LASLAB
Language & Speech Laboratory

18ᵗʰ LASLAB International Conference
Vitoria-Gasteiz, 25-26 May 2023

INTERACTION AND L2 GRAMMAR LEARNING BY CHILDREN IN AN EFL CONTEXT:
Form-focused instruction and individual differences

Sponsored by:

INDEX

WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear participants,

I am delighted to welcome you to Vitoria-Gasteiz!

We have organized the 18th international LASLAB workshop: *Interaction and L2 grammar learning by children in an EFL context: Form-focused instruction and individual differences* because we believe that engaging children in tasks that will help them learn L2 grammar and considering how individual differences might affect their learning process are topics in need of research.

We are very happy to have you all here sharing your perspectives and ideas on issues such as form-focused instruction, grammar learning strategies, metalinguistic awareness, and collaborative tasks that lead young learners to pay attention to form in a communicative setting.

We are privileged to have plenary sessions by six leading researchers whose work will surely be inspiring.

The conference has been possible thanks to the financial support of several sponsors, whose help is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

Prof. Dr. María del Pilar García Mayo
On behalf of the organizing committee

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Language and Speech research group (www.laslab.org)
Director: M. P. García Mayo

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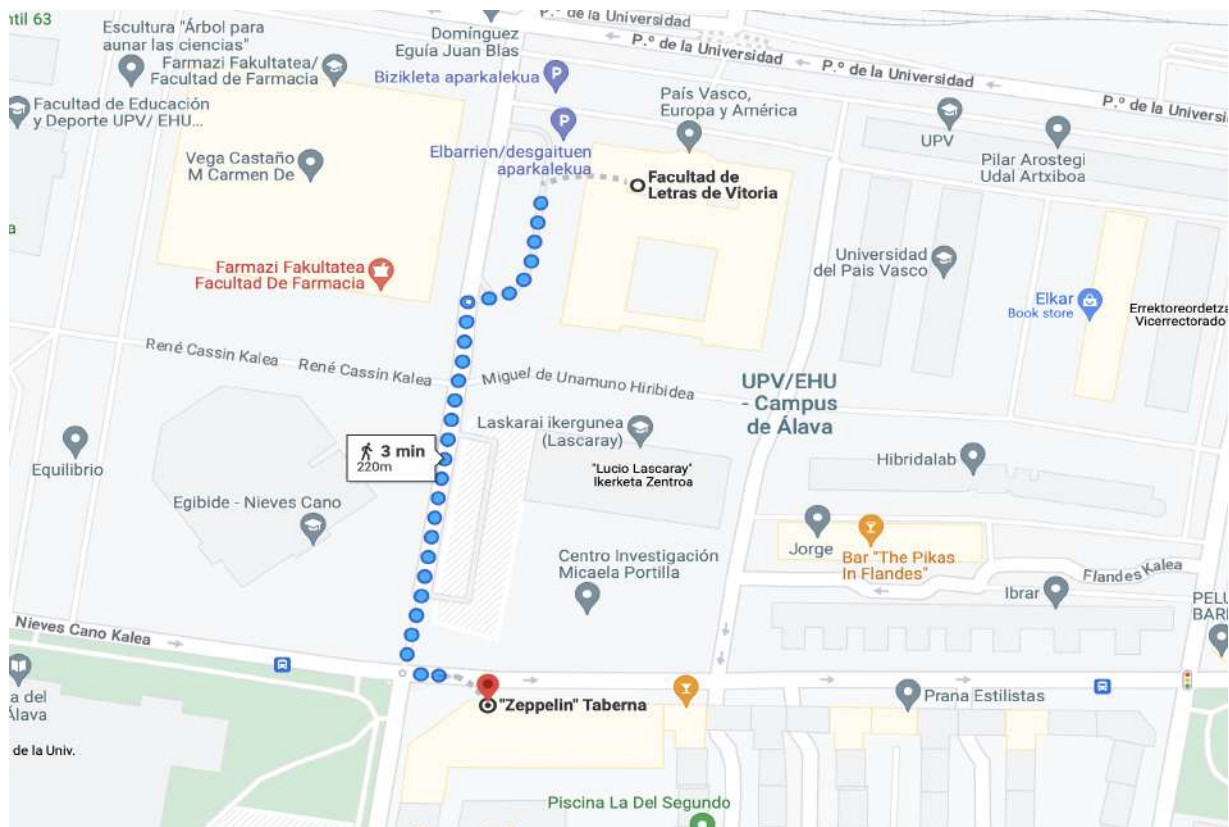
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Conference venue

- **Plenary sessions and communications:**

  o Salón de Grados. Faculty of Arts (Facultad de Letras).

- **Coffee breaks:**

  o Cafetería in the Faculty of Arts (Facultad de Letras), located on the ground

  floor of the Faculty building (see map below).

- **Lunch:**

  o Zeppelin Berria (see map below).

PROGRAM

THURSDAY, 25th MAY 2023

8:30 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:15	Opening
9:15 - 10:15	**ROY LYSTER** **(McGill University)** *Operationalizing form-focused instruction for young classroom learners*
10:30 - 11:00	*CLIL Overkill? The effect of different CLIL intensities on young learners' oral grammar* **Raúl Azpilicueta-Martínez (Universidad Pública de Navarra)**
11:00 - 11:30	*Developing metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual competence in 12 year-olds: The use of an instructional grammar sequence in L2 French* **Raquel Sanz- Moreno & María Dolores García Pastor** **(Universidad de Valencia)**
11:30 - 12:00	Coffee break
12.00 - 13:00	**KAREN ROEHR-BRACKIN** **(University of Essex)** *Measuring children's metalinguistic awareness*
13:00 - 15:00	Lunch
15.00 - 15:30	*Explicit instruction and length of exposure in the teaching of English noun-noun compounds: Two good 'ingredients' for Spanish children in primary education* **(ONLINE)** **Eduardo Gómez Garzarán & Raquel Fernández Fuertes (Universidad de Valladolid)**

15:30 - 16:00	*Metalinguistic awareness and language transfer in primary school children learning to express obligation in EFL* **María Dolores García Pastor, Jorge Piqueres-Calatayud & Antonio Jiménez Medes** **(Universidad de Valencia)**
16:00 - 16:30	*Language proficiency and language choice during child EFL interaction* **Erika J. Leacox & Asunción Martínez Arbelaiz (UPV/EHU)**
16:30 - 17:00	**Coffee break**
17:00 - 18:00	**MIROSŁAW PAWLAK** **(Adam Mickiewicz University)** *Investigating the use of grammar learning strategies by children: Issues and challenges*

FRIDAY, 26th MAY 2023

9:00 – 10:00	**RAPHAELE BERTHELÉ and ISABELLE UDRY** (Universität Freiburg) *Individual differences in instructed foreign language learning – Multilingualism in children with and without special needs*
10:15 – 10:45	*Young EFL learners' collaborative dialogue and learning of grammatical features: The effect of timing of form-focused instruction* **(ONLINE)** **Azar Tajabadi (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University)**
10:45 - 11:15	*The effect of focused task-based peer interaction on young EFL learners' knowledge and production of present continuous: An intervention study* **Elisabet Pladevall-Ballester (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) & Eloi Puig-Mayenco (King's College London)**
11:15 - 11:45	**Coffee break**
11:45 - 12:15	*Sensory chunking and brain efficiency* **Verónica Mendoza (UPV/EHU)**
12:15 - 12:45	*Collaborative writing and written languaging: Effects on accuracy* **María Puy Obanos Gil & Izaskun Villarreal (Universidad Pública de Navarra)**
12:45 – 13:45	**MASATOSHI SATO** (Universidad Andrés Bello) *Why don't they engage with communicative activities?! Psychological and social approaches*
	Closing

PLENARY SPEAKERS

Raphaele Berthelé

Raphaele Berthelé is Professor in multilingualism at the University of Fribourg. He studied and worked at the Universities of Fribourg, Tübingen, Berkeley, and Berne. He co-founded the Fribourg Institute of Multilingualism in 2008. Currently he directs the MA programmes in Multilingualism studies and in foreign language pedagogy. His research interests cover different areas from cognitive to social aspects of multilingualism. Over the last years, he has focused on the empirical investigation of receptive multilingualism, on the acquisition of literacy skills in multilinguals, on spatial reference in bi- and multilinguals, and on individual differences in language learning.

Roy Lyster

Roy Lyster is Professor Emeritus of Second Language Education at McGill University in Montreal, Canada (https://mcgill.ca/dise/roy-lyster). His research has examined content-based second language instruction and the effects of instructional interventions designed to counterbalance form-focused and content-based approaches. He was co-recipient with colleague Leila Ranta of the 1998 Paul Pimsleur Award for Research in Foreign Language Education and was presented the Robert Roy Award by the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers in 2017. He was co-president then president of the Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics from 2004 to 2008. He is author of a module called *Content-Based Language Teaching* published by Routledge in 2018, and three books*: Learning and Teaching Languages Through Content* published by Benjamins in 2007, *Vers une approche intégrée en immersion* published by CEC Publishing in 2016, and *Scaffolding language development in immersion and dual language classrooms* (with D. J. Tedick) published by Routledge in 2020.

Mirosław Pawlak

Mirosław Pawlak is Professor of English at the Faculty of Pedagogy and Fine Arts, Adam Mickiewicz University, Kalisz, Poland, and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Applied Sciences, Konin, Poland. His research interests include form-focused instruction, corrective feedback, learner autonomy, learning strategies, motivation, willingness to communicate, emotions in L2 learning and teaching, study abroad, English-medium instruction, and pronunciation teaching. Mirosław Pawlak is Editor-in-Chief of journals Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching and Konin Language Studies, and the book series Second Language Learning and Teaching (Springer). He has published over three hundred books, edited collections, book chapters and journal articles.

Karen Roehr-Brackin

Karen Roehr-Brackin is a reader in applied linguistics in the Department of Language and Linguistics and the director of the Centre for Research in Language Development throughout the Lifespan at the University of Essex.

She holds a PhD from Lancaster University and an MA from the University of Hamburg. Her work focuses on explicit and implicit knowledge and learning in instructed language acquisition in both adults and children. She is also interested in individual learner differences such as language learning aptitude, cognitive style, learner beliefs, and language learning history. Her most recent projects are concerned with language learning in older adults and the impact of playing to learners' strengths vs. compensating for their weaknesses in language instruction.

She has published a monograph on metalinguistic awareness in second language learning as well as a number of articles in international peer-reviewed journals.

Masatoshi Sato

Masatoshi Sato is a Professor at Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile. He is a lifelong language learner, language teacher, and teacher trainer. His research agenda is to conduct theoretical and applied research in order to facilitate the dialogue between practitioners and researchers. In addition to his publications in international journals, he has co-edited volumes from *John Benjamins* (2016: *Peer Interaction and Second Language Learning*), *Routledge* (2017: *The Routledge Handbook of ISLA*; 2019: *Evidence-Based Second Language Pedagogy*), *Language Teaching Research* (2021: *Learner Psychology and Instructed Second Language Acquisition*), and *The Modern Language Journal* (2022: *The Research-Practice Relationship*). He is the recipient of the 2014 ACTFL/MLJ Paul Pimsleur Award. He is currently the Editor of *Language Awareness*. Email: masatoshi.sato@unab.cl / Twitter: @masatoshi_sato

Isabelle Udry

Isabelle Udry is a researcher and lecturer at the Institute of Multilingualism at the University of Fribourg and the Zurich University of Teacher Education. She is interested in cognitive processes that underlie multilingualism and foreign language learning and how they can contribute to the development of teaching methodology. Her research focuses on individual differences in language learning, creativity and multilingualism, language aptitude, and the role of digital technology in the foreign language classroom.

ABSTRACTS: PLENARY SESSIONS

Operationalizing form-focused instruction for young classroom learners

Roy Lyster
McGill University (Canada)

Form-focused instruction (FFI) is designed to draw students' attention to target features as they are experiencing a communicative need and thus differs considerably from decontextualized language instruction. Foreign language learners in meaning-oriented classrooms with exposure to and engagement with relevant themes and topics have been shown by research to benefit from FFI. But how can teachers effectively engage students with FFI in systematic ways in non-traditional ways during meaning-oriented tasks? This talk will draw on a program of classroom research to illustrate how teachers can do so by intertwining reactive and proactive approaches to FFI.

A *reactive approach* includes oral scaffolding techniques such as teacher questions and corrective feedback in response to students' language production that serve to support student participation while ensuring that classroom interaction is a key source of language learning. A reactive approach includes in-the-moment strategies for drawing students' attention to language or getting them to produce more extended discourse. A *proactive approach* involves pre-planned instruction designed intentionally to highlight form-meaning connections by means of activities planned in a progression to promote noticing, awareness, and opportunities for practice in meaningful contexts. An illustration of such an approach tried and tested by teachers is an instructional sequence comprising four phases—contextualization, awareness, practice, autonomy—and thus called the CAPA model. Implemented in tandem, these reactive and proactive approaches to FFI serve to hone students' metalinguistic awareness while engaging them in purposeful use of the target language.

Measuring children's metalinguistic awareness

Karen Roehr-Brackin
University of Essex (United Kingdom)

Existing research into young learners' metalinguistic awareness has led to definitions of the construct as well as to key findings about its role in children's cognitive and linguistic development. I will briefly summarise this research before introducing two   well-established theoretical models that can help us understand the concept of metalinguistic awareness more broadly, that is, E. Bialystok's classic dichotomy of analysis of knowledge and control of processing, and R. Ellis' notion of explicit (second language)   knowledge. This will be followed by an overview of measures of metalinguistic awareness that have been used in empirical studies to date. Selected measures will be illustrated and then critiqued with reference to the two existing theoretical models. As a result of this critique, I will propose an updated model which combines features of the two previous frameworks by conceptualising knowledge representations in terms of (1) how implicit/explicit and (2) how specific/schematic they are. I will explain and exemplify this updated model to illustrate how it can serve as a useful thinking tool. In particular, I will argue that it not only allows us to theorise measures of metalinguistic awareness more clearly and more easily, but that it can also capture tasks aimed at assessing other linguistic and cognitive abilities. The presentation concludes with suggestions for future research into metalinguistic awareness.

| Faculty of Arts | Thursday, 25th May | 17:00 – 18:00 |

Investigating The Use Of Grammar Learning Strategies By Children: Issues And Challenges

Miroslaw Pawlac
Adam Mickiewicz University (Poland)

Despite numerous criticisms, research into language learning strategies (LLS) has remained robust ever since the construct emerged in good language learner studies (Rubin, 1975). In effect, a copious body of empirical evidence has been accumulated concerning patterns of LLS use in different contexts, also with respect to specific areas of the target language (TL), variables affecting such use as well as the effectiveness of instruction in this area (Griffiths, 2018; Oxford, 2017; Pawlak, 2021; Pawlak & Oxford, 2018). This said, some areas concerning LLS have remained blatantly neglected by researchers and one of them is the use of LLS employed for learning and using grammar structures, or grammar learning strategies (GLS). Even though the number of studies focusing on GLS is on the increase, mainly thanks to the work done in the Polish context (e.g., Hassanzadeh & Ranjbar, 2022; Pawlak & Csizér, 2022) and the development of the Grammar Learning Strategy Inventory (GLSI; Pawlak, 2018), the focus of these studies has been on university students, in particular English majors. At the same time, there has been no attempt so far to extend empirical investigation into GLS to children, the main reason being perhaps the somewhat controversial status of teaching and learning grammar in this age group. The talk aims to fill this gap by discussing key issues involved in investigating GLS among elementary school children as well as challenges that researchers are bound to encounter in the process. Additionally, an initial version of a research instrument for tapping the use of grammar learning strategies in this age group will be presented.

Individual differences in instructed foreign language learning – Multilingualism in children with and without special needs

Raphaele Berthelé & Isabelle Udry
Universität Freiburg (Germany)

In this talk we discuss how individual differences in cognition, language aptitude, motivation, and family background are associated with foreign language (FL) skills in young learners. After a brief overview of how and why scholars in the past have been interested in testing the ability to learn additional languages, we present results from a recent study on language aptitude in German-speaking Swiss primary school children whose instructed FLs are English and French.

We show the internal dimensionality of aptitude as it emerges from exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. There are consistent patterns of association across the different cognitive, language-related, and affective variables measured in this project. Moreover, we discuss the association of the different dimensions with FL skills both in normally developing children and in children who were diagnosed with learning difficulties.

Next, we focus on the affective-motivational dispositions underpinning FL learning. By means of network analysis, we provide insight into the relationship between children's FL self-concepts and other motivational constructs (including enjoyment of FL learning and FL learning anxiety) across the two instructed FL languages. In the last part of our talk, we outline how social background variables relate to the various cognitive and motivational constructs in FL learning.

Why don't they engage with communicative activities?! Psychological and social approaches

Dr Masatoshi Sato
Universidad Andrés Bello (Chile)

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has increasingly been implemented in language programs around the globe. The premise of this theoretical and pedagogical framework is that second language (L2) learners develop their desired skills when they are given a carefully-designed task. However, while TBLT research continues to show a task's effectiveness on L2 learning, reports from real-world classrooms, especially in foreign language contexts such as EFL in Spain, have revealed that ways in which a task works is not that straightforward. In this talk, I will first problematize TBLT's overarching assumptions. After discussing different L2 learning theories, which tend to be disassociated with each other, I will illustrate how L2 learners' psychological, social, and cognitive aspects are intertwined and, ultimately, accountable for the impact of TBLT. Finally, I will share some pedagogical interventions designed to facilitate learner psychology (e.g., metacognitive instruction, vision intervention) that may help learners benefit from a task more. With examples from the Chilean EFL context, I will propose that teachers can: (1) assess their students' psychology related to pair and group work; (2) raise the students' awareness of their own psychology; and (3) devote adequate instructional time to developing learner psychology that facilitates the students' engagement with the task and their classmates.

ABSTRACTS: ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

CLIL Overkill? The effect of different CLIL intensities on young learners' oral grammar

Raúl Azpilicueta

Universidad Pública de Navarra

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programmes seem to produce significant language gains when their exposure exceeds the 300-hour yardstick, according to research carried out with older learners primarily (Muñoz, 2015). However, the impact of high-intensity CLIL exposure on young learners' oral grammar still constitutes a clear research gap, despite the proliferation of early-start foreign language teaching in schools across Europe in the last decades (Muñoz, 2014). Recent research on CLIL and oral proficiency with young learners has provided mixed results (Madrid and Barrios, 2018; Martínez Agudo, 2019; Gálvez Gómez, 2021), and the number of studies analysing CLIL exposure and oral proficiency which have specifically accounted for socioeconomic status (SES) and extramural exposure is limited, what further complicates the generalisability of the existing evidence. This study compared the oral grammar of 108 young non-CLIL and CLIL learners in Spain performing a story-telling task, comprising i) a non-CLIL group (n=23; mean age= 10.91), who had received 1766 hours of instruction (HOI); ii) a low-CLIL group (n=21; mean age= 10.24; HOI: 2473 hours); iii) a high-CLIL group (n=32; mean age= 10.91; HOI: 4239 hours) and iv) a younger high-CLIL group (n=32; mean age= 9.84; HOI: 3709 hours). All four cohorts were matched for SES and extramural exposure. Kruskal-Wallis, post-hoc and Friedman tests were conducted.

The results revealed significant differences at the grammatical level between the high-CLIL groups (both age groups) and the non-CLIL group, with consistently higher values for the high-CLIL group. The fact that the additional 707h of the low-CLIL group over the non-CLIL group did not to produce significantly higher values refines Housen's claim that the supplemental exposure of CLIL might not be enough for young learners to display sizeable language gains (2012) and limits it to the low-CLIL group only.

Developing metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual competence in 12 year-olds: The use of an instructional grammar sequence in L2 French

Raquel Sanz-Moreno & María Dolores García Pastor

Universidad de Valencia

The Spanish educational system currently demands from teachers and schools the development of schoolers' awareness of how languages work, and their plurilingual competence. Explicit grammar instruction has been shown to promote such metalinguistic awareness in both L1, and FL learning (Camps & Milian, 2020; García-Mayo, 2017; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011), whilst pedagogical interventions that include this type of instruction and integrate different languages have been considered effective for plurilingual education (Guasch, 2008). In spite of this evidence, pedagogical initiatives of this kind and related research regarding FL learning in Spain have been rare (see Boillos Pereira et al., 2022; Mallol & Alsina, 2017), especially with children aged 6-12 years. This study intends to fill this void within the context of a larger funded project (PID2019-105298RB-I00), which attempts to develop an interlinguistic school grammar for plurilingual education in Spain (Rodríguez-Gonzalo, 2021). In this specific study, which is research in progress, an instructional grammar sequence (IGS) (Camps, 2003) that combines form focused instruction of present simple in L2 French with language transfer activities in Spanish and English was designed and implemented in at least one group of 12 year-olds from a semi-private school centre in a major city in the south-east of Spain. The sequence thus served as our main data collection instrument together with a semi-structured interview with the FL teacher, her classroom observations and the researcher's during the instructional treatment. The data were mostly analyzed from a qualitative perspective with the analysis of classroom discussions focusing mainly on language related episodes (LREs) (Swain & Lapkin, 1998). We expect to obtain positive results regarding the general development of schoolers' knowledge about present simple linguistic forms and uses in L2 French. However, we also expect the students not to put all their knowledge to use in everyday communication contexts.

Explicit instruction and length of exposure in the teaching of English noun-noun compounds: two good 'ingredients' for Spanish children in primary education

Eduardo Gómez Garzarán & Raquel Fernández Fuertes

Universidad de Valladolid

The modification of a noun by another noun (*e.g.*, *paper plane*) is not typically part of the English curriculum in Spanish schools. This is so despite the presence these structures have in the textbooks used in the English subjects as well as in the content subjects taught in English (Gomez Garzarán 2017).

These structures have been previously investigated with different types of participants and pairs of languages analyzing the possible cross-linguistic influence in language contact situations (*e.g.,* Nicoladis 2002, Fernández Fuertes et al. 2008). The production of noun-noun constructions (*i.e.*, NNs) by 84 L1 Spanish-L2 English children has been analyzed to address (i) the role of direct explicit instruction as opposed to indirect implicit instruction in the English classroom; and (ii) the effect length of exposure can have in native-like attainment in these cases. Four participant groups have been considered: two that have been part of a 3-year teaching program involving explicit NN instruction (9-year-old and 11-year-old group); and two more groups of the same ages following regular instruction without explicit teaching on NNs.

Participants have been tested individually via a referential communication task (Yule 1997). This director-matcher task, which simulated a board game, prompted participants to produce NNs by means of specifically designed pictures.

Results show (i) that explicit instruction does have a positive effect (in line with Norris & Ortega 2000, de Graaff & Housen 2009, Spada & Tomita 2010, etc.) since more nativelike production is achieved and a higher number of NNs appear after the explicit instruction period; and (ii) that length of exposure also has a parallel effect that is accentuated when combined with explicit instruction. This has a double implication: (i) that explicit teaching of grammatical properties is effective and (ii) that the productivity of English NNs is something that can actually be taught.

Metalinguistic awareness and language transfer in primary school children learning to express obligation in EFL

María Dolores García Pastor, Jorge Piqueres-Calatayud & Antonio Jiménez Medes

Universidad de Valencia

The effectiveness of explicit grammar instruction in the development of L2 learners' metalinguistic awareness has long been attested (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011; Norris & Ortega, 2000). Such pedagogy is especially important in an EFL context, in which the learner has limited access to the target language (Nassaji, 2017). Spain is an example of such context, whilst certain regions are also bilingual in Spanish, and a regional language. Such linguistically diverse landscape, and European educational trends led the Spanish government to promote plurilingual education already in 2006, and an approach to grammar instruction oriented to develop students' metalinguistic awareness of regional languages, and foreign languages like English. Although attempts have been made to enhance Spanish primary school children's plurilingual competence (Boillos Pereira et al., 2022; Cenoz, 2017), and their language awareness of grammar in curricular languages (García-Mayo, 2017; Camps & Milian, 2020), pedagogical interventions that target both, and research into their potential effects are necessary to truly reach the language education that the current Spanish educational system requires. Therefore, in this still in-progress study, which belongs to a larger research project, an instructional sequence that includes language awareness and language transfer activities on the forms that are used to convey obligation in English (i.e., imperative, *have to*, *must*, and *should*), was implemented in two intact classes of 6ᵗʰ Primary schoolers (11-12 years old) with an A1-A2 proficiency level in English (Council of Europe, 2018). Multi -source data including learners' responses to the activities, classroom interactions, and a semi -structured interview with the teacher, were analysed mainly from a qualitative perspective that draws on key notions from the language education, and SLA literature. Based on previous implementations of this sequence, positive results regarding learners' awareness of the aforementioned forms are expected. Language transfer regarding all these forms is also expected to be adequate.

Language Proficiency and Language Choice during Child EFL Interaction

Erika J. Leacox & Asunción Martínez Arbelaiz

UPV/EHU

The effect of language proficiency and language choice on child interaction while working on classroom tasks (Pica, Kanagy and Falodun, 1993; Seedhouse, 2005) is the focus of this research. Forty dyads of nonnative speakers (NNS) of English aged 8-12 years completed a task designed by the first author who was their teacher in a school in Tolosa (Basque Autonomous Community).

The dyads were organized into proficiency levels, following Lesser (2004). We recorded the interactions, examining the effect of proficiency level categories on instances of attention to form. This attention to form came from breakdowns of communication and the resulting negotiation of meaning (Long, 1996; Long and Porter 1985; Pica, 1994; Varonis and Gass, 1985). The relationship that proficiency in English had with student´s reliance on the languages of their repertoire was also observed. Analyses for variables of attention to form and task completion of each proficiency level category were performed. Our results suggest that the proficiency level does not have an effect on the number of instances of attention to form. Although the difference was not significant, the higher-level dyads reached resolution of the tasks in English more often than the lower levels. Overall, learners' use of English became greater as proficiency level interactions became higher. Across proficiency level categories of interaction, it was found that the learners used less Basque, Spanish, and Mixed utterances in the higher proficiency levels. Task completion was reached less in the Mid-Mid categories than in Low-Low and High-High dyads which could imply that the Low-Low and Mid-Low interaction categories reached more completion due to their reliance on non-target languages. These results add a multilingual component (Melo-Pfeifer, 2017) to the field of child interaction research (Mackey and Oliver, 2002; Oliver, 2002) shedding some light on the current teaching practices.

Young EFL learners' collaborative dialogue and learning of grammatical features: The effect of timing of form-focused instruction

Azar Tajabadi

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

With the accumulation of evidence for the ample benefits of form-focused instruction (FFI) (e.g., Norris & Ortega, 2000; Spada & Tomita, 2010), current research is moving towards exploring the factors affecting the effectiveness of FFI in different contexts with different learners (e.g., Nassaji, 2016; Xu & Li, 2022). Following suit, the present study examined the effect of two types of FFI on fifty-seven young EFL learners' learning of irregular past tense. Learners in four intact classes with similar proficiency levels were randomly assigned to two instructional treatments: isolated pre-task FFI and integrated FFI. In groups of three, the learners engaged in a decision-making task in which they built a story by putting related pictures in order. All groups received instructions on meaning and form. However, in the pre-task group FFI was provided before the story-building task, while in integrated groups, FFI was provided within the task. One week after the instruction, a similar task was carried out for the purpose of measurement. Treatment effect was measured in two ways. First, the number of form-focused language-related episodes (LREs) produced during the task completion was considered as evidence of learning in progress. The audio-recorded interactions between the learners were transcribed and coded for instances in which they discussed the use of irregular past tense. Results showed that LREs were produced significantly more by the learners in integrated FFI. The second measurement was carried out through an error correction test (ECT). Although learners in the pre-task FFI groups outperformed their counterparts on the test, the difference was not statistically significant. Together, the study suggests that the effect of sequence of FFI might play a role in young learners' learning of grammatical features. However, more evidence is required before pedagogical implications can be made. Also, the study draws attention to the incongruity between the occurrence of LREs and test performance and raises questions in this regard.

The effect of focused task-based peer interaction on young EFL learners' knowledge and production of present continuous: an intervention study

Elisabet Pladevall

Universitat de Barcelona

Eloi Puig-Mayenco

King's College London

A central question in Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) research is whether explicit instruction followed by task performance results in more effective acquisition of a given grammatical structure (Ellis, 2018; Ellis et al. 2020) with some studies suggesting that explicit instruction followed by focused task performance leads to higher gains in explicit knowledge than task-only conditions (e.g., Li, et al. 2016; Shintani, 2019) and to more frequent but not necessarily accurate production of the target structure (Ellis, et al. 2019).

This study explores whether explicit knowledge and production of present continuous are equally affected after a task-based peer interaction intervention with and without grammar instruction. To do so, an intervention study was designed where 4th grade 9/10 year-old Catalan-Spanish bilingual EFL primary school learners were divided into four groups (n=22 per group), who took part in an 8-week pedagogical intervention (50 minutes per week). A fifth control group only participated in the testing sessions. Groups were divided according to the intervention received: *grammar+interaction* – explicit grammar + interaction instruction; *grammar* – explicit grammar instruction only; *interaction* – explicit interaction instruction only; *games* – no additional instruction, unrelated vocabulary games; *control* – no intervention. The four groups who received intervention also participated in task-based peer interaction every week (both collaborative and information-gap tasks).

All groups took a bi-modal Grammaticality Judgement Task and a collaborative picture narrative task before and after the intervention. Before intervention, all groups showed low percentages of accuracy in both tasks. In the GJT, only those who received mixed grammar and interactional explicit instruction and grammar only instruction showed significant improvement. In the collaborative task, the four treatment groups showed significant improvement in attempts at production and accuracy, albeit to different strengths. Findings will be discussed in relation to the pedagogical intervention and the development of knowledge and production in peer-interaction contexts.

Sensory chunking and brain efficiency

Verónica Mendoza

UPV/EHU

Learners of English as a foreign language do not always produce morphemes such as the third person singular *-s* in obligatory contexts even at advanced instructional stages. Some linguists resort to Generativism to account for variability in morpheme production but provide no pedagogical solutions (Lardiere, 2009; Villarreal & García Mayo, 2009; Martínez-Adrián & Gutiérrez-Mangado, 2015). Moreover, some neuroscientists state that chunking (grouping items together) contributes to brain efficiency. Chunking mitigates the cognitive load of the contents processed and aids acquisition, as when we chunk a telephone number to learn it. Additionally, with rehearsal, the brain acquires multi-item motor/procedural memories, called *motor chunks*. Motor chunks constitute the building blocks of the planning and production of automatic (cognitively non-demanding) action sequences, including the automatic sentences of language (Graybiel, 1998, 2008; Jin et al., 2014). To increase the accuracy rates of the *-s* and assess instructional efficacy, the author tested an innovative pedagogy that comprised *sensory chunking* (the technique of teaching with sentences built from language blocks, called *sensory chunks*) and complementary didactic devices.

Sixty-four learners of English as a foreign language from three schools of primary education in Spain participated in a classroom experiment. The participants from school 1 (the control group) and those from schools 2 and 3 (the experimental groups, taught with the innovative pedagogy) received three sessions on the *-s* lasting 45 minutes each. All three groups performed four tasks following a pretest-posttest procedure. Here are presented the results of an oral sentence transformation. This task yielded a statistically significant increase in the accuracy rates of the *-s* only in the experimental groups: group 2 (z=-2.756, p=0.006, dCohen=2.626) and group 3 (z=-4.571, p<0.001, dCohen=3.7). Moreover, the results suggest that sensory chunks and sensory chunking could contribute to brain efficiency, promote the acquisition of motor chunks, and foster language automatisation.

Collaborative writing and written languaging: Effects on accuracy

María Puy Obanos Gil & Izaskun Villarreal

Universidad Pública de Navarra

Both collaborative writing (CW) and processing of written corrective feedback (WCF) have been shown to be advantageous for the understanding and processing of errors (e.g., Author 2 & Other , 2021; Bitchener 2012) and the retention of forms and subsequent language development (e.g., Author 2 & Other, 2023; Chen, 2019; Nicolas Conesa et al., 2019). To date, there is scarce research examining the combined benefits of CW and WCF processing via written languaging (WL) and its prolonged benefits among non-adult populations.

To this end, the present study investigates the effect of CW and WCF by exploring the accuracy rates of 4 texts (pre, rewritten, post and delayed texts) written by 133 14 year-old secondary EFL learners under 6 conditions: (1) written and errors processed individually; (2) written and errors processed collaboratively; (3) written individually and errors processed collaboratively; (4) written collaboratively and errors processed individually; and two control groups who simply wrote the texts (5) individually and (6) collaboratively. Students' texts were analysed for correction rates (errors and errors per word) and evidence of learning –(un)successful, uncorrected or deleted errors. Preliminary results revealed accuracy differences among texts and conditions as well as learning favouring individual conditions. Pedagogical implications will also be drawn.

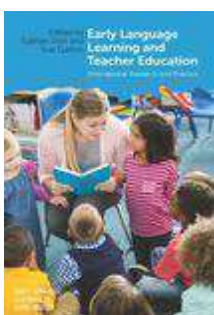# INFORMATION ABOUT RESEARCH IN THE FIELD

Early Language Learning in School Contexts
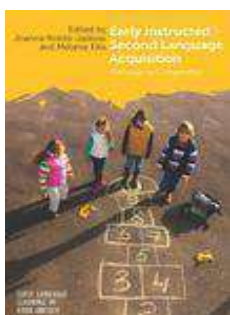Series of books edited by Janet Enever and Annamaria Pinter in Multilingual Matters
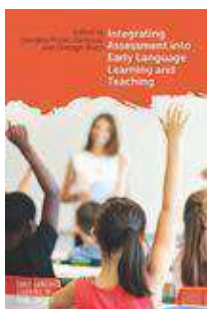
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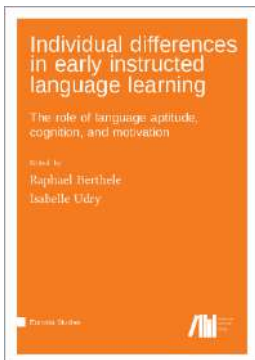Edited by Subhan Zein and Sue Garton

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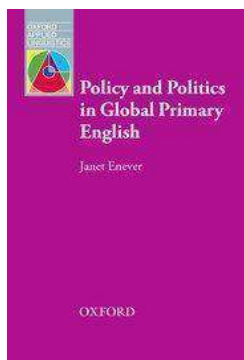
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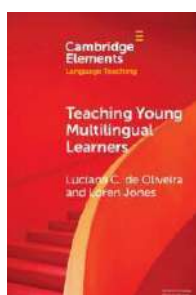
Series: Second Language Acquisition

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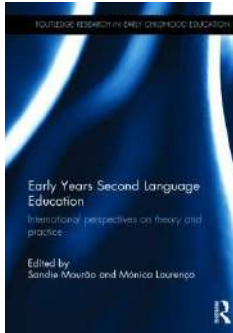
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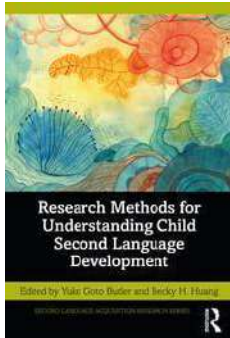Edited by: Victoria A. Murphy and Maria Evangelou

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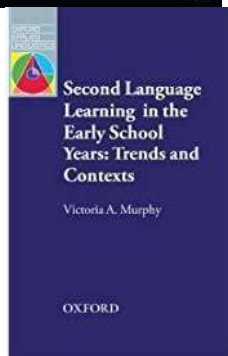Edited by Sandie Mourão and Mónica Lourenço

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Specialized journal:

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  https://benjamins.com/catalog/ltyl

Networks:

- **AILA Research Network on English Language Learning:**

  http://www.ell-ren.org/

- **Early Language Learning Research Association (ELLRA)**

  http://ellra.org/

- **Red española, ALEXI:**

   https://sites.google.com/view/red-alexi/