

UC Riverside

Issues in Applied Linguistics

Title

Editorial

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1d75f3wx>

Journal

Issues in Applied Linguistics, 16(1)

ISSN

1050-4273

Authors

Mikesell, Lisa

Olinger, Andrea

Hardacre, Bahiyyih

Publication Date

2008-06-01

DOI

10.5070/L4161005090

Peer reviewed

Editorial

This issue explores a diverse set of topics: the socialization of Israeli children to time, the motivation of male and female adolescent learners of French, and the pragmatic development of Spanish learners at the university level. While there seems to be little connection between the articles – they use different methods, investigate ‘learners’ of different languages and of different age groups, and focus on different variables – they come together in a fundamental way. Each article essentially concerns identity: how children are socialized to time is linked to the identity of a community; how male and female adolescent learners’ motivation differs brings to the surface the effects of a classic social variable of identity, that of gender; how learners respond pragmatically in differing social contexts and to individuals of varying social statuses involves a learner’s perception of their own identity and that of those around them.

Time and temporality have been given little attention in language socialization research. The first article of this issue addresses this shortcoming in the field by investigating how children are socialized to timekeeping and schedules. Kattan, using ethnographic data of three families of Israeli emissaries, examines interactions between children and their parents. Specifically, he explores how children are socialized to time and scheduling, focusing on disagreements between children and their parents. He claims that these disagreements can be a resource for understanding oppositions between members of a community as well as what is shared amongst these same members. He focuses particularly on activity-transition-point-proposals, defined as “initiations of transitions from one temporally marked activity or routine to another,” and their uptake. Focusing on these moments helps make clear how children in these families are socialized to timekeeping and also how this time socialization process can illuminate the relationship between individual and community.

Perhaps one of the most popular distinctions in the second language motivation literature is that of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Kissau examines how these two forms of motivation are influenced by gender. His results, based on a survey of 490 grade 9 students studying French as a second language in Canada, indicate that girls show more intrinsic motivation behavior (e.g., performing well in language classroom activities, demonstrating more curiosity to learn new things, and preferring challenging activities), whereas boys are less intrinsically motivated but more extrinsically motivated than girls to learn French. (e.g., boys needed more external motivators such as candy or grades). Kissau suggests that one way to motivate boys intrinsically is to make lessons more analytical or involve topics more appealing to them such as sports. Believing that extrinsic motivation alone is not enough to motivate male learners to participate in class or sustain their long-

term interest in French, he suggests that teachers should find a way to motivate male students intrinsically.

Few studies have examined the effects of instruction on the pragmatic development of Spanish learners. In the third article, Félix-Brasdefer uses a quasi-experimental design to investigate whether explicit instruction can improve fifth-semester learners' abilities to make refusals to persons of equal and unequal status in formal and informal situations. One week after instruction, the author reports two findings: first, while there was no change in the control group's performance, the experimental group's initial preference for direct refusals changed to a preference for indirect refusals. Second, the experimental group demonstrated a greater variety and frequency of indirect strategies across conversational turns. Additionally, one month after instruction, the experimental group showed evidence of having retained most pragmatic features that had been taught. In light of these findings, Félix-Brasdefer encourages language teachers to use a range of activities to raise learners' awareness of pragmatics and suggests resources for teachers of Spanish as a foreign language who wish to do so.

During the preparation of the last few issues, IAL has undergone changes within its editorial, production, and managerial staff. Rosamina Lowi, Co-Editor of issue 15.1, has recently graduated from the department and is now teaching in the Languages and World Cultures program at UCLA. We congratulate her and wish her much success in her new position. We welcome Andrea Olinger and Bahiyyih Hardacre as Assistant Editors, Stephanie Kim and Jessi Roehrig as Assistant Production Editors, and So Yeon Kim and Jin Hee Lee as Managing Editors. Finally, we would like to say farewell to Emmy Goldknopf, who after serving as an Editor, Co-Editor, and Assistant Editor on several issues since 13.2, has moved on. IAL benefited tremendously from her extraordinary dedication and incredible eye for detail. We wish her the very best in her future endeavors, both professional and personal.

Lisa Mikesell
Andrea Olinger
Bahiyyih Hardacre