

INTRODUCTION

Jorge Pinto*

jalpinto@edu.ulisboa.pt

Lili Cavalheiro**

lilicavalheiro@campus.ul.pt

María del Carmen Fondo***

mariafondo@campus.ul.pt

Ana María Cea-Álvarez****

anacea@elach.uminho.pt

This thematic volume brings together current studies that explore various issues related to the acquisition, learning, and teaching of foreign languages in various contexts, highlighting the heterogeneity and complexity that characterize them. Regardless of the different target languages on which the studies are carried out, from our understanding, in many situations their results can be applied transversally to the teaching and learning of other foreign languages. As the fields of acquisition as well as of teaching and learning are interconnected, our aim in this volume was to assemble papers that did not focus exclusively on theories of acquisition, but that also addressed issues of applied linguistics to the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

Thus, this volume encompasses contributions that consider two essential points: 1) how foreign languages are learned and acquired, and 2) how foreign language learning has changed, and which pedagogical models are suitable for different linguistic contexts.

Within the first and largest point, Santos' article, "Effects of procedural task repetition and task complexity on oral production of Portuguese foreign language: exploratory study", presents an analysis of the effects of tasks on the oral production of learners of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PFL), which is quantified within the dimensions of linguistic complexity, correctness, and fluency. The results demonstrate that task repetition has a positive effect on two levels of cognitive complexity. Next, Falcão and Weissheimer's article entitled "The impact of explicit feedback on the development of oral production in Spanish as a foreign language in distance education"

* Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal. ORCID: 0000-0002-5583-880X

** Centro de Estudos Anglisticos da Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal. ORCID: 0000-0001-9488-2603

*** Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal. ORCID: 0000-0002-8631-0602

**** Centro de Estudos Humanísticos, Escola de Letras, Artes e Ciências Humanas, Universidade do Minho, Braga, Portugal. ORCID: 0000-0002-7383-9646

analyzes the impact of oral production tasks on pronunciation, grammar correction, and fluency by learners of Portuguese L1 and Spanish L2 within the context of distance learning. Additionally, still regarding oral competence, the long-term repercussion of sending two different forms of succinct feedback is also evaluated. The third article, “Perception of fricative consonants of Portuguese as a second language by Chinese learners”, by Ci, Flores and Oliveira, describes the process of acquiring a sequence of fricative consonants in European Portuguese. This is an empirical study, in which several research instruments were developed and variables applied, namely the ability to identify and perceive certain sounds, the linguistic experience in the L2, or the influence of the L1 on the development of L2 sounds. In a similar vein, Duan, Castelo and Freitas’ article, “Acquisition of stressed oral vowels by Chinese learners with intermediate-high proficiency in European Portuguese as a second language”, presents a pilot study analyzing native speakers of Mandarin Chinese acquisition process of some vowels produced in stressed position in European Portuguese. The authors defend the relevance of explicit instruction regarding the pronunciation of the vowels analyzed at advanced levels of PFL teaching and learning, of the acoustic analysis as a tool for learning pronunciation, and of performing controlled and spontaneous speech tasks. The fifth article, “Developing phonological awareness skills in English (L2) on *Lexia Core5 Reading* platform: a process analysis in complex dynamic systems theory”, by Cruz and Alves, presents a longitudinal study based on a Brazilian student’s development of phonological awareness skills of English through the use of the *Lexia Core5 Reading* online platform. The authors highlight not only the student’s progress throughout the activities, but also those that were the most difficult for him. The following article, “Effect of task type on the use of discourse markers in L2 Portuguese by L1 Chinese learners”, by Yang and Li, examines the effect of various oral tasks on the use of speech markers (SMs) in Portuguese as L2 by L1 Chinese speakers at different levels of L2 proficiency. In the seventh article, “The difficult acquisition of the subjunctive vs. indicative moods by Portuguese and Francophone learners”, Antunes assumes that since Portuguese and French are two relatively similar Romance languages, it would be expected that students would not have great difficulties in using the subjunctive mood. However, the analysis of students’ discourse reveals difficulties in selecting the appropriate moods, even when in their mother tongues the context would imply a choice identical to that of the foreign language. Next, Zhang presents “An empirical study on the validity of the fluctuation hypothesis in the acquisition of Portuguese article by Chinese learners” to verify the fluctuation in the process of acquiring the article in Portuguese by Chinese learners who do not have this linguistic system in their L1, based on the quantitative analysis of data resulting from a forced production task related to the choice between the definite and indefinite articles. The last article considered in this first section, “Role of mother tongue on phraseologism in PLE: a study with Chinese learners”, by Pita and Ruixi, addresses the lexical-semantic dimension in a study in which the frequency of use of phraseologisms is analyzed according to the communicative needs and the difficulties they may represent for Chinese students of PFL. It also discusses the influence of other variables, such as the

role of the mother tongue, the frequency of use, and the time spent studying the acquisition of these structures.

The second section begins with the article, “For a multimodal mapping of the concept of translanguaging based on open data”, by Araújo and Pereira, which begins with the belief that classrooms are becoming increasingly multilingual and multicultural learning spaces. Within this context, translanguaging (an interdisciplinary concept that recognizes and embraces learners’ bi/multilingualism) is considered to contribute to the development of competences in both the mother tongue and target language(s) through the strategic activation of the linguistic repertoire in all its fullness. The eleventh article “Linguistic landscape: a pedagogical tool for plurilingual education and global citizenship”, by Lourenço and Melo-Pfeifer, presents a study that places the pedagogical resource of the linguistic landscape within a framework for plurilingual education and global citizenship. The data allow us to realize that the use of linguistic landscapes may promote plurilingual education and global citizenship when considering some of the principles listed by the authors. Considering the use of technology in language learning, Yu and Gaspar in their article, “Technology empowers: an investigation of ICALL’s influence on the design of self-regulated learning materials”, highlight materials based on Intelligent Computer Assisted Language Learning (ICALL), arguing they improve learning methods and provide students with more opportunities to learn outside the classroom, thus contributing to greater learner autonomy. The authors demonstrate, on the one hand, how ICALL can identify and correct errors, but, on the other hand, how its models and structures also still need to be improved compared to self-regulated printed teaching materials. The following article, “Teaching pragmatics through translation exercises”, by Díaz Ferrero, Severino and Porlán Moreno, reflects on the importance of being familiar with the pragmalinguistic factors when learning a foreign language, and presents the characteristics of a didactic sequence whose aim is the development of pragmatic competence through contrastive analysis and pedagogical translation exercises. The fourteenth article, “The Literary Text as a didactic resource for the teaching-learning of PFL: assumptions, challenges and proposals”, by Ramon, defends the literary text as a particularly useful resource for the teaching-learning process of PFL, as it allows for authentic contact with this pluricentric language, highlighting its linguistic and cultural diversity. In this article, some theoretical assumptions are summarized, challenges are reflected upon, and didactic suggestions are presented. The last article of this section and of the thematic volume, “Literary reading in Spanish language teaching: a study on the development of reading comprehension skills and literary skills of high school students”, by Moreira da Silva, derives from an experimental research whose aim was to investigate to what extent reading literary genres, in comparison with non-literary genres, contributes to the development reading comprehension skills and literary competence of Spanish-speaking high school students’ in Brazil.

In sum, the articles that comprise this thematic volume reflect the overall change in the panorama of foreign language acquisition and learning in the last decades. In view of this, they present studies that consider the linguistic repertoires of students in the learning and acquisition of the target languages as well as the multilingual contexts of the classrooms. In line with this, pedagogical models or didactic strategies promoting the

interlinguistic development of students, their plurilingual and pluricultural competences are supported.

Finally, the editors would like to thank the Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) support through the Funding Programs UIDB/00214/2020 (CLUL), UIDB/00114/2020 (CEAUL) and UIDB/00305/2020 (CEHUM).