Perspectivas actuales en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de lenguas en contextos multiculturales / Current Perspectives in Language Teaching and Learning in Multicultural Contexts

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This book, which is mainly addressed to scholars working in the field of linguistics applied to language teaching, results from an initiative linked to the IV Nebrija International Congress of Applied Linguistics to Language Teaching: towards Multilingualism, held at the Nebrija University in June 2019 and organized by the research group LAELE. The authors of the various chapters as well as the editors make sure to acknowledge both the prevalent role that teaching and learning a new language plays in a society defined by multilingualism and the importance of embracing multifaceted perspectives. While the unifying thread is applied linguistics to language teaching, the different chapters approach this general field from a variety of research perspectives, among them, cognitive science, corpus linguistics, psycholinguistics, behavioral science and language acquisition, specifically the learning and processing of a new language in the second language (L2) course/classroom.

The volume consists of an Introduction by the editors which briefly presents each of the three subparts as well as each chapter, fifteen chapters, and a brief epilogue. The chapters, which analyze and discuss different foreign languages, are all written in Spanish or English and are preceded by a summary and an abstract. The fifteen chapters are grouped around three topics: (i) non-native language acquisition of the various areas of language; (ii) migrant, heritage and minority languages; and (iii) methods in second language acquisition and second language teaching.

Non-native language acquisition

After the all-encompassing introduction, we get to the core of the first part, Non-native language acquisition, whose four chapters deal with

different areas of linguistics including phonetics, morphology, syntax, discourse and the lexicon.

In the first chapter, Nina Melero investigates the use and the characteristics of the pause and its possible relationship to the complex phenomenon of the "foreign accent" identified in the L2 Spanish of adult L1 Italian speakers. This chapter, whose title is *The pause and the 'foreign accent'. Prosodic patterns in the use of Spanish as a foreign language: analysis and description of the interlanguage of advanced Italian learners C1/C2* (Spanish[1]), deals with how the personal and cultural identity of the learners strongly affects how their communication skills are perceived.

In the second chapter, *Nominal compounding in L3 Spanish* (Spanish), Hugues Lacroix and Anahí Alba de la Fuente, examine an understudied topic: the morphosyntax of Noun-Noun and deverbal compounds in the Spanish L3 of Basque-French bilinguals. More specifically, the acquisition of the morphological characteristics of these two types of Spanish compounds. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first study that investigates this combination of languages.

Elena Valenzuela, Rachel Klassen, Tania Zamuner and Kristina Borg, in the chapter *Ambiguous relative clause modifier attachment in code-switched constructions* (English), use evidence from eye-tracking – the only eye-tracking study in this book – to investigate parsing strategies of bilinguals in code-switched sentences containing ambiguous relative clauses. The authors, paying particular attention to the effect of cross-linguistic differences/similarities on syntactic processing in L2, discuss the effect that acquisition, language dominance, and language exposure have on those parsing strategies used by adult Spanish-English speakers living in an English environment.

In *Emotionality in autobiographical narratives: an analysis of the vocabulary and other linguistic features in oral production of Chinese learners of Spanish* (Spanish), the last chapter of this first part, Teresa Simón Cabodevilla, Irini Mavrou and Susana Martín Leralta examine the autobiographical narratives of Chinese adult learners of Spanish that were induced by fragments of films which evoked diverse emotions. The main aim of their research was to analyze different dimensions of the emotional lexicon and other linguistic resources used in the oral production of those L1 Chinese learners of Spanish as a foreign language.

Migrant languages, heritage languages and minority languages

Part II focuses on migrant, heritage and minority languages. Made up of six chapters, the specific focus of this second part of the volume are the

speakers rather than the actual languages being investigated. The unifying theme is minority languages, with a special emphasis on identity and education.

The fifth chapter of the book, but first of this section, is entitled *Emotional acculturation in heritage speakers of Spanish: adaptation of the Emotional Patterns Questionnaire and design of the Cuestionario de experiencias emocionales* (Spanish). The authors, Marta Gallego-García, Anna Doquin de Saint-Preux and Kris Buyse, analyze the role of migration and heritage language from an innovative perspective in applied linguistics which consists of focusing on the understanding of migratory phenomena and complex connections between emotions, language and culture. To carry out their analysis they used an adaptation of the *Emotional Patterns Questionnaire* (ERQ; Gross & John, 2003). In order to meet the requirements of the specific context of this research, the questionnaire was translated into and adapted to four languages, namely Spanish, Dutch, French and English.

Chapter six, *Affective factors, patrimonial identity and ethnic discrimination in the university performance of European students with Spanish as their heritage language* (Spanish), by María Cecilia Ainciburu and Irene Buttazzi, examines the social integration of students born in Germany and Italy, with Spanish as a heritage language. This chapter also discusses the degree of impact that discrimination may have on these heritage speakers' academic performance, which is not biased by lack of knowledge of the language of the country of residence. The authors used a questionnaire to evaluate patrimonial identity and perception of ethnic discrimination.

The chapter by Eva Gómez García, entitled *Academic relevance of the oral presentation in multicultural contexts: contrastive analysis of interaction in the oral formal discourse of heritage speakers of Spanish and L2 students from the US* (Spanish), is dedicated to an understudied area of heritage and non-native Spanish, namely the Oral Academic Presentation (PAO). Given its crucial role in the process of academic socialization, the author analyzes in detail the oral presentation skills of heritage and L2 Spanish speakers in the United States, which will allow them to become members of a specific academic or professional community.

The eighth chapter differs slightly from the other chapters in Part II in that this study has the language of migrants as the target language. Rola Naeb and Marcin Sosinski in *Technology-enhanced learning (TEL) in the LESLLA context* (English), investigate how new technologies may contribute to facilitate and enhance the process of second language learning, for adults in different contexts. Thus, it is dedicated to the process of language learning by minorities, specifically migrants who

move to Europe from other countries. One of the projects, Digital Literacy Instructor (Diglin), had Dutch, English, German and Finnish as target languages and the other, EU-speak, had English, Finnish, German, Spanish and Turkish.

In the next chapter, *Plurilingualism and education: an approach to plurilingual education from the perspective of minority languages* (Spanish), María López-Sández and Bieito Silva Valdira taking as example Galician and Spanish in Spain, namely their status as co-official languages, explore the requirements of a possible multilingual and multicultural education that would allow the survival of minority languages in Europe.

This second part of the book concludes with Victoria Aguilar's study *The Arabic language in Spain: between dissociation and integration* (Spanish), whose main objective is to decipher the reasons why learning the Arabic language is so difficult for L1 Spanish learners in Spain. The author explores different aspects that affect the learning and teaching of this language and highlights the dissociation between the fact that what is usually taught in L2 classrooms is Classic Arabic, with special attention to the written proficiency, without establishing a connection with the variants of Arabic that are actually used in oral communication.

Methods in second language acquisition and second language teaching

The third and last part of this volume contains five chapters. As Part III's title suggests, this final section is dedicated to experimental methods and their relevance for non-native language teaching and acquisition. The most remarkable fact about this part of the volume is the presentation of different types of data elicitation techniques, among them corpus analysis and the event-related brain potentials (ERP) technique.

How to do research in SLA by combining corpus and experimental methods: an introduction for language researchers and teachers (English) is the opening chapter by Cristóbal Lozano, a chapter which stands on its own in that its main objective is to provide a practical description of the principles and tools needed to carry out empirical research in non-native language acquisition. Differently from the other chapters in this section, Lozano's is the only chapter comparing the use of corpus data and experimental tasks when analyzing a specific syntactic structure.

González Martín's chapter, *What electroencephalogram studies tell us about the teaching of second languages* (English) highlights the importance of applying experimental data to improve the different

approaches to teaching non-native languages. By presenting the experimental technique of ERPs, the chapter provides a general perspective relevant for a large population of learners focusing in particular on difficulties at the phonological and the morphosyntactic level. This chapter perfectly embodies the essence of this section in that it actually constitutes a bridge between two domains: experimental research and teaching approaches.

The chapter by Nogueroles López and Blanco Canales, *The think-aloud technique as a teaching and research tool into listening strategies* (Spanish), like the other chapters in Part III, focuses on a technique, specifically it approaches the think aloud technique in relation to listening comprehension from a two-fold perspective: as a research tool and as a teaching-learning technique in the classroom. This study was carried out in Hong Kong with bilingual Cantonese-English students, who also had knowledge of Mandarin Chinese, attending a university beginner course of Spanish language.

Raquel Fernández Fuertes, Eduardo Gómez Garzarán and Mañas Navarrete are the authors of the next chapter which focuses on the effect of type of instruction for the learning of morphosyntactic aspects of foreign languages. In *Noun-noun compounds in a game task: what child data can tell us about teaching practices* (English), using English N-N compounds, the authors evaluate the efficiency of explicit versus implicit instruction and argue that explicit instruction facilitates learning of these morphosyntactic structures. The target language is English learned by children in Spain.

Teacher perceptions and student interaction in online and hybrid university language learning courses (English) is the last chapter, both of the section and the volume. This chapter does not deal with a specific area of language, unlike the other chapters in Part III (i.e. oral comprehension and compounding in morphology), as the main objective of Elisa Gironzetti, Manuel Lacorte and Javier Muñoz-Basols is to provide an assessment of the availability and effectiveness of undergraduate non-native online and hybrid courses in languages other than English.

Conclusion and remarks

This volume investigates important and often understudied language contexts, topics or types of learners. For instance, the chapter by Lacroix and Alba de la Fuente deals with a combination of languages and a linguistic topic, namely Noun-Noun and deverbal compounds, that to the best of my knowledge, have not been investigated before. Another example in this respect is the chapter by Gómez García, also dedicated to an understudied area, the characteristics of the Oral

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Academic Presentation, carried out by heritage and non-native Spanish speakers in the United States. Finally the results from the eye-tracking combined with code-switching study, by Valenzuela, Klassen, Zamuner and Borg, which, by showing the difference in reading times in simultaneous English-Spanish bilinguals, demonstrate that language exposure plays an important role in parsing strategies.

The book is also innovative with respect to the variety of methodological approaches employed by the researchers and with respect to its multicultural dimension which is perfectly paired up with the type of society we currently live in. This makes the volume not only a timely textbook, but also a valuable empirical, technological and pedagogical source of information for the field of linguistics applied to the acquisition and teaching of non-native languages. Further evidence for the timely nature of this volume is to be found in the last chapter of Part III where the authors specifically acknowledge the challenges that the global population has faced due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. From the perspective of teachers and learners, it has particularly affected the in-person teaching as many professionals have been forced to take their teaching to an online level.

As attentively clarified in the general introduction, the chapters have been grouped by the editors according to how their contents revolve around specific topics, namely non-native language acquisition, minority languages and methods in language teaching. However, given the richness in terms of variety of the topics investigated, the editors might have also adopted a different type of organization principle to group the chapters. In fact, as suggested by the authors themselves, another common denominator is, for example, Spanish as a target language, which is shared by the chapters authored by Melero; Lacroix and Alba de la Fuente; Valenzuela, Klassen, Zamuner and Borg; Cabodevilla, Mavrou, and Martín Leralta; Gómez García; Lozano; and López and Canales.

Another common feature shared by several chapters is the population included in the studies. For instance, population-wise the articles in this volume could be grouped as adults versus children and the studies involving adult participants could be further divided into non-university versus university students, even though the only chapters whose participants are children are those by authors Fernández Fuertes, Gómez Garzarán and Mañas Navarrete. A further display of population partition, could address the different types of speakers (e.g. native versus non-native speakers) or the different types of learners (foreign and second language learners, third language learners, simultaneous and sequential bilinguals, immigrant speakers, heritage speakers and speakers of minority languages).

A different common denominator shared by some of the articles is the kind of study. This volume, in fact, is also commendable in relation

to the main focus of the articles presented, which ranges from theoretical and review studies to critical, observational or experimental studies. Also shared by several chapters, another feature of the volume mentioned by the editors as well, is the description of experimental tasks, namely those by Melero; Lacroix and Alba de la Fuente; Fernández Fuertes and Gómez Garzarán and Mañas Navarrete; González Martín and Gómez García; and Lozano.

Overall, the wide range of topics covered in *Current Perspectives in Language Teaching and Learning in Multicultural Contexts*, but also their sophisticated linguistic, experimental and methodological approaches, make this volume of interest not only for researchers and academics in the field of applied linguistics, but also for academics in the field of general linguistics and I would even dare to say for the general public, and this is the reason why I strongly recommend this volume to those readers interested in second language acquisition, bilingualism, language teaching, cultural identity, learning strategies and technologies or language policy, to name a few.

Recepción: 27/02/2021; Aceptación: 07/03/2021

Notas

[1] The language in parenthesis refers to the actual language in which the chapter is written.