Cognition and Language Learning, edited by Sadia Belkhir (2020)

PARASKEVI THOMOU

The overall theme of the *Cognition and Language Learning* volume, edited by Sadia Belkhir, is the interaction between cognitive functions and foreign language learning and how this interaction is taking place in the foreign language classroom.

Many different approaches concerning second language acquisition have been developed in the past, i.e., Behaviourist Approach (Skinner 1957), Universal Grammar (Chomsky 2000), Cognitive theories, including Cognitive Linguistics theory. They explore the tight links between knowledge, language acquisition and cognition (Skehan1998, Langacker 2001, Littlemore 2009 etc.). The original contribution of the volume to the prevailing literature on cognition and language learning lies in the fact that it sheds light on the fundamental cognitive processes of thinking, interpreting, strategy use, perception, memorization, etc. The aim of the volume is to indicate how all of these cognitive processes affect the educational activity carried out in different educational settings. The volume seems to fulfill its aim as long as the need inside the linguistic community for studies on the interaction between cognition and language learning is persistent and constant.

The book is organized into nine chapters. Each chapter contains research carried out on foreign language students. The

book is addressed to linguists, language scholars, bilingual class teachers and foreign language students. It attempts to show "how cognitive aspects featuring language are relevant to the field of educational linguistics" with the ultimate goal of improving language teaching (Belkhir 2020: 10).

The first chapter, by the editor Sadia Belkhir, provides an introduction to cognitive linguistics theory and briefly discusses the connection between cognition and language in relation to several theoretical backgrounds (linguistics, psychology and second language acquisition).

In the second chapter, Kamila Ammour discusses the metacognitive awareness of foreign language students during narrative text reading. The research carried out shows that EFL learners use strategies that are limited to word level and confined to the literal meaning of texts. The role of EFL teachers is to raise their students' metacognitive awareness, i.e. to teach them to use metacognitive strategies.

In the third chapter, Fatima Zohra Chalal deals with language attrition. The study in question shows that recalling vocabulary already learned is easier and faster than learning and retaining new vocabulary. In this chapter, the savings paradigm is the proposed method. It assumes that once a word is learned, there are residual traces of knowledge that can be used to reactivate it.

In the fourth chapter, Sadia Belkhir returns to discuss metaphor identification (Metaphor Identification Procedure) within texts. The research carried out shows that participants unconsciously use metaphors in their language production, yet they face difficulty in identifying them as metaphors. However, MIP partially helped learners to identify metaphors in written discourse. Belkhir suggests that supplementary information about metaphors could foster learners' metaphor identification ability.

The fifth chapter, by Georgios Georgiou, deals with L1 influence on the perception of L2 vowels and the role of stress on perception. The Perceptual Assimilation Model features the degree of vowel assimilation by L2 learners. The results of the

assimilation and discrimination test showed the interference of the learners' L1 in the L2 due to phonological and phonetic differences between the vowel inventories of the two languages. The theoretical background of PAM managed to correctly predict the learners' discrimination accuracy over L2 vowel contrasts.

In the sixth chapter, Amel Benaissa reports on research concerned with the use of online quizzes and digital flash cards to enhance students' retention and memorization of vocabulary. The teacher can promote groups of words for teaching. Additionally, vocabulary learning can take place inside and outside of the classroom. Further online activities are recommended as they boost learners' active production of freshly acquired words.

Chapter 7, by Nora Achili, presents EFL learners' perceptions of success and failure in language learning. Success is attributed to internal (motivation, personal effort) factors, while failure is attributed to both internal (lack of effort, poor learning strategies) and external (task difficulty, poor teachers) factors.

In Chapter 8, Katia Berbar deals with the cognitive effects of anxiety in the three phases of language learning: input, processing and output. High levels of anxiety have negative effects on learners' cognitive ability. "Therefore, language teachers should be aware of students' emotional states, determine the most anxiety-provoking events inside the classroom, and take measures to minimize the negative influence of anxiety" (Berbar 2020: 138).

In Chapter 9, Hanane Ait Hamouda covers students' perceptions on the use of code-switching in EFL classes. Most students believe that this method does not improve their level of language learning, but they also view it as an important communicative strategy. Moreover, code-switching does not hinder the students' process of mastering English.

This book is a useful tool in the field of foreign language learning. Both the researcher and the teacher can gain valuable knowledge in relation to cognitive processes "hidden" behind several learning phenomena. Within the chapters and through the data analysis, theoretical tenets of cognitive linguistics are

connected with results of research which was carried out in educational space and time. This gives the reader the opportunity to understand the relationship between cognition and language learning in depth.

The researcher and the teacher of English as a second language will benefit from the content of the book in planning several educational learning strategies which will improve EFL learning. The material included in the appendices provides helpful ideas to the teacher for planning questionnaires and tasks useful for the language student.

Especially noteworthy is the discussion of topics such as metacognitive awareness, learners' perceptions and attitudes, as well as language attrition, all of which are central in foreign language learning research.

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Paraskevi Thomou
University of Crete
Department of Primary Education
Gallos University Campus
Rethymno, 74100
Crete
Greece
thomou@uoc.gr