

Report on the Conference of the European Second Language Association (EUROSLA23)

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One of the fields which is of importance to education is the sphere of Second Language Acquisition. In Europe, scholars and researchers with interest in this field are associated in the European Second Language Association (EUROSLA, <http://eurosla.org/home.html>). Besides various specialised seminar meetings and workshops, the Association also organizes an annual conference which is an internationally recognized event. The 23th conference of the European Second Language Association was organized by the Amsterdam Centre for Language and Communication of the University of Amsterdam and took place on the University premises from 28th to 31st August 2013.

About 350 delegates from over 35 countries attended the conference this year and introduced and discussed the latest trends in the field of second language acquisition. 153 papers, 43 posters, 2 colloquia and 16 doctoral presentations provided a framework for wider discussions on the issue and gave the experts a unique opportunity to share new findings and exchange their knowledge.

The first day of the event was dedicated to two traditional pre-conference events: a roundtable discussion with the theme of *Acquisition orders in SLA: Perspectives from emergentism and dynamic systems theory* whose aim was to help researchers evaluate the relevance of literature on second language acquisition orders through the views of the two current approaches to SLA. The approaches were introduced by their leading representatives, William O'Grady and Wander Lowie together with Marjolijn Verspoor. The second pre-conference event was the doctoral workshop which gave 16 emerging researchers an opportunity to present their research designs and first research findings and get valuable feedback from selected discussants as well as the audience. The focus of the emerging researchers' work covered a variety of topics, such as multilingualism and linguistic diversity, as well as languages studied, including English, French, German, Turkish and even Persian.

During the main conference four plenary talks were delivered. The conference was opened by a keynote speech by Alison Mackey *Methodology in SLA research: Past, present & future* in which the author presented an overview of methods commonly used in the past and explored the current state of methodological usage in the field. She also stressed the importance of research synthesis and replication for further development of the discipline and its research. The second plenary talk by Rens Bod called *What can computational modelling tell us about second lan-*

100 *guage acquisition?* focused on the Data-Oriented Parsing, a model of computational language learning which uses corpus fragments of formerly heard utterances to create new utterances. In her keynote speech *Early foreign language learning: Is it a child's play?* Marianne Nikolov introduced different views on early foreign language instruction and presented contemporary trends in the area based on recent research and studies. The fourth plenary talk *Linguistic convergence in dialogue: Interactive alignment as language learning* was delivered by Pavel Trofimovich and addressed the issue of the Interactive Alignment Model which is based on an idea that participants of a conversation gain mutual understanding by making connections between their linguistic representations. Based on empirical research, Trofimovich then presented the possible implications of this model for second and foreign language learning and teaching.

The presentations were divided into more than twenty strands according to their content. Some of the dominant topics were instructed SLA (focused on grammar and lexis, listening, speaking fluency, oral tasks and writing), experimental studies on implicit and intentional/incidental learning, interlanguage and cross-linguistic influence and the age factor. All these topics correspond to the current general discussion in the area of SLA. Each strand also demonstrated the width of possibilities and ways to approach each of the research problems. For example, the writing instruction was studied by comparing the effect of written corrective feedback on writing and acquisition of second/foreign language grammar (Guo), evaluating the success of individual and collaborative writing (Miranda and Manchón; McDonough, Crawford and DeVleeschauwer), the cognitive processes in operation during writing (Adrada Rafael) and investigating primed production in written synchronous computer mediated peer interaction (Michel). Similarly, the issue of cross-linguistic influence was explored by studying the influence of Chinese prosodic system on learning of English word stress patterns by Chinese learners (Li, Zhu and Zhang) or by an analysis of potential changes in the translator's first language linguistic system by analysing the interpretation of pronominal subjects in Italian (Milicevic and Kras). More information on the programme can be obtained from <http://aclc.uva.nl/conferences/eurosla-23/programme/programme.html>.

Although most contributions were research based, the programme also included methodological and theoretical strands. Methodological issues discussed involved linguistic complexity, fluency and task complexity; theoretical strands focused on topics such as the affective filter or third language acquisition. Two colloquiums presented a possibility for in-depth discussions on the topics of acquisition of visual languages and second language phonology.

Several delegates from the Czech Republic also participated in the event. The Masaryk University Brno was represented by K. Vlčková, I. Hudečková and K. Švejdíková (*Comparison of psychometric properties of foreign language learner strategy inventories: SILL, LSUS, and LASSI in their Czech adaptation*) and M. Šamalová (*Pedagogical translation in English language teaching and its influence on the development of learner's language skills: Research design*). The Palacký University Olomouc

was then represented by Š. Šimáčková and V. J. Podlipský (*The chemistry of foreign accents: Isolating elements of Czech-accented English*).

Each year, several papers are selected for a peer reviewed *EUROSLA Yearbook* which is published by John Benjamins and covered in LLBA index. The yearbook contains a choice of the most interesting contributions from the conference, covering a wide range of theoretical perspectives which cross different cultures and languages. Proposals for the EUROSLA Yearbook 14 from among the presenters at the EUROSLA 22 and EUROSLA 23 conference should be submitted until January 12th, 2014.

Next year, the 24th year of the EUROSLA conference is going to be hosted by the Centre for Language Learning Research, Department of Education, University of York.

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