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Age effects in Second Language Learning [Texto impreso] : stepping stones toward better understanding / Robert M. DeKeyser

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 62-67

The effect of age of acquisition on ultimate attainment in second language learning has been a controversial topic for years. After providing a very brief overview of the ideas that are at the core of the controversy, I discuss the two main reasons why these issues are so controversial: conceptual misunderstandings and methodological difficulties. The main part of the article then makes suggestions for improvement in subject selection, data collection, and instrumentation, in the hope that both sides of the debate will be able to agree on them. More sophisticated research in this area is of the utmost importance given how crucial understanding age effects is for educational policy and curriculum design. Where foreign language learning rather than second language learning is concerned, directly relevant research, carried out with classroom foreign language learners, is even more sorely needed.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 52-67

1. Age effects 2. Critical period 3. Inmigrants 4. Bilingualism 5. Research methodology

2

Capturing the diversity in lexical diversity [Texto impreso] / Scott Jarvis

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 103-106 : 58 refs.

The range, variety, or diversity of words found in learners' language use is believed to reflect the complexity of their vocabulary knowledge as well as the level of their language proficiency. Many indices of lexical diversity have been proposed, most of which involve statistical relationships between types and tokens, and which ultimately reflect the rate of word repetition. These indices have generally been validated in accordance with how well they overcome sample-size effects and/or how well they predict language knowledge or behavior, rather than in accordance with how well they actually measure the construct of lexical diversity. In this article, I review developments that have taken place in lexical diversity research, and also describe obstacles that have prevented it from advancing further. I compare these developments with parallel research on biodiversity in the field of ecology, and show what language researchers can learn from ecology regarding the modeling and measurement of diversity as a multidimensional construct of compositional complexity.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 87-106

1. Lexical measures 2. Vocabulary acquisition 3. Ecological approaches 4. Biodiversity 5. Human judgments 6. Shannon's index 7. Simpson's index

3

Developing L2 pragmatics [Texto impreso] / Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 82-86

This article positions research on the acquisition of pragmatics as an inquiry in the greater field of second language acquisition research. Viewing pragmatics from this intersection, I consider five areas of research that are of interest in both fields and have the potential to make significant contributions to second language pragmatics research. They are: the design and evaluation of pragmatics tasks as simulations of conversation; task design for the study of implicit and explicit knowledge; the measurement of pragmatic development; the interface of the development of grammar and lexicon with pragmatics; and the effect of environment on pragmatic development.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 68-86

1. Task design 2. Explicit pragmatic knowledge 3. Measurement of pragmatic development 4. Grammar-pragmatic interface 5. Study abroad

4

Multiple dimensions of academic language and literacy development [Texto impreso] / Alister Cumming

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 146-152

Language, literacy, and culture intersect almost everywhere, of course. I analyze three phenomena where intersections occur between cognitive skills, personal attitudes, social practices, and macro-societal structures in ways that are salient, puzzling, and also illuminating about the multiple dimensions of learning literacy in situations of cultural and linguistic diversity: (a) heuristic search strategies involving language switching for choices of words and phrases while composing, (b) expressions of personal identity when writing for specific discourse communities, and (c) reciprocal modeling during dynamic assessments of writing and reading. Examples are drawn from research in Toronto with multilingual students entering university programs and with "at-risk" adolescents in a community-based, after-school tutoring program. The analyses set an agenda for future research and educational practices to help develop the multifaceted dimensions of developing academic literacy among culturally diverse learners.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 130-152

1. Academic literacy 2. Culture 3. Discourse community 4. Dynamic assessment 5. Language switching 6. Multilingual students 7. Writing 8. Voice

5

Practice theory in language learning [Texto impreso] / Richard F. Young, Alice C. Astarita

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 187-189 : 30 refs.

Ortega (2011) has argued that second language acquisition is stronger and better after the social turn. Of the post-cognitive approaches she reviews, several focus on the social context of language learning rather than on language as the central phenomenon. In this article, we present Practice Theory not as yet another approach to language learning, but as a philosophical and methodological frame within which the interplay between social context and language learning can be understood. We review the work of Bourdieu, de Certeau, Foucault, Giddens, and Goffman, who argue for the centrality of practice in human semiosis. Through analysis of introspective accounts by ten first-generation/working class students of their foreign language learning experiences, we show how Practice Theory reveals a dialectic between the immediate experiences of language learners and the durable and transposable dispositions emanating from and integrating their past experiences.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 171-189

1. Agency 2. Structuration 3. Social class 4. Nonverbal communication

6

SLA for the 21st century [Texto impreso] : disciplinary progress, transdisciplinary relevance, and the bi-multilingual turn / Lourdes Ortega

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 18-24

The goals of this article are to appraise second language acquisition's (SLA) disciplinary progress over the last 15 years and to reflect on transdisciplinary relevance as the field has completed 40 years of existence and moves forward into the 21st century. I first identify four trends that demonstrate vibrant disciplinary progress in SLA. I then turn to the notion of transdisciplinarity, or the proclivity to pursue and generate SLA knowledge that can be of use outside the confines of the field and contribute to overall knowledge about the human capacity for language. I propose an understanding of transdisciplinary relevance for SLA that results from the ability: (a) to place one's field in a wider landscape of disciplines that share an overarching common goal and (b) to develop critical awareness of one's disciplinary framings of object of inquiry and goals and others' likely reception of them.

Finally, I argue that it is by reframing SLA as the study of late bi/multilingualism that the remarkable progress witnessed in the last 15 years will help the field reach new levels of transdisciplinary relevance as a contributor to the study of the ontogeny of human language and a source of knowledge in support of language education in the 21st century.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 1-24

1. SLA 2. Bilingualism 3. Multilingualism 4. Monolingual bias 5. Transdisciplinarity 6. Framings 7. Language ontogeny

7

Societal responses to adult difficulties in L2 acquisition [Texto impreso] : toward an evolutionary perspective on language acquisition / John H. Schumann

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 207-209 : 39 refs.

It is generally accepted that second language (L2) acquisition becomes more difficult as one grows older and that success in adult L2 acquisition is highly variable. Nevertheless, humans in language contact situations have to cope with intergroup communication. This article examines the ways society has responded to this challenge. It describes eleven strategies or workarounds that humans use to deal with this problem: developing lingua francas, forming Sprachbunds, practicing exogenous marriage, undergoing language shift, learning the target language imperfectly, developing a pidgin or creole, shifting the learning burden to children, relying on individual differences in aptitude among learners, developing the art and practice of translation, developing machine translation technology, and providing instruction. The eleven strategies can be understood as involving four broad societal responses to the burden of SLA: to simplify the learning task, to create a simpler language, to leave it to a special set of learners, and to provide special training. Finally, the article offers some speculations about the evolutionary reasons for the difficulties experienced in adult L2 acquisition.

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1. Second language acquisition
2. Lingua franca
3. Sprachbund
4. Exogenous marriage
5. Pidgin
6. Creole
7. Translation
8. Instruction

8

The role of metalanguage in supporting academic language development [Texto impreso] / Mary J. Schleppegrell

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References: p. 168-170 : 42 refs.

Recent currents in language learning research highlight the social and emergent aspects of second language (L2) development and recognize that learners need opportunities for interaction in meaningful contexts supported by explicit attention to language itself. These perspectives suggest new ways of conceptualizing the challenges faced by children learning L2s as they learn school subjects. This article reports on design-based research in U.S. schools with a majority of English language learners, where teachers were supported in using Systemic Functional Linguistics metalanguage in the context of curricular activities. This work illustrates how a meaningful metalanguage can support L2 learners in accomplishing challenging tasks in the primary school curriculum at the same time that it promotes the kind of focused consciousness-raising and explicit talk about language that has been shown to facilitate L2 development. Examples from classroom research exemplify how metalanguage supports the situated and contextual language learning that current research in education and L2 acquisition calls for, while also supporting disciplinary goals and activities in English language arts.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 153-170

1. English language learners
2. Grammar
3. Elementary school
4. Systemic functional linguistics
5. English language arts

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Transfer of learning transformed [Texto impreso] / Diane Larsen-Freeman

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References: p. 123-129

Instruction is motivated by the assumption that students can transfer their learning, or apply what they have learned in school to another setting. A common problem arises when the expected transfer does not take place, what has been referred to as the inert knowledge problem. More than an academic inconvenience, the failure to transfer is a major problem, exacting individual and social costs. In this article, I trace the evolution of research on the transfer of learning, in general, and on language learning, in particular. Then, a different view of learning transfer is advanced. Rather than learners being seen to "export" what they have learned from one situation to the next, it is proposed that learners transform their learning. The article concludes by offering some suggestions for how to mitigate the inert knowledge problem from this perspective.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 107-129

1. Transfer of learning 2. Adaptation 3. Iteration 4. Affordances 5. Complexity theory 6. Second language learning 7. Levels of processing framework 8. Transfer appropriate processing

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Usage-based language [Texto impreso] : investigating the latent structures that underpin acquisition / Nick C. Ellis, Matthew Brook O'Donnell, Ute Römer

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición impresa y electrónica. Los datos para su localización y/o acceso electrónico están accesibles a través del enlace al título de la publicación.

References: p. 46-51

Each of us as language learners had different language experiences, yet somehow we have converged upon broadly the same language system. From diverse, often noisy samples, we have attained similar linguistic competence. How so? What mechanisms channel language acquisition? Could our linguistic commonalities possibly have converged from our shared psychology of learning as applied to the evidence of similar-enough language experience? This article outlines a research program to investigate whether there are sufficient constraints in the dynamics of language to promote robust induction by means of statistical learning over limited samples. It illustrates the approach with regard to English verbs, their grammatical form, semantics, and Zipfian patterns of usage. It explores the emergence of structure from experience using methods from cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics, learning theory, complex systems, and network science.

Language learning. -- 2013, v.63, supp. 1, march, p. 25-51

1. Complex systems 2. Corpus linguistics 3. Emergentism 4. Learning theory 5. Usage-based acquisition 6. Zipfian distribution 7. Language ontology
