

Editorial

As has been stated by Marianne Celce-Murcia (2001, p. 3), “[t]he field of second (or foreign) language teaching has undergone many fluctuations and shifts over the years. Different from physics or chemistry, in which progress is more or less steady until a major discovery causes a radical theoretical revision, language teaching is a field in which fads and heroes have come and gone in a manner fairly consistent with the kinds of changes that occur in youth culture”. Accordingly, despite a continually growing body of research data, the L2 learning/teaching processes remain, at least to some extent, a mystery waiting to be further unveiled, explored and reflected upon. Over a decade EFL educational contexts have gradually ceased to be viewed in terms of unidimensional, cause-effect relationships, whereas more and more attention has been given to the nonlinear, temporally determined changes that irrevocably though not always explicitly shape the learning and teaching environment (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011; Mercer, 2011; Pawlak, 2019; Waninge, Dörnyei, & de Bot, 2014). Following this line of reasoning, the present special issue of *Konin Language Studies* aims to look at the L2 classroom through the lens of teachers’ and students’ retrospective records of experience as well as prospective directions for language learning and teaching improvement. We would therefore like to welcome you to a collection of six papers written by experienced academic teachers and researchers who examine qualitative and quantitative swings in a range of L2 classroom-related variables and areas (e.g., anxiety, boredom, learner agency, L1 place in L2 pedagogy) from different (e.g., ecological, sociocultural, strategic, dynamic systems), longer (five decades) or shorter (one semester) perspectives.

Our special issue begins with Shannon McCrocklin’s paper which revolves around the issue of dictation programs for L2 pronunciation learning and, more specifically, investigates the effect of Automatic Speech Recognition-generated transcript and strategy use on the Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese and Ambonese/Malay-Indonesian ESL students’ pronunciation. The

qualitative and quantitative analysis of obtained data sheds some light on the participants' interaction with dictation programs and reveals their growing ability to improve the accuracy of transcription. In the second paper, Teresa Siek-Piskożub examines the role of learner agency in his or her EFL development, focusing on his or her awareness of the influence of his or her past on the present and the future as well as on the meaning that he or she makes of his or her EFL experience. A qualitative analysis of the narratives written by two Polish students of English shows that their comments on the past, the present and the future were nicely intertwined; they were also able to indicate and reflect on possible advantages and disadvantages of the institutionalized EFL teaching, though the tones of the two students' agency differed. Finally, the study proved the applicability of the chordal triad model of agency to EFL learning. The third paper, written by Katarzyna Papaja, is concerned with the relationship between content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and foreign language anxiety in different (Dutch, German and Polish) cultural contexts. The results gleaned from the Likert-scale questionnaire indicate CLIL as negatively impacting anxiety and contributing to the respondents' tenseness and nervousness. The aim of the quantitative study conducted by Joanna Zawodniak and Mariusz Kruk is to investigate changes in the levels of boredom as experienced by three English students whose score on the *English Classroom Boredom Scale* was the lowest, average and the highest. The results reveal a dynamic, spatially and temporally situated nature of the participants' boredom that was mainly caused by language activities, organization of the lessons and the phases they consisted of. As regards the fifth paper, authored by Rebecca Chism, it is intended to qualitatively explore the contribution of a weekly blog to the professional development of pre-service world language teachers. The data collected from several undergraduate students in the US over the period of one semester demonstrate that blogs can effectively witness student-to-teacher transformation, enhancing critical thinking and reflective skills. In the final, sixth paper, Aleksandra Wach makes a qualitative content analysis of a number of handbooks for teacher education in relation to their recommendations for L1 use in the L2 instruction. The findings clearly show that over a length of five decades the attitudes towards L1 use have undergone a kind of evolution and that in contemporary teacher education handbooks the L1 is more appreciated as a valuable resource worth incorporating into curricula for L2 teaching.

We hope that this special issue, with all its ideas, standpoints, suggestions and implications, will inspire academics and researchers working in the field to debate about possible ways of improving the quality of L2 education

in general and about the interplay of teachers' and students' unique pasts, presents and futures in particular.

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