

## **The Exploration of Multilingualism: Development of research on L3, multilingualism and multiple language acquisition<sup>1</sup>**

Larissa Aronin and Britta Hufeisen, Editors, John Benjamins Publishing, 2009

*Reviewed by Hamed Ghaemi<sup>2</sup>*

This book offers a comprehensive introduction to the concept of multilingualism as distinguished from bilingualism, and summarizes current trends in third language (L3) and third language acquisition (TLA) research. Chapter one (Aronin and Hufeisen) presents the genesis and development of L3 research, multilingualism, and multiple language acquisition research and introduces the other chapters.

Chapter two (Kemp) methodically explore terms, definitions and concepts of multilingualism, with detailed distinctions made between bilingualism and multilingualism. The author argues that it would be useful if researchers were to explicitly define multilingualism in-depth as part of each study. “Genesis and development of research in multilingualism: Perspectives for future research,” (Franceschini, chapter 3), explains the key concepts of diversity, the historical foundation of multilingualism, and cultural sensitivity. Chapter four (de Angelis and Dewaele), elaborates on the development of psycho- and cross-linguistic research from the 1950s to the present.

In chapter five (O 'Laorie and Singleton) discuss the two crucial elements of cross-linguistic influence—the perceived distance between the languages and the L2 (i.e., second language) factor. The authors investigate the nature of cross-linguistic influence in L3 learners through reports of two studies. The studies observe the learning of French and German as third languages (L3s) by Anglophone students whose L2 is Irish. The studies prove the psychotypological feature to be an important component of participants' cross-linguistic consultation when encountered with challenges in their L3.

One of the purposes of chapter six (Aronin and Hufeisen) is to introduce a wide variety of methods and approaches applicable in the field of L3 research to the readers. This chapter focuses on the research methods which particularly fit the nature of multilingualism. The authors try to persuade readers that L3 researchers should incorporate a full range of contemporary research methods from other scientific fields, and combine them with current linguistic investigations.

A synopsis of research on multilingualism education is presented in chapter seven, (Cenoz and Jessner). The authors introduce the newly-developed term of Third Language Acquisition (TLA) and explain the effect of age on TLA. An overview of the various forms of multilingual education and teaching is offered, focusing on the socio- and psycho-linguistic aspects of multilingual learning.

Peter Ecke, the author of chapter eight, lists an abundance of L3 resources (e.g., books, journals) likely to be of interest to graduate students, researchers, and practitioners. Finally, chapter nine (Aronin and Hufeisen) highlights once more the crucial phases in the history and future of multilingualism research.

In conclusion, I maintain that, as the upcoming trend in TLA is thriving, anyone interested in the field of TLA and L3 research can really benefit from this invaluable book.

1. AILA Applied Linguistics Series (AALS). John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam / Philadelphia, © 2009 – John Benjamins B.V.P. 168 pages.

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