

INTRODUCTION

This special issue of *Neofilolog* is a festschrift to honor Professor Teresa Siek-Piskozub, an eminent scholar whose work has guided and inspired her students and colleagues, applied linguists in Poland. Since the affective dimension in learning processes and language education has been among her interests as a researcher and as a teacher (e.g., Siek-Piskozub, 2016), this work is dedicated to the role of affective factors in language instruction.

The affective domain in second and foreign language learning and teaching has long been recognized as an important area of theoretical, practical and empirical investigations. Learners' and teachers' feelings, emotions, attitudes, self-esteem, motivation, as well as other affective factors, have been found to considerably influence the processes and outcomes of learning, often being responsible for the success or failure of learners' endeavours (Arnold, 2011; Arnold, Brown, 1999; Dewaele, 2011). Although these concepts have been explored for half a century now, the results of studies in the affective domain area still open up a multitude of avenues for further examinations. One reason for this is the complexity of this field and of a variety of the specific factors that it encompasses. Another reason is the context-dependent nature of affectivity in language learning, which makes any investigation unique and worthwhile in the composition of an overall picture of the field. Therefore, the specific roles that affective factors play in language learning and ways of addressing them in language education continue to be significant strands of inquiry.

This volume comprises twelve articles that tackle various dimensions within this broad inquiry. The initial three articles are theoretical in scope and include valuable considerations underlying the affective domain in language learning and teaching. The article by **Jane Arnold**, by outlining the main issues in the topic of affect, opens the volume and acts as a preface to it. Arnold stresses that affect in the context of education embraces both individual factors and an interpersonal dimension, hence it is the teacher's role to facilitate

learners' growth by arranging a confidence-building climate in the classroom. Such an environment can stimulate genuine L2 communication and enhance learners' motivation. **Hanna Komorowska** in her article discusses the concepts of L2 Self, L2 Ideal self and L2 Motivational Self Systems in relation to L2 research. Making references to various examples of well-known people who experienced situations posing threats to their linguistic identity, she explores the notions of language maintenance, language loss or changes of the dominant language. The practical implications of this discussion include the need to develop self-awareness and tolerance toward other people's identities, as well as intercultural sensitivity, in L2 learners. The focus of the article by **Adriana Biedroń** is on the dynamic interplay between affective factors and strictly cognitive ones, such as language learning aptitude, in learning a language. Although research on the relationships among different groups of factors has been scarce, certain correlations have been discovered, for example, between aptitude and traits such as personality, empathy and tolerance of ambiguity. High levels of motivation, self-regulation and autonomy are also found in successful learners.

The following group of articles has a more practical orientation, presenting suggestions for a variety of didactic options for addressing the affective domain in L2 learning. **Małgorzata Pamuła-Behrens** and **Katarzyna Morena**, discussing the challenges of L2 learning by immigrant children, particularly in the Polish educational context, outline the benefits, principles, and practical suggestions for an implementation of the JES-PL Method. Drawing upon self-determination theory and building learners' autonomy, competence and relatedness, the method is an important aid for the development of the language of schooling in immigrant learners, necessary for effective functioning in their new environment. **Katarzyna Karpińska-Szaj** and **Jolanta Sujecka-Zajac** in their article elaborate on the benefits of didactic dialog as an interactive technique which enables student-student and teacher-student collaboration. Its aim is to enhance learners' linguistic awareness and metacognitive skills, and, most importantly, to involve them more fully in the L2 learning process. Making references to their own previous research, the authors demonstrate how didactic dialog evokes reflective thinking in learners and potentially leads to an improvement in the management of their learning. **Danuta Wiśniewska** explores ways of using the linguistic landscape that surrounds L2 learners as a stimulus to express emotions in the target language. The linguistic landscape includes, for example, advertising and political banners, graffiti, captions on monuments, and other signs in the target language, which can serve as springboards for discussions, role-plays, vocabulary practice, writing tasks, and many other forms of L2 teaching techniques, creating opportunities of authentic affective exchanges in the L2. **Paweł Scheffler** and **Wolfgang Butzkamm** offer a re-evaluation of pattern practice as part of classroom

procedures that help learners achieve fluency in L2 use. Their focus is on bilingual drills as a specific pattern practice technique which combines a focus on form with a focus on meaning. Among the benefits of this didactic option is that it can evoke positive emotions, such as interest and enjoyment, in learners. The authors provide a number of relevant examples to illustrate how bilingual drills can be skillfully implemented in communicative lessons.

The final group of articles in this collection comprises five empirical texts in which the authors report their study findings. **Ariadna Strugielska**, in an attempt to investigate the relationship between learners' affective domain and their multidimensional cognition, compared the affective responses evoked in native-speaker users of English and advanced EFL learners in the processing of the English word "chair". The learners' conceptualizations of the item appeared to be more varied, with the affective dimension revealed more frequently, than in the native-speakers' responses. This points to the uniqueness of non-native speakers' conceptual systems and the important role that affect plays in them. The affective side of a specific learning task, writing MA papers, is the topic of **Aleksandra Wach's** longitudinal diary study. The qualitative data in the form of the students' diary entries revealed a high number of both positive and negative emotions that accompanied the writers throughout the assignment. The data point to a dynamic nature of the emotional responses to the challenges of the cognitively demanding task, as well as to a range of affective strategies that the participants resorted to in order to successfully complete it. **Danuta Gabryś-Barker's** article reports on a partial replication study, in which the data from a published study by other researchers (Sağlam, Sali, 2013) were compared with those obtained through the author's own investigation. The study aimed to explore the perceptions of Polish and Turkish EFL pre-service teachers of the role of a learning environment. The comparative analysis indicated that while the Turkish sample conceptualized a classroom in a more traditional, teacher-centered manner, learner-centered and socio-psychological perspectives on a learning environment prevailed among the Polish pre-service teachers. The teacher perspective is also present in the article by **Krystyna Droździał-Szelest**, who administered a questionnaire to a group of in-service teachers of English with the aim of investigating their motivations behind enrolling in a postgraduate program as a way of pursuing professional development. The responses revealed an awareness of the need to develop professionally, and both instrumental and intrinsic/personal motives of the participants' decisions. Moreover, participation in the courses, through their stimulating content and the social dimension, turned out to be a motivating factor and a source of further inspiration for the respondents' teaching careers. The final article in the volume, written by **Miroslaw Pawlak**, reports the findings of a questionnaire study involving L2 teachers which explored the respondents' awareness

of individual factors in their students as well as their readiness to take these factors into account in providing instruction. The obtained data showed some familiarity with the concept of individual variation, but rather limited ways of getting information about learners' individual profiles. The teachers admitted to adjusting their didactic procedures to learners' factors, such as proficiency, learning styles, motivation, and a few others. The researcher concludes that although some sensitivity to learner individual variation was revealed in the study sample, the teachers' competence in this respect could be much more profound.

It is our hope that the variety of subtopics within the general topic of the affective domain in L2 learning and teaching offered in this volume will make it both useful and enjoyable to the readers. We truly believe that the collection of articles will provide a source of reflection about teaching foreign languages, and, hopefully, an inspiration for undertaking further explorations into the role of affect in learning.

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