

Hanna KOMOROWSKA (Ed.) *Issues in Promoting Multilingualism. Teaching – Learning – Assessment.*

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Issues in Promoting Multilingualism. Teaching – Learning – Assessment funded with the support of the European Commission contains 15 articles touching upon diverse aspects of language education based on quality and novelty. The Polish contributions to developing individual multilingualism neatly interlink theoretical perspectives with empirical ones and are succinctly presented by scholars from varied thematic milieus under the editorship of Hanna Komorowska, an internationally recognized Polish professor, a member of the EU High Level Group on Multilingualism in Brussels and a consultant to the European Centre of Modern Languages in Graz.

In place of a formal introductory chapter, there are two forewords opening the book, which constitute a noteworthy lead-in. The first comes from the publisher – the foundation/organization supporting the development of education in Poland – underscoring the context of the book’s release that de facto coincided with the Polish presidency of the Council of the European Union. In the second foreword, the editor gives an overview of contemporary language education priorities that provided the background for this publication; she also accentuates the changes that have taken place in the Polish language education system owing to which Poland is now a country which “has no difficulty understanding the role of languages in international communication” (p.7).

The subtitle on the one hand alludes to the title of the Council of Europe’s main language policy tool, i.e. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (2001) and on the other foretells the sections to be found in the volume. Accordingly, the first six chapters revolve around the area of language teaching targeting, at the outset, the education of language teachers in Europe – its structure, the content, the models it embodies as well as the specific trends that characterize both pre-service and in-service teacher education. In her informative writing, Hanna Komorowska, while calling for flexible adjustment of teacher education to constant changes, cautions against overlooking developments in educational or social sciences, “Whatever has proven valuable and useful in teacher education so far has to be integrated with new models and new ideas as hitherto unknown challenges face the teaching profession” (p. 34).

The area of English for Specific Purposes [ESP] occupies the two following chapters in this section, with the accent placed on the corporate environment in the first text and on the university area in the second, which turns out to be a valuable juxtaposition. Among the challenges of providing Business English [BE] training in the corporate context, Magdalena Bielenia-Grajewska emphasizes the 'multifactorality' of the teaching environment which, for instance, forces the tutor to take on many roles simultaneously. Moreover, she offers a remarkable typological overview of six organizational cultures alongside their pedagogical implications. The teaching of FL courses at universities is skillfully tackled by Aleksandra Łuczak who terms them 'very specific', for – as she stresses – they “fall into the category of English for Specific Purposes, but on the other hand the design process does not follow the classic procedures recommended for ESP courses” (p.61-62). Her further elaboration includes major dilemmas teachers may face in the teaching process, the determination of language course content by study courses and the development of study skills, while prominence is given to needs analysis as well as procedures in an ESP course design. In contrast, the two following chapters concern culture-related aspects in FLT, and in the first, Ewa Maciejewska-Stepień's article, both the political and the methodological background for developing Intercultural Communicative Competence [ICC] is unveiled. Ewelina Debaene, in turn, brings up the issue of immigrants living in Ireland, noting that speakers of Polish in this country may already outnumber native speakers of Irish. She discusses preliminary results from her thought-provoking study of attitudes towards learning the Polish language conducted at Trinity College Dublin. The section under the heading of “Teaching” closes with Sylvia Maciaszczyk's contribution concerning “Computer Assisted Language Teaching and Learning”, in which she draws upon the history of CALL, reviews three pedagogical theories appropriate for CALL and argues that “the Integrated CALL or Integrative CALL will be multifaceted and diverse not only in terms of technologies, but also of the pedagogies used” (p. 137).

Although the necessity of providing adequate training in self-management of language learning is not new, the continuous and evident learners' inability to self-direct still seems to be the main stumbling block causing them to “cease to learn foreign languages once formal education has been completed” (p. 143). And, accordingly, the next part devoted to the aspects of “Learning” starts with Małgorzata Dąbrowska's article on strategy training, in which she includes an account of her research examining strategic trainability and conscious strategy development of language students in pre-service teacher education.

The skill of reading is most strongly represented in the book, for as many as three scholars offer their insights in this area, all in fact agreeing upon the indispensability of its enhanced development during FL learning. First, Małgorzata Pamuła asserts that reading constitutes not only part of the communication process but also a form of communicating and she puts forward arguments in favour of “the necessity to develop the reading skill in a foreign language as soon as young learners are confronted with reading in the acquisition process of L1” (p.172). Second, Ewa Bandura focuses her attention on the university context and, by referring to her small-scale research with third year students, stresses that “Through critical reading

foreign language teaching can contribute to the acquisition of highly transferable skills" (p.210). Third, according to Magda Sroka, reading is a perfect vehicle for training thinking skills, mastering language skills, social and political development and personal growth, while literature can be an excellent carrier of content for the classroom. In the final chapter of this part, Agnieszka Otwinowska deals with certain terminological intricacies of bilingualism, plurilingualism, multilingualism and intercomprehension, concentrating most of her attention on the last concept mentioned as she stresses the importance of using cross-linguistic similarities in teaching; further on, she reports on her findings concerning the awareness of cognates among bilingual and multilingual Polish learners of English.

Four final contributions belong to the section of "Assessment". Dominika Szmerdt-Chandler admits it is generally not an easy task to test or assess learners' oral language production and, thus, her text centres around facilitating this process through offering guidance on the decisions being taken during the design and development of oral tests as well as during the rating process. Digital video project work, in turn, described as "a technologically rich learning environment [that] can be combined with a variety of student assessment techniques using learner-centered perspective" (p.302), is the focus of Elżbieta Gajek's article. The indispensability of using such tools, as the author soundly argues, lies in the possibility of integrating learners' skills and competences as well as combining the needs of learners with curricular requirements. Still remaining in the context of technology, Mariusz Marczak, after providing more theory-oriented historical background of Computer Assisted Language Testing (CALT) as well as advantages and restrictions in this area, he dedicates the next part of his text concerning the CALT test design and tools to "the more practically-minded". He also voices his regret that "despite the steady growth of dedicated technologies to date, current assessment procedures are far from perfect and require further development" (p.331). Michał B. Paradowski's last chapter impressively synthesizes data and conclusions drawn mostly from psycholinguistics and assesses benefits springing from multilingualism.

This valuable volume is characterized by comprehensiveness, relevance, quality and variability of topics and approaches gathered in the spirit of promoting multilingualism through language education. Its internal diversity with three main foci on teaching, learning and assessment will make the volume appealing to a broad audience from researchers interested in educational linguistics and psycholinguistics to methodologists, teachers and students seeking to broaden their knowledge and stay '*au courant*'.

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References

Council of Europe. 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press