

Simone Montanari, and Suzanne Quay (eds.): Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Multilingualism: The Fundamentals

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Issues of multilingualism regarded as a typical perspective of everyday life are presented in the current volume, inspired by the need for distinction between learning, unlearning and using more than two languages. Divided into four parts, the structure of the book reflects the research areas of multilingualism ranging from the global perspective towards the monolingual individual.

The first part is concerned with societal issues of multilingualism focusing on its historical, political, educational and economic matters contributing to the development of multilingualism in the global North and South. Although not covering the world regions entirely, research from various areas of the globe contribute to the understanding of a variety of issues in multilingual communities in North Africa, Southeast Asia, Europe, and North America. Highlighting the significance of ideological processes and the social nature of language, Ech-Charfi provides a thorough overview of the available linguistic resources to speakers of various language varieties in North America. Ng and Cavallaro's study is concerned with the diversity of linguistic practices and attitudes towards official languages as an effect of cultural and linguistic aspects of colonisation in Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore. Bartelheimer, et al. cover diverse manifestations of multilingualism in Europe with the focal point of institutions, language policy and language programmes in the regions of Belgium, Switzerland, Norway, Luxembourg, as well as in the whole of Europe. Historical and demographic trends in the multilingual communities of Canada and the US are outlined in the paper of Wright and Chan through examples of the multilingual cities of Toronto and Los Angeles.

The second part of the edition, discussing language use in multilingual communities, provides insight into issues of diglossia, codeswitching, receptive multilingualism in communities of languages with a high mutual intelligibility level, along with issues of language use of the individuals who were raised in signing communities. Through the story of Agnieszka, a schoolgirl using Polish, Irish and English in different domains of her life, Maher discusses issues of diglossia as heterogenous functional allocation of high and low language varieties, the co-existence of which is characterised by constant and dynamic movement. The study of Stavans and Porat focuses on providing a thorough definition of codeswitching as a language contact phenomenon establishing communal and individual identity, enhancing and fostering multiliteracy, as well as means of social inclusion. Through models of Matrix Language Frame (Myers-Scotton, 1993), the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism (DMM, Herdina & Jessner, 2002), Grosjean's (2001) language mode model, the chapter describes Stavans' (2005) trilingual processing model, giving insight on how a multilingual

individual processes languages. Goosken's paper is concerned with receptive multilingualism in language communities with closely related languages of high mutual intelligibility. The chapter describes the linguistic determinants of inherent and acquired receptive multilingualism at lexical, phonetic, morphosyntactic levels along with extra-linguistic factors such as personality traits, attitudes, exposure, literacy, the availability of resources and applied strategies in order to cope with misunderstandings throughout the communication process. Emphasizing that no matter how natural this process might seem among speakers of closely related languages, more awareness from the part of language policy makers, linguists and language professionals is essential in order to establish receptive multilingualism as a more widely acknowledged and accepted means of communication. Pichler, et al. are concerned with bilingual communities using different modes of communication, which are spoken/written and sign language. The paper provides insight into matters of bimodal bilingualism from a multidisciplinary perspective, from code-mixing behaviours, psycholinguistic questions, through child language acquisition, towards communication matters among signing communities. This chapter draws attention to the need for the recognition of multilingualism as a defining feature of diverse signing communities.

Part three is mainly concerned with the impact of family and schools on multilingual children. Quay and Chevalier discuss various factors that may affect the language outcome in the home including parental language choice and language use patterns, discourse style, language contact and exposure through interaction with family members along with the role of media and literacy as well as attitude resulting from language prestige. Lanza and Lexander's paper provides an overview of existing research on spoken and digitally mediated family language practices in transcultural families, advocating increased awareness on the exploration of (non-)digital language practices in order to shed light on family language decision making, family dynamics regarding language use, as well as questions of multilingualism across different generations. Wang discusses the processes of learning additional languages in the school context highlighting common mechanisms used by multilingual students in order to acquire an additional language, such as transfer, translanguaging and the role of metalinguistic awareness. The process is described at phonological, lexical, semantic morphosyntactic, and pragmatic level while providing insight into the narrative and literacy development along with the development of figurative language. The highly complex topic of language attrition in multilinguals is discussed by Jessner and Megens, providing an overview of the research field and the concept along with describing crucial factors that influence the attrition process.

The study is based on the DMM (Herdina & Jessner, 2002) as a holistic approach of multilingual development, language maintenance and attrition.

Differences between bi- and multilingualism are addressed in the fourth part of the volume. The chapter written by Montanari is concerned with the effects of multilingualism on the acquisition of new languages regarding various linguistic levels, such as phonetics, phonology, vocabulary, grammar and literacy. The chapter argues in favour of the multilingual advantage resulting on one hand from the direct transfer of skills and knowledge from previously known languages along with learning experiences, and on the other hand from indirect influential factors deriving from changes in the linguistic and cognitive abilities of the learner. Allgäuer-Hackl and Jessner's contribution is concerned with various language contact phenomena in multilinguals, such as cross-linguistic influence and -interaction, as discussed in the DMM (Herdina & Jessner, 2002). The authors argue in favour of regarding multilingual awareness denoted as an umbrella-term for meta- and cross-linguistic awareness as a key factor of the multilingual processes of language learning, -management, and -maintenance. A selected array of research is presented in order to support the claim, highlighting the multilingual advantage, and emergent qualities in the multilingual system. The authors articulate the need of future research on the framework of cross-linguistic interaction of multilinguals, along with studies providing insight into processes of multilingual awareness as well as enhanced strategic processes as proof of the M-factor concerning experiences of multilingual language learners. Segal et al. discuss the cognitive benefits of multilingualism in aging, advocating the formation of a cognitive reserve as a result of mental effort and intellectual engagement, which may delay and slow down the processes of cognitive decline. The paper sets out to explore the effects of multilingualism on cognitive performance through a preliminary study examining the performance of 198 adults aged 22-90. The results indicate that the number of languages spoken by an individual influences selective attention. The results have to be carefully considered due to the complexity of the phenomenon of multilingualism, including variables that are challenging to be separated from each other. The study of Strangmann et al. contributes to the growing field of research on the multilingual brain with focus on the neural underpinnings of language control. Reviewing relevant literature concerning the bi- and multilingual brain, the authors advocate the existence of a common language network along with some areas of perisylvian language region that is dedicated to language learning.

The final chapter, summarizing the contributions to this edition highlights the unique characteristics of multilingualism, which need to be researched not only as a variation of bilingualism, but in its own right.

The editors of the current volume express their hope for the emerge of a dynamic and holistic viewpoint of multilingualism, responding to key questions and meeting the challenges of a multilingual world.

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