to learn German, thereby enabling all students to participate in learning and fulfil their potential.



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Discussion piece: *Relating to our History*

By Ros Mitchell (University of Southampton)

In February 2022, BAAL officers joined in a celebration for Pit Corder, our first Chair, who studied modern languages at Oxford, drove a Friends (i.e. pacifist) ambulance during World War 2, taught English abroad for the British Council until 1961, and then developed academic applied linguistics in Leeds and Edinburgh. Through the efforts of colleagues at York St John University, a commemorative blue plaque was unveiled at his York birthplace, as described by Rachel Wicaksono in the Summer 2022 BAAL News. The plaque describes Corder as having “inspired generations of English language teachers and researchers”.

Corder is, of course, also commemorated through the Pit Corder Lecture, delivered at each BAAL annual conference. However, the abstract for the 2022 Lecture, by Prof Ahmar Mahboob of the University of Sydney, presented a very different perspective:


“The field of Applied Linguistics has been hostage to special interest groups. One evidence of this is in the employment histories of the many fathers and mothers of Applied Linguistics. Most served with their government agencies to expand the dominance of English and their nations across the globe, before they went back home and set up their own Departments and Disciplines of Applied Linguistics, SLA, TESOL etc.

“Today, while voices of resistance and change are rising and we are seeing new subfields like translanguaging and dynamic approach emerge, the profession – and the professional organisations – remain largely funded by and a tool of a few special interest groups, including (but not limited to), government (including military), publication industry, and other corporations.” (BAAL Conference Booklet 2022, p. 7)

Prof Mahboob did not repeat these comments in his actual Belfast lecture. However, they challenge all of us both to reflect on our history and the place within it of individual scholars, and also on our relationship with our own professional context today, especially at a time when applied linguists are turning more attention to issues of social justice and inclusion.

Regarding our history, it is clear that British applied linguistics has roots in early 20th century English language teaching in the Empire and beyond (Howatt & Smith, 2014). Following World War 2, and through the end of Empire, the British government aimed to promote the English language as a soft-power asset (as continues today). Thus, the British Council was encouraged to reorient itself away from promotion of cultural links, toward English language education in the Commonwealth and other areas of the developing world (Donaldson, 1984). Selected universities were encouraged to develop departments of applied linguistics so as to professionalise the teaching of English worldwide (Phillipson, 1992). The School of Applied Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh was founded in 1957, and was later directed by Pit Corder, who worked there from 1964-1983, attracted a very influential academic team and taught successive cohorts of language educators who returned to senior positions internationally. Most of these educators were of course concerned with English, THE language of globalization in the later 20th century.

But does this background mean that the “fathers and mothers” of BAAL were individually nationalist and imperialist in outlook, as Mahboob suggests? The evidence is different. Many of this group had been profoundly influenced by active service in World War 2, whether as Quaker ambulance drivers (Pit Corder, Peter Strevens) or as soldiers (e.g. John Trim or Eric Hawkins). The autobiography of Eric Hawkins “Listening to Lorca” (1999) is imbued with commitment to education as a means of supporting egalitarian democratic values. This group’s commitment to European integration is seen in their early work for AILA (Strevens, Trim, Corder), and long engagement with the languages projects of the Council of Europe (Trim). From 1978-1984, numerous applied linguists joined in the work of the National Congress on Languages in Education (NCLE), initiated by CILT directors Perren and Trim. The goals of NCLE were to promote language across the school curriculum in the UK, connecting language education policies for English, for foreign languages, and for newer heritage languages, and promoting the concept of “language awareness”.



And what of the intellectual contributions of early UK applied linguists? They generally shared a “functionalist” perspective on language itself, and saw its potential for the democratization of access to language learning, through innovations in both curriculum design (as in Council of Europe “Threshold Level” projects: Trim, Wilkins) and in pedagogy (the “Communicative Approach”: Henry Widdowson, Keith Johnson, Christopher Brumfit). The “interlanguage” perspective on SLA developed by Pit Corder saw language development as driven by communicative need, and learner language as systematic from the beginning, abandoning views of learner language as deficient and errorful. Constructs of “Standard English” and the “native speaker” were problematised (Davies, 1991) and multilingualism promoted (NCLE). It is hard to read all of this as a straightforward commitment to the “dominance of English”.

Some of the relative failures of early British applied linguists are also instructive, regarding their relationship with government and power. From the beginning, they were keen to innovate in language education at home. The pioneering 1960s Schools Council project “Language in Use” introduced a functionalist study of language to the school curriculum (where “English” at the time was uniquely literary). While NCLE had tried to promote an integrated view of language, the eventual 1980s National Curriculum retained “hard” subject boundaries. However, again, applied linguists tried to contribute to the subject “English” in particular, engaging with successive investigations into the teaching of knowledge about language (e.g. Henry Widdowson, Michael Stubbs). In the early 1990s, teachers of “English” were still mostly literature graduates; applied linguist Ron Carter was commissioned by the government to direct the “Language in the National Curriculum” (LINC) project developing trainee teachers’ understanding of language. Nonetheless, the resulting sociolinguistically informed materials were condemned as insufficiently focused on Standard English, and never distributed (Carter, 1996). Subsequently, applied linguists have had very limited and intermittent influence on school curricula and language teacher education policy in England, in striking contrast to ongoing engagement through our students with education issues internationally.

British applied linguistics has evolved considerably since the decades briefly described here, moving beyond a dominant concern with language teaching and learning and addressing a wider range of language-related social issues alongside (as seen for instance in the Belfast 2022 programme). In higher education, as for all other humanities/social sciences, support for the discipline no longer derives mainly from core UK government funding (nor indeed from publishers or other “corporations”, as suggested by Mahboob).

Instead, the marketisation of HE means that much funding comes from international student fees (largely TESOL-related). As individual applied linguists, whatever our research interests or social engagement, we have to acknowledge that like our “fathers and mothers”, much of our professional vitality does derive from Global English, and from a funding model unhelpful to either social or linguistic diversity. Yet within that evolving broader sociopolitical context, there was, and is, space for reflection on our personal and professional values and potential agency, which applied linguists have exercised from the beginning. Contemporary applied linguists do not have a monopoly of “voices of resistance and change”.

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Multilingualism In Focus

Foghlaimoirí fásta i gcomhthéacs mionteangacha

Adult learners in minority language contexts


By Colin Flynn (Dublin City University)

Déanaim plé san alt beag seo ar an ábhar taighde is mó a mbím ag obair air: foghlaimoirí fásta na Gaeilge. Déanaim plé ar mo chúlra féin san ábhar, an taighde atá déanta agam agus an tábhachta atá leis an taighde i gcomhthéacs foghlaimoirí mionteanga agus a ról i bpróisis athneartaithe teanga.

In this short piece I discuss the research topic that I work on most: adult learners of Irish. I discuss my own background in relation to the subject, the research I have conducted on adult learners of Irish, and the importance of this research in the context of adult minority language learners and their role in language revitalisation processes.

A major theme in my research – and sadly not in that of many others – is the process of learning a minority language in adulthood. Much of my work to date has been focused on adult learners of Irish, but I have also discussed (Flynn, 2020, Chapter 1-2) and co-investigated (Flynn et al., 2016) the learning and teaching of other minority languages. A constant across much of this work is that I have conducted my research within the field that is now called the Psychology of Language Learning (PLL), focussing on L2 attitude and motivation. I did my PhD research before PLL was established as a subfield of Applied Linguistics and I, therefore, claimed Social Psychology of Language (SPL) as my academic subdomain. A major difference between these two fields is that most researchers associated with the former (PLL) are applied linguists while those in the latter (SPL) are psychologists by training (Al-Hoorie et al., 2021). In my own case, however, my postgraduate research was supervised by a psycholinguist who was interested in classroom second language learning, particularly in language revitalisation contexts. To complicate matters, my research investigated L2 attitude and motivation (in the Applied Linguistics/SLA sense) and language attitudes (in the SPL/Sociolinguistic sense), and was necessarily at the interface of Applied Linguistics and Social Psychology of Language. *Ón tús, bhí mo chuid taighde ar an teorainn idir an teangeolaíocht fheidhmeach agus an tsíceolaíocht shóisialta teanga. Bhí seo amhlaidh de thairbhe mo thaithí teagaisc, an oiliúint a fuair mé mar iarchéimí agus mo chuid suimeanna taighde. Tá fo-réimse nua ann anois sa Teangeolaíocht Fheidhmeach, Síceolaíocht na Foghlama Teanga, a chuimsíonn níos fearr na réimsí taighde a mbím ag plé leo.*

Why adult learners? Generally speaking, research in language revitalisation and maintenance contexts tends to focus on school-aged learners and educational policy. Indeed, there is a lot of work on immersion education and language acquisition among students within such schools. Clearly, children are an important cohort and the emphasis on ensuring they learn minority languages is not misplaced. However, they are not the only ones learning minority languages. In every language revitalisation context I am aware of, adult learners form a sizeable portion of those actively engaged in learning the language in question. Indeed, adult learners probably have a clearer understanding of the import of their efforts to develop a proficiency in the language of their choice. In many cases, adult learners who attend courses by choice are, to some extent, in a position to make informed decisions regarding course types, teachers, materials, etc. based on their own preferences and experience. This may have an impact on their motivation and ultimate success in language learning. *Is grúpa ar leith iad foghlaimoirí fásta i gcomhthéacsanna mionteanga mar go ndéanann siad cinneadh iad féin an teanga a (ath)fhoghlaim. Is minic a bhíonn inspreagadh láidir iontu agus is féidir leo dul chun cinn mór a dhéanamh san fhoghlaim dá bharr sin.*



Prior to working in academia, I spent approximately 10 years teaching Irish to adults, as well as designing course materials for them. I taught evening language courses in Dublin and, in the summer months, I taught week-long immersion courses for adults in the Donegal *Gaeltacht* (Irish-speaking region) of Gleann Cholm Cille. During that time, I taught learners from all over the country and from around the world. I gained invaluable insights into the ups and downs of the learning process, and the myriad outcomes of time spent learning the language. That experience fostered my desire to understand the language learning process in adults and to document it empirically, and it led me to write MPhil and PhD theses on aspects of the psychology of minority language learning in adulthood. One (somewhat) surprising result of this work is that it reveals that many adult learners do not engage in learning Irish in order to use the language communicatively:


“Learners with a cultural investment in the Irish language may not be motivated by the desire to integrate into the Irish language speech community. Rather, they may seek the cultural experience associated with language learning and re-investing in their cultural heritage.”

(Flynn & Harris, 2016: 382)

The findings from this research are surprising because they would appear to contradict the generally accepted aims of language revitalisation efforts, i.e. to promote communicative use of the minority language. It should be noted, however, that quite some years ago Singleton (1987) argued for broadening our understanding of communicative needs in the case of Irish. Nonetheless, perhaps the above finding and conclusion drawn by Flynn and Harris (2016) is not all that surprising, since similar findings have emerged from research on adult learners of another minority language, namely Scottish Gaelic (Edwards, 1994; MacLeod et al., 2015).

Another aspect of the Irish language research context is the fact that there is no standard spoken variety of the language. There are three main regional dialects, and many subdialects within them. While some levelling has occurred in recent decades, these spoken varieties are still quite distinct from one another in terms of phonology, syntax, and lexicon. There is a standard written variety *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil* [The Official Standard], but it is just that – a written standard! Despite the potential challenges this variation in the spoken language poses for language teaching and learning, teachers tend to uphold traditional views on language authenticity, i.e. traditional, *Gaeltacht* Irish is more authentic than L2 or ‘new speaker’ varieties (Ó Murchadha & Flynn, 2018, 2022). My PhD research, which was published as a monograph (*Adult Minority Language Learning: Motivation, Identity and Target Variety: Multilingual Matters*, 2020), was a multimethod study of adult learners’ awareness of and orientation towards different varieties of Irish as language learning targets. Though the results were complex and nuanced, I found that adult learners also attach prestige to the traditional regional varieties of Irish, even if they are not actively aiming to acquire the features of any one of them (Flynn, 2020).

The number of adult learners of minority languages may be small in comparison to school-aged learners. Irish is a compulsory subject at primary and secondary level so it is learned as a second/additional language by almost every child in the State. Furthermore, 6-7% of school aged children attend an Irish-medium school. Nevertheless, many scholars have argued that they represent an important group for language revitalisation efforts since they can substantially increase the number of speakers of minority or threatened languages, they may transmit the languages to children, and as employers/employees, they may give the language a purpose and function (Baker et al., 2011).



Importantly, adult learners are mentioned in language revitalisation and maintenance policy in Ireland. For example, it is stated in the *Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge* [20-year Strategy for Irish]:

Tabharfar tuilleadh deiseanna do dhaoine fásta ar suim leo an teanga a fhoghlaim nó cur lena gcumas Gaeilge a labhairt. Déanfar clár foghlama Gaeilge a bheidh creidiúnaithe do dhaoine fásta agus déanfaidh sé freastal ar gach leibhéal mar an clár foghlama teanga náisiúnta comhaontaithe.

[Additional opportunities will be afforded to adults interested in learning the language or in increasing their ability to speak Irish. An accredited adult Irish language learning programme, catering for all levels, will be recognised as the agreed national Irish language-learning programme.]

(Rialtas na hÉireann, 2010: 16)

Adult Irish-language instruction is provided mainly through private sector schools in the form of evening classes. Some of these schools receive State funding, but there have been very few serious initiatives to capitalise on the potential of adult learners to aid in the revitalisation of Irish in the way it has been done in Wales, for example. Additional attention to adult learners of Irish in Applied Linguistics research, as well as language policy and planning work in Ireland would go some way to further our understanding of the role these learners might play in the future of the language. *Déantar neamart go minic i bhfoghlaimoirí fásta mar chainteoirí a d'fhéadfadh a chur go mór le próiseas athneartaithe mionteangacha. Dá bharr seo, tá gá le tuilleadh taighde i réimse na Teangeolaíochta Feidhmí ar fhoghlaimoirí fásta na Gaeilge agus obair a chuireann san áireamh iad i mbeartas agus i bpleanáil teanga in Éirinn.*

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Publishing in languages other than English? How fabulous would that be!

By Darío Luis Banegas (University of Edinburgh)

This brief reflective piece is a bit of an after-thought on a study I carried out in South America in 2021 that sought to explore the working conditions, (de)motivations, and publishing experiences of South American English Language Teaching professionals writing in English for publication. First, I offer a summary of the study before I move on to pose some questions that seek to provoke working on counter-hegemonic, inclusive, and plurilingual ways of contributing to knowledge generation and dissemination in applied linguistics and languages education.

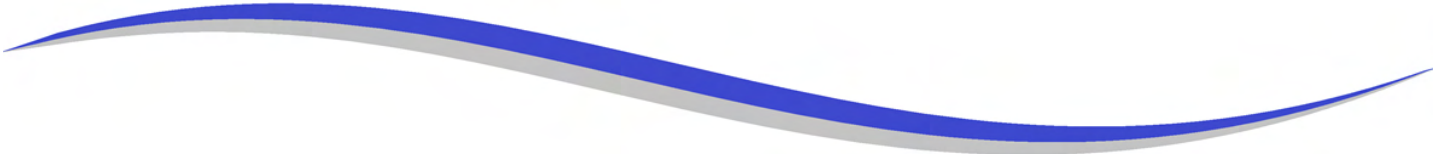
Este breve artículo reflexivo es una especie de ocurrencia tardía sobre un estudio que llevé a cabo en Sudamérica en 2021 el cual buscó explorar las condiciones laborales, las (de)motivaciones, y experiencias de publicación de profesionales sudamericanos de la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa. Primeramente, ofrezco un resumen del estudio para luego arrojar preguntas que buscan interpelar la ejecución de modos contra-hegemónicos, inclusivos, y plurilingües de contribuir a la generación y diseminación de conocimiento en la lingüística aplicada y la educación en lenguas.

Primero, lo primero. Desde hace unos años que vengo indagando en la circulación del conocimiento en English Language Teaching en Sudamérica a través de publicaciones (por ejemplo ver Banegas & Cad, 2021). Creo que forma parte de mi interés, what other people would call agenda or strategy (word I truly despise) de alentar la publicación entre colegas latinoamericanos en revistas de alto impacto (I cite you, you cite me... boom! impact). De hecho creo que muchas de mis publicaciones, por ejemplo artículos, book chapters, edited volumes, y special issues (e.g., Banegas & Sanchez, 2023) siempre cuentan con colegas de aquellas zonas. However, this is fortunately far from original as I am aware of other colleagues/crusaders whose work goes in the same direction such as the amazing Profile Journal, the Special Issue guest-edited by Viana et al. (2021), the review articles on Argentina (e.g., Porto et al., 2021), or the empirical articles on writing groups authored by Rodas et al. (2021) and Colombo and Rodas (2021), to name a few.

Como consecuencia de mi interés, en 2021 llevé a cabo una investigación exploratoria con María Elisa Romano (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina) para comprender las condiciones de trabajo, (de)motivaciones, y experiencias de profesionales de la enseñanza del inglés como lengua adicional trabajando en educación superior en Sudamérica que publican/buscan publicar en inglés. Nuestro estudio se centró en profesionales para quienes el inglés es una lengua adicional. Mediante la utilización de métodos mixtos (encuesta seguida de entrevistas) recolectamos información de 522 participantes de Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay, y Venezuela. El estudio reveló datos interesantísimos a nivel regional; los mismos serán publicados a la brevedad en un artículo escrito...en inglés (Oh, the irony!). However, and this is what I would like to discuss here, two key findings caught our attention:

From the 488 participants who said that they had published an article/review/book/book chapter/short piece in conference proceedings between 2001 and 2021, just 9.01% said that these were always in English. This shows that these English-as-an-additional-language TESOL professionals exhibit plurilingual publishing practices which, in turn, means that their contribution to the field is not only in English. How many of us can say the same?

Los resultados también arrojaron que de los 522 encuestados, 424 dijeron que les interesaría publicar/continuar publicando en las siguientes lenguas: inglés (54.07%), español (38.89%), portugués (5.1%), y guaraní (0.37%). Nuevamente, estos resultados junto con otros de la muestra indican que los participantes no se “mueren” por publicar en English-medium (high-impact) journals porque priorizan la diseminación de sus investigaciones y casos de buenas prácticas entre sus pares en la región. In other words, for them impact is contributing to the regional teaching and research communities because they share the same concerns.



In an Anglophone-dominated system that seems to privilege hegemonic logos and certain languages to the detriment of other cosmovisiones y lenguas, which may lead to what Cadman (2017) calls epistemic erasure, what can we do (apart from us sustaining it and sometimes reproducing it)? Here are some questions, ideas, examples, provocations:

1. Could journals be more multilingual? For example, Language Awareness encourages authors to include an abstract in another language apart from the one in English. The Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics, a journal that until now has solely published in English, has recently announced that it will accept submissions entirely written in Spanish.
2. ¿Estamos nosotros dispuestos a escribir diferentes tipos de comunicaciones (o brindar presentaciones, podcasts, entrevistas) en más de una lengua en proporciones (casi) iguales?
3. ¿Podríamos desde BAAL lanzar una iniciativa donde se invite a autores a producir infografías sobre sus artículos en más de una lengua?
4. Could we include in our own publications more references in other languages? (Just looked at my references in this piece and I'm clearly not walking the talk!)

Are we ready to contribute to knowledge dissemination by submitting manuscripts to (open access) journals outside the big tables? (As a lecturer based at a UK university, I am aware that this is not exactly what my employer wants even when the social justice rhetoric would say otherwise. La lista no es exhaustiva, y la tomo más como una nota mental de lo que yo mismo debería hacer y así evitar el consabido “Consejos vendo, pero para mí no tengo”. If we firmly believe in knowledge democracy and flow and equity across knowledge economies, we could contribute to engaging in actions that not only support open scholarship (Liu et al., 2022) but also facilitate language inclusiveness so that publications (and knowledge!) do not remain behind a language wall (we have paywalls which are nothing compared to language walls and muros epistémicos). Ojalá podamos de a poco crear de manera colectiva condiciones que nos permitan jugar con las lenguas y acompañar procesos emancipadores que nos interpelen...tal como hacen los colegas sudamericanos de nuestro estudio.

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Reflecting on the practice of multilingualism in a narrative study.

By Bérénice Darnault (University of Barcelona)


As Dr Simon Coffey brilliantly put it in the previous issue (BAAL News 121), this new section is for us, researchers in applied linguistics, an opportunity to reflect on – et refléter – more concretely our practical reality, that of borrowing words and concepts from other languages daily. My hope is to see this practice of multilingualism flourish in the same way as our multi-disciplinary research community continuously seeks and celebrates with a permanent enthusiasm the power of words and ideas beyond linguistic borders and across fields.

Multilingualism pervades our professions and life inasmuch as it pervades our students' histories with languages. Its practice often cognitively helps us develop multiple approaches across the course of our life, whether in research or teaching, for instance, as I can recall in my own case as a university student, and more recently as a researcher. Durante mis años universitarios, and prior to my doctorate, todavía recuerdo discusiones fascinantes con amigos británicos apasionados por los idiomas, y con los cuales solíamos buscar equivalentes en inglés de palabras extranjeras. Recuerdo que nunca encontramos ninguna resolución definitiva a las traducciones del verbo *flâner*, en francés, ni tampoco de la palabra *saudade*, en portugués, cuyas experimentaciones emocionales y físicas probablemente ofrecen la mejor definición. La práctica del multilingüismo así mismo en las esferas profesional y personal, siempre me pareció un instrumento para facilitar la comprensión de conceptos culturales, aún más clave cuando esos no pueden ser traducidos de manera satisfactoria, y cuya complejidad no siempre se puede explicar en una misma lengua. En nuestra esfera académica, teorías utilizadas y descritas en un mismo idioma (generalmente en inglés) tampoco no tienen, en su mayoría, equivalentes en otros idiomas. Espero que esta sección prometedora permita la transmisión de teorías y la difusión de nuevas investigaciones en varios idiomas y contextos lingüísticos. D'ailleurs, je ne remercierai jamais assez l'éditeur de ce numéro de me permettre de m'essayer à cet exercice.

Multilingualism also reminds me of our community's mindful commitment to research on the practice of languages in a multidimensional and cross-disciplinary way. I have tried to embrace such endeavours in my own narrative study on the lifelong language learning trajectories of three highly motivated senior language users. La souplesse et l'élasticité de nos professions nous amènent souvent à voyager d'un monde lexical et cognitif à un autre, dans une même langue ou dans plusieurs autres, tout comme à enjamber une diversité de domaines de recherche à la fois qui s'étendent bien au-delà de la linguistique, qu'elle soit théorique ou appliquée. Une élasticité linguistique et conceptuelle à laquelle je me suis moi-même attelée au cours de mon doctorat auprès de trois retraités français multilingues très motivés en langues, devenus mes sujets de recherche durant quatre années.

According to my literature review, there had been no previous attempts to understand third age language learning motivation through the narrative prism of individual lifelong success stories. This could be explained by the general scarcity of studies related to third age language learning, the conflicting theories on ageing at a social, biological, psychological, and philosophical level (Derenowski, 2021), and the little-known yet emerging micro-phenomena of language classrooms and informal language conversation meetings targeted at seniors. Todos os três candidatos do meu estudo, cada um com mais de 65 anos, tinham a especificidade de terem praticado, manuseado, amado e desgostado de várias línguas ao longo das suas vidas até atingirem, uma vez reformados, um limiar elevado e estável de motivação contínua na aprendizagem em geral, e mais particularmente, na aprendizagem das línguas. Un phénomène que je pensais rare mais qui avait au contraire pris de l'ampleur avec l'essor des Universités du Troisième Age partout en Europe (University of the Third Age or U3A in the UK), et notamment grâce à la mise en place des nouvelles politiques européennes centrées sur l'éducation (lifelong education) et le bien-être des seniors (European Commission, 2022).

I once used to teach English to French native seniors looking for private conversation classes outside traditional classrooms. Tour à tour, ils m'ont embarquée dans leur propre espace créatif de découvertes linguistiques qu'ils remodelaient à la force d'un enthousiasme enfantin, vagabond et indéfectible.



A chaque nouvelle séance, ils me proposaient une sorte de jeu de l'oie multilingue, où spontanéité des thèmes de conversation se mélangeait à la mixité des langues. Au cours de mes années passées à leur côté, les enseignements se sont inversés et mutualisés, et j'ai eu droit à des cours improvisés d'allemand et d'italien, y compris de vieux patois piémontais que mon élève doyenne, alors âgée de 80 ans, avait l'habitude d'employer plus jeune, un pied en Italie, un pied en France. Si mes élèves étaient férus d'anglais, ils étaient aussi et par-dessus tout transportés par le vœu profond de raconter une multiplicité d'identités à travers leurs histoires personnelles, celles d'être multilingues et multiples, tant par leurs passions, que par leurs chemins entrepris et la diversité de leurs choix actuels d'apprentissage.

Fascination for those lifelong motivated multilingual learners, and especially for their sustained motivational behavioural patterns over a lifetime, shaped the contours of my inquiry, and led me to explore this micro phenomenon of motivated foreign language senior users through a longitudinal paradigm. I aimed to understand what had maintained their motivation high over the span of a whole life. As such, I conceived language learning in dynamic, process-oriented terms, with its variability and situatedness, including its motivational and 'temporary ups and downs'. Identifying the remit of successful multiple language learning ecologies and sustainable language learning motivation inevitably had to be rooted in my participants' personal life stories.

Not only were the interviews an opportunity to practise multilingualism with my participants, but also to explore a myriad of topics and fields beyond applied linguistics. Mêlant allers retours linguistiques en français, en anglais et parfois même dans leur patois régional, étudier ces personnalités fortes m'a permis de parcourir plusieurs domaines. J'ai donc navigué des neurosciences, pour comprendre leurs capacités cognitives à pratiquer des langues grâce à leur plasticité cérébrale acquise au fil du temps, à la psychologie et la gérontologie, pour entendre leur cheminement personnel et leur motivation de longue haleine tout au long de leurs histoires personnelles, et que j'ai pris soin d'enregistrer à l'occasion de plusieurs séances d'écoute et d'entretiens.

Participants of my narrative study all experienced waves and peaks of motivation across their lives, driven by Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs) (e.g., Muir, 2020). Mus par une motivation à toute épreuve et qui avait surgit par vagues et par courants au fil des années de pratique et d'expérience linguistiques, les trois candidats avaient accumulé suffisamment de 'pics motivationnels' et d'expériences positives pour les maintenir et les archiver dans une sorte de réservoir motivationnel, fonctionnant de façon autonome et s'auto-alimentant par plusieurs facteurs identitaires formés avec le temps, dont un goût prononcé pour l'insubordination (Thompson, 2017) et une forme de contestation naturelle au système classique d'apprentissage.

The study of lifelong language learning and motivational ecosystems through personal accounts can hopefully inform educational designers and optimize language education quality through better appreciation of the autonomous third age language learning experience. Such a cross-disciplinary endeavour involves construing learning motivation as a lifelong individual process that evolves along a narrative continuum, starting at birth and developing over the course of life, personal experiences. On a more introspective note, hearing or reading such stories inevitably brings us back to our own personal lifelong trajectories with language learning, and potentially sheds light on current aspects of our motivational lifelong reservoir.

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PhD Report

Family Language Policy and Heritage Language Maintenance among Libyan Migrant Families in the UK


By Farida Alhahmmed (Newcastle University)

This PhD project aims to explore the language experiences and practices of Libyan migrant families in Northeast England. It also seeks to understand how these families perceive the value of their heritage language and construct their own identities, explored from both the parents' and children's perspectives. This research topic is closely related to my experience as a Libyan mother dealing with more than one language in everyday life and raising multilingual Arabic–English children, which provided the impetus to investigate other Libyan migrant families' daily language experiences and practices.

The project is located within the field of family language policy (FLP), an interdisciplinary field of inquiry that employs theoretical frameworks such as language policy, language socialisation, and child language acquisition (Ren & Hu, 2013; Smith-Christmas, 2014). It is a relatively new domain that can be defined as “an integrated overview of research on how languages are managed, learned, and negotiated within families” (King, et al., 2008, p. 907). Since the family context is complex and dynamic, I employed Spolsky's (2009, 2012) FLP theoretical model to guide the study and help me understand the data as it provides a conceptual framework for exploring language dynamics in family settings in a particular society. It encompasses three interrelated components: language ideology (i.e., how family members perceive particular languages; language practices (i.e. language use, what they do with language); language management (i.e. what efforts they make to preserve the language) (Curdtt-Christiansen, 2018). Previous studies on language policy have focused on the national macro level and there is a need to investigate it at the micro level, within the family domain, to better understand the formation and maintenance of language in the community.

In terms of methods, I adopted a qualitative interpretive approach, using in-depth semi-structured interviews with parents and language portraits with children, as well as field notes to complement the dataset. The participants comprised 15 Libyan migrant families residing in Northeast England (15 mothers, 4 fathers and 20 children). I chose to use interviews with the parents to obtain in-depth information related to their language experiences and perspectives. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) argue that interviews offer a unique window into subjects' lives as they can express their activities, experiences, and opinions in their own words. I chose to use a different method with the children, namely language portraits. This is a type of creative graphic visualisation tool that has recently been used by language researchers and educators to collect data, mainly from children but also from adults. More specifically, it is used to support individuals in describing their multilingual experiences by colouring a body silhouette with various colours representing the presence of different languages in their lives, whether these are languages they use, learn, or are exposed to. I gave each child instructions on how to complete the language portrait activity, and then I asked each child to describe and explain their colouring verbally, including the choice of colours, symbols, captions, and the use of space. The children's narrative explanations were audio-recorded and transcribed.

My initial plan was to interview mothers only and complete the language portraits with the children. However, on receiving feedback from my PhD panel and other researchers in the field after presenting at an international conference, I decided also to include the fathers' perspectives, despite the potential difficulties I would face in accessing them given the religious and sociocultural norms within the Libyan society. As a female Libyan researcher and a mother, I was aware of the significance of my social capital in facilitating access to other Libyan mothers and their children, who are generally considered difficult participants to recruit. Nonetheless, I was aware that recruiting Libyan fathers could be challenging as a Libyan, Arabic, Muslim, married female researcher. Moreover, it might have been uncomfortable for both the interviewer and interviewee to engage in individual face-to-face interviews as this would challenge our religious and cultural traditions.



Being sensitive to such possible issues, it was essential to prioritise comfort and trust between my male participants (fathers) and me (as the researcher) to assure the ethics and credibility of the study. Hence, the juxtaposition of my role as a researcher and that of an insider within the specific community informed my methodological decision to interview the fathers via audio call using Zoom instead of face-to-face interviews, inviting them to participate through the mothers. Only four fathers among 15 families expressed their willingness to participate. This was not the number I hoped for; however, I found that reflecting on how my ethnic identity, gender, status, and language use influence the research processes and how this can have a positive or negative influence on the research is more crucial.

Finally, reflecting on my PhD studies, I have found it a rewarding process. To make it more enjoyable and less onerous, I believe that choosing a topic generated from personal interest and/or experience is a good starting point for success over a long road full of complexity and challenges on the way. Reflecting on these challenges and the ways in which you tackle them can contribute to the research and strengthen your experience as a researcher. I hope that my study will contribute to the FLP field by providing a better understanding of multilingual experiences among an under-investigated group – Libyan migrant families – in the UK, where minority languages are not protected by robust language policy and are not well supported in mainstream education.

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Book Reviews


Williams, Q., Deumert, A. and Milani, T. M. (2022). *Struggles for Multilingualism and Linguistic Citizenship*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. ISBN: 9781800415300. 272 pages.

Activism, voice, and agency permeate this edited collection of twelve chapters exploring struggles for multilingualism in different linguistic, geographic, and historical contexts. The collection is divided into four sections covering theory and practice of multilingualism, multilingual narratives, digital activism, popular culture as well as future directions for research and action. Each section and chapter either connect with, or are explicitly framed by, linguistic citizenship and the result is a stimulating and diverse set of discussions. In these discussions, linguistic citizenship is used to interrogate and understand local, national, and global policies and practices, in the past and in the present.

The applicability of a linguistic citizenship lens to studies focusing on enduring problems and issues in multilingual societies is clearly on display in this edited collection. Some chapters take us back to previous decades to bring out new understandings of the policy development process, as in chapter 7, by Salö and Karlander, where the role of the discredited concept of “semi-lingualism” is positioned as a driver for the embedding of mother tongue instruction in Swedish education since 1977. Other chapters, such as chapter 9 by Williams, take us into contemporary, multilingual performances with analyses of the work of hip-hop artists and stand-up comedians. Yet, other chapters (e.g. chapter 8, by Hiss & Peck) bridge past and present by focusing on pupil protests using Twitter as a space for activism in a Cape Town school where the code of conduct and the curriculum were experienced as denying young people’s voices and identities. Hiss and Peck show us how the young people made effective use of hashtags as a community-building linguistic activity which led to institutional changes such as the introduction of isiXhosa as a curriculum subject for the first time. In the words of one of their campaign slogans, these pupils were campaigning as “Africans fighting to be African in Africa”.

The linguistic citizenship framing throughout the collection means that inequalities are foregrounded and challenges for research, policies and practices are formulated. A powerful example of this comes from chapter 3 by Heugh entitled ‘Linguistic Citizenship as a Decolonial Lens on Southern Multilingualisms and Epistemologies’. Heugh calls for language researchers and policy makers to work with a plurality of epistemologies and reject hierarchies of knowledge which are so prevalent in publications and studies. Heugh’s chapter provides three detailed examples for readers to learn from, the first of which details how researcher practices contributed to the invisibilisation of African linguists’ contributions through work undertaken on transcribing and developing orthographies for languages in Africa, throughout the 20th century. The second example gives readers insights into Heugh’s research reflections of fieldwork for language planning in post-Apartheid South Africa. The chapter highlights the ways in which, if not conducted with the appropriate time and respect for communities and relationship building, this work can contribute to epistemic erasure and loss, in this case of Gri language and Griqua knowledge practices. In her final example, Heugh reflects again on her own researcher experiences in language survey work in South Africa in 2000 and once again shows how this work has the potential to foreground or erase the voices of citizens when they self-report on how they mix and move between languages in their multilingual lives.

As highlighted at the beginning of this review, the work of various contributors to the collection engages with the concept of voice, and this frequently relates directly to individuals and communities voicing their multilingual experiences and identities. The work of Kulick, however, in chapter 11, takes a different stance by focusing on the sociolinguistics of responsibility which is explored through a concrete example of how the rights of adults with disabilities, who are non-lingual, are supported, or denied, in relation to their sexual lives. This case study is explored through a contrastive approach of care worker practices in two national contexts (Denmark and Sweden) which are analysed through the work of two philosophers: Levinas and Agamben. Kulick concludes with the challenge that research, such as that couched within a linguistic citizenship framework, needs to recognise and respond to the lived experiences of people who communicate through non-verbal means.



To conclude, I appreciated this edited collection very much and will be recommending it to applied linguists, sociolinguists and all researchers whose work may draw them into struggles with multilingualism. Researchers who want to push the boundaries of knowledge about language in previously under-researched contexts, and design and conduct their research in ways which challenge academic norms, will do well to start here.

Jane Andrews, University of the West of England.


Odlin, T. (2022). Explorations of Language Transfer. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, ISBN: 978-1-78892-953-0. 176 pages.

This book explores the multiple ways in which language transfer can occur in bi/multilinguals in second language education. Chapter 1 introduces the concept of transfer, predictions of transfer and language processing, and discusses the transfer metaphor by looking at the etymology of “transfer” (i.e. carrying across) and “translate”, which hint at the interaction between languages in the minds of bi/multilinguals. The book is divided into two parts. A first part on predictions and constraints (chapters 2-4) and a second part on language transfer and the link between comprehension and production (chapters 5-7).

Chapter 2 delves into the historical development of the terms (language) transfer and of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), which predicts that differences between L1 and L2 will lead to learner difficulties and delays in learning L2. Drawing on the notion of habit, which can be analysed in terms of activation patterns, automaticity of patterns and entrenchment (i.e. L1 persistent interference), Odlin touches on the psychological dimension of transfer and language learning. Weinreich’s distinction between weak and strong CAH’s versions is discussed and compared with other definitions (e.g. Lado’s definition). Links between habits, behaviourism, and structural linguistics are made.

Chapter 3 looks at problems with the CAH and contrastive predictions, also considering individual variation and its influence on subjective assessments. Moving from the assumed inverse relation between predictions and constraints, the author offers insights on research that shows cases of transfer of constraints such as morphology, idioms, word order and functional projections. Odlin questions the completeness of CAH, suggesting that CAH is not possible without a theory of transferability, which needs to be satisfactory to consider the role of affective factors and to have a satisfactory set of predictions. The emphatic function of focus constructions and affects is discussed to highlight how culture specificity can influence the transferability of meaning, production, and comprehension between languages.

Chapter 4 examines research in languages, such as Hawaiian Pidgin English, Andean Spanish and young people Dyrbal, which evidence cases of word order transfer. That means word order transfer from L2 to L1 (borrowing transfer) and word order transfer from L1 to L2 (substratum transfer), particularly in terms of Subject-Object-Verb/ Subject-Verb-Object. The results of these studies show two things. First, (bidirectional) parallel influences between L1 and L2 are frequent. Second, there seems to be a correlation between level of proficiency of L2 and transfer from L1 to L2 production. However, Odlin acknowledges that, overall, there is not much research that unearthed this type of transfer and proposes to explain this phenomenon in terms of three different, overlapping explanations. The first explanation is that the existence of language universals may prevent this type of transfer. The second explanation is that he considers the possibility of observational problems, such as the fact that less proficient speakers are more reluctant to speak, or they are under researched, which would explain the lack of data, or the fact that flexibility of word order in both L1-L2 might hinder the identification of a transfer. The third explanation is that Odlin discusses the fact that metalinguistic awareness/accessibility of word order can prevent this sort of transfer because conscious awareness raising, especially in formal instruction, can create constraints on negative transfer.



Drawing on psycholinguistic theories of comprehension, Chapter 5 highlights the positive link between cross-cultural similarities and comprehension, production and learning, evidencing that the connection between comprehension and production can be language specific. Considering the constructive nature of comprehension processes, the author examines research that has shown that cross-linguistic similarities strongly influence the path from input to output. Examples of both positive and negative transfer of focus constructions are also considered, such as the closeness of Swedish to English, which explains their marked positive transfer from L1 to L2, and the distance of Finnish from English, which explains their negative transfer from L1 to L2 but also a positive transfer from L3 Swedish on L2 English production.


Chapter 6 examines the effects of focus constructions on comprehension processing drawing on relevance theory. Cross-linguistic differences in types of inferential bridges are discussed, and particularly the use of syntactically marked structures, such as “it-clefts”, which require a more complex understanding of the issues of variability of forms, meanings, and of cross-linguistic correspondences. Variations in forms and in meanings are discussed. The issue of the not always complete interchangeability in different focus forms, because of syntactic factors/constraints and tendencies in discourse, is highlighted to show that focus constructions may have context dependent language specific meanings, which can cause translation problems or prevent learning. The fact that the cognitive effects of focus constructions can reflect language specific patterns is also highlighted.

Chapter 7 examines the problem of language specificity in translation and the relation between transfer and translation. It accounts for errors in translation due to crosslinguistic equivalence/influence, both machine-based (e.g. the lack of acknowledgement of topic continuity and backsliding in Google translate despite some quality improvement over the years), and human based (e.g. Howitt’s translations of Andersen’s stories show errors due to translation of L1 formulations). Drawing on cognitive grammar, individual variation in understanding, producing, and judging is discussed in terms of reconstrual of situations and perspectives. The author concludes by claiming that translation needs to be part of a plausible theory of Second Language Acquisition.

Finally, Chapter 8 discusses the implications. Understanding the impact of language specific processing can influence how researchers look at predictions of transfer. Despite the fact that every language has focus constructions, cross-linguistic differences in forms, functions, understanding and production make comparability problematic. Transfer can be caused by interlingual identification that guides comprehension and production in different ways, depending on the languages involved, and this is relevant for translation. Pedagogical implications are that teachers can make predictions about speakers of a language and that they can use translations as a tool to test learners’ transfer, to teach and to raise metalinguistic awareness on crosslinguistic differences and to improve understanding and production. Because of linguistic indeterminacy and individual variability, teachers need to acknowledge the possibility of multiple acceptable translations. The chapter closes with recommendations for future research, particularly in terms of students and teachers’ metalinguistic awareness in the classroom.

Overall, this is an important contribution, which brings to the table many interesting topics and connections to explore within the wide field of language transfer. This is insightful work which will be of interest to scholars and students in Second Language Acquisition and psychology and related disciplines, but also in sociolinguistics, pedagogy, and cognitive neurosciences.

Valentina Bartali, University of Warwick




Klimanova, L. (Ed.) (2022) Identity, Multilingualism and CALL Responding to New Global Realities. Sheffield: Equinox. ISBN: 9781800500792. 384 pages.

Focusing on the interdisciplinary emergent area of L2 identity research in CALL that addresses ‘the nature of positioning and identity construction through language and multimodal resources in instructional and social Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)’ (Klimanova, 2021, p.196), this edited volume seeks to elucidate key themes and issues in relation to L2 identity enactment in digital social spaces and virtual L2 learning environments. Based on available, up-to-date empirical data, this book offers valuable insights into possible avenues for future research in the broader area of digital pedagogy and L2 language learning. The collection consists of fourteen chapters overall which, can nevertheless be thematically divided, availing the reader of the opportunity to avoid reading it from back to front. With the exception of the introductory Chapter 1, the rest of the chapters refer to four CALL-based identity research themes: (a) learner identity in telecollaboration contexts, (b) language teacher identity in digital contexts (c), the impact of user-devices interaction on self-positioning and identity construction and (d) the impact of multilingual digital resources on multilingual learning experience.

Empirical evidence exploring learner identity projection and self-positioning in intercultural virtual exchanges is provided in six chapters in the volume. The need for inclusive and equitable multilingual and translanguing practices in virtual exchange (VE) spaces is addressed by Helm and Hauck in Chapter 2 by investigating how interconnections between language ideologies and language practices impact participant interactions and positioning and VE instructional design in Tandem and Online Facilitated Dialogue (OFD). Although the OFD model of VE was found to favor equitable multilingualism practices, the pervasiveness of monolingual ideologies in the design of both models underscores the need for inclusive and equitable multilingual and translanguing practices in the spirit of the social justice turn in Second Language Acquisition (Ortega, 2017). In Chapter 3, Lesoski’s case study focuses on the lived telecollaboration experiences of a heritage speaker of German to negotiate her plurilingual identities highlighting how deficit-based mindsets associated with the participants’ negative views toward trans-languaging and using multilingual repertoires can impede the potential of virtual encounters as a fruitful practice of intercultural education. Practical implications of the study involve suggestions related to the design and implementation of telecollaborative exchanges. In a similar study conducted by Yang in Chapter 14, a more nuanced view of a Korean heritage language learner’s identity construction processes is presented highlighting the importance of community for L2 learning in online spaces as intimate camaraderie was found to substantially affect heritage language practices in her effort to assert her Korean heritage within a virtual community of Korean-heritage speakers.

Conducted within the discourse-semiotic Appraisal Theory, Sevilla-Pavon and Nicolaou, in Chapter 10, explore the foreign language (FL) learners’ intercultural communication engagement strategies of contracting and expanding within the context of online discussion forums, followed by an analysis and discussion of virtual exchange participants’ process of identity construction. Key findings revealed a massive use of monoglossic (Expand/Entertain and Contract/Deny) resources in students’ posts which was not necessarily linked to monolithic and rigid cultural and linguistic identities, as participants often displayed pluralistic and open-minded attitudes toward increased mobility and globalization as expressed via heteroglossic language ideologies. The practice of trans-languaging in synchronous multi-party videoconferencing sessions is examined by Klimanova in Chapter 11 via the use of multilingual repertoires and code-switching among mutually intelligible languages when collaborating in a group on a task-based assignment. ‘Trans-languaging practices in linguistically unstructured CMC video chats were found to be socially motivated and conducive to the emergence of strong social bonds and virtual micro-group identities’ (p. 293). In a related study, Izmaylova in Chapter 12 addresses the impact of L2 learners’ cultural identity on intercultural competence (IC) development and learning experience in a multilingual telecollaboration project that fostered learners’ IC skills, offering them a space to explore their identities and engage in cultural comparison and analysis that allowed them to adopt a more ethno-relative orientation (Bennett,1993).



Teacher identity development in virtual learning contexts is equally addressed in Manion and Lontas' (Chapter 8) and Park's (Chapter 9) studies. Viewing quality improvement of L2 teaching as a function of CALL teacher identity building, Mannion and Lontas trace the identity-related perceptions of CALL doctoral students as expressed dialogically in asynchronous online discussion forums and collaborative digital stories affording them the opportunity to engage in identity work that involved critical thought and reflection over the ideal practices and competences of L2 education professionals. In examining L2 Korean teachers' self-positioning in online classes within COVID-19 pandemic, Park concludes that online teacher identities 'are a complex of various situated positionings and sub-identities were co-constructed in a variety of interactions and relationships to overcome novel challenges and critically influence their agency as language teachers in online learning' (p.234).


Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 13 elaborate on user-device interactions in relation to L2 identity construction processes in social digital spaces. Vandergriff in Chapter 4 focuses on an analysis of social trilingual hashtagging to explore its semiotic value for the emergence of a multilingual virtual self. Multilingual hashtagging in the data was found to be associated with heteroglossing tagging and playful identity performance suggesting the critical role of social media literacy, including hashtagging in language education. Hashtagging along with video content are also explored in Chapter 5 in terms of their impact on language learning and multilingual identity performances in TikTok. Although English is predominantly used for communication in the platform, Tiktokers engaged in multilingual practices and multimodal strategies in their language learning videos while their hashtag use indicated their plurilingual and transcultural abilities to move across languages and varieties. Language learning in the digital world is also addressed in Chapter 13 where synchronous multimodal conversation and playful use of multisensory communication that were technically afforded by HelloTalk contributed to the enactment of learners' imagined projected self and imagined co-presence leading to greater engagement in language learning and development of temporary multilingual identities in digital spaces. In Chapter 6, the emphasis lies on how design of multilingual non-CMC CALL products affects the development of language learners' self-concept and ideal L2 self. Findings indicate that such products aid users visualize themselves as learners or users of a language; nevertheless, their tendency to privilege certain languages and linguistic identities at the expense of others has an adverse effect on the multilingual self. Chapter 7, on the contrary, examines how multilingual resources use impact on meaningful learning in formal instructional settings stressing the need for the adoption of a culturally and linguistically diversified curriculum to promote multilinguals' identities and more active participation in computer science disciplinary practices.

Overall, the volume consists of a valuable compilation of up-to-date empirical interdisciplinary research on multilingual identity construction in digitally mediated educational and informal language learning contexts that elucidate current issues in the area and fosters the need for future extensive research. Its highly informative content makes it an insightful contribution to the newly emergent body of literature on the topic, of great interest to SLA specialists and experts in the field of CALL.

Eirene Katsarou, Democritus University of Thrace, Greece

Durrant, P., Brenchley, M. and McCallum, L. (2021). Understanding Development and Proficiency in Writing: Quantitative Corpus Linguistic Approaches. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-1108477628. 243 pages.

It is well known that of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), writing is the most difficult and last one to master in both first language (L1) and second language (L2) learning contexts. This is because the skill of writing requires multiple other skills to mature including developed cognitive, linguistic, and organizational abilities, amongst others (see Frederiksen & Dominic, 1981; Scarcella, Olson, & Matuchniak, 2018). Against this backdrop, the book by Durrant et al. on understanding development and proficiency in writing in learning English as L1 and L2 is a timely and much needed one for several considerations. Top among these is that it is the first large-scale project that considers English writing development as L1 and L2 side-by-side using quantitative corpus linguistic (QCL) approaches. Second, it provides researchers with a strong understanding of the methodological foundations of QCL approaches to researching both L1 and L2 writing development.



Third, it provides the most comprehensive discussion to date on the QCL approaches to writing development in learning English as L1 and L2. Finally, the book provides teachers with informative and practical knowledge about how written language actually develops, enabling them to make informed decisions in their specific teaching contexts.

The book is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is an introduction that sets out the aim of the book and provides an overview of the subsequent chapters. Quantitative corpus linguistics (QCL) methodology, simply put, is a research approach for the empirical investigation of language variation. With the substantial developments in corpus linguistics and natural language processing in recent years, research into QCL has developed exponentially, enabling faster and more reliable analyses of large numbers of texts. This in turn enabled researchers to obtain more insights into language development and language use, and consequently producing more informative knowledge for practical use such as L1 and L2 teaching.

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical and methodological foundations on which the authors base their evidence for writing development. The authors draw their evidence from two systematic literature reviews on research that studied writing development over the last seventy years and which they compiled for the purpose of this volume: research on first-language writing development and research on second-language writing development. The ultimate goal of these two systematic literature reviews on writing development research is “to establish what such research has taught us about written language development, what it hasn’t taught us, and what we should do next” (p. i). Over 250 empirical studies were reviewed and analysed from L1 and L2 writing contexts, and these constituted the evidence base for the project of the book.

Chapters 3 to 6 focus on writing development in L1 and L2 from four different perspectives: Development in syntax (chapter 3), development in vocabulary (chapter 4), development in formulaic language (chapter 5), and development in cohesion (chapter 6). For each of these aspects or perspectives the authors establish the theoretical framework for their analysis, conduct a comprehensive review of the relevant studies, and identify and discuss all related methodological issues. The conclusion, chapter 7, provides a summary of the lessons learned from the reviews in chapters 3-6, draws several theoretical and methodological conclusions regarding QCL research, and provides some priorities for future research into QCL, including ways of refining the theoretical and methodological bases of the QCL approaches.

The arguments made by the authors are convincing throughout the book, arguments supported with data or research findings. The book is written in a reader-friendly and accessible style without losing the depth or strength of the argumentation or informative content. I read the book with pleasure. I have no doubt that the book will be an essential reference work on written language development research and quantitative corpus linguistic approaches for academic researchers, language professional, language teachers, corpus linguists, and students of first- and second-language writing.

Ali Shehadeh, UAE University



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- £20

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- £120

Associate (e.g. publisher)
- £125



The British Association for Applied Linguistics

The aims of the Association are to promote the study of language in use, to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and to provide a common forum for those engaged in the theoretical study of language and for those whose interest is the practical application of such work. The Association has over 750 members, and awards an annual Book Prize. 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 four people to be full members of BAAL.

Chair

Zhu Hua
Institute of Education
Faculty of Education and Society
University College London
BAALChair@cardiff.ac.uk

Membership Secretary

Rachel Wicaksono
School of Education, Language and Psychology
York St John University
York YO31 7EX
r.wicaksono@yorksja.ac.uk

Membership administration

Sophie Flood
BAAL C/O Mosaic Events
Tower House, Mill Lane,
Off Askham Fields Lane,
Askham Bryan,
York, YO23 3FS
0330 333 0485
admin@baal.org.uk



The British Association for Applied Linguistics

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

BAAL email list: BAALMAIL@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

For further details go to: <https://baal.org.uk/baalmail/>

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