

Editorial

The present edition of *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* closes the fifth year of its existence, thus marking an important milestone for the journal, that is, the publication of the twentieth issue. Reflecting on these five years, we can confidently say that the journal is a far cry from what it was five years ago. At that time, it virtually had to be built from the ground up, which generated numerous problems, ranging from convincing eminent scholars to agree to serve on the editorial board, to ensuring high-quality submissions, to finding suitable reviewers, to working very hard to ensure that the outcome looked as professional as possible. At present, *SSLT* is a recognized academic publication, we receive numerous submissions, many of which have to be rejected out of hand, and although, because of the growing number of incoming papers, seeking out reviewers sometimes poses an even more formidable challenge than it used to, we enjoy continued, heartfelt support of the most prominent figures in the field, many of whom we do not hesitate to call our friends. They never decline to evaluate papers we send them despite having piles and piles of outstanding assignments on their desks, and there are also those who take precious time out of their schedules to put together special, thematic issues of the journal, thus immensely increasing its standing in the field. While we are fully aware that much remains to be done to further enhance the quality of the journal and to make *SSLT* even more recognizable and influential than it has become, we are determined to work very hard to achieve these goals. This is because we consider the journal to be unique in many ways, to manifest the truth of the adage that where there is the will, there is the way, as well as to constitute the fruit of genuine dedication and passion.

The current issue is composed of six papers, with a balance being preserved between those that are conceptual in nature and those that present the results of original empirical research. The first two contributions are examples of review papers, and they are devoted to the role of pragmatics in learning and

using a second or foreign language, an area that surely deserves considerably more attention than it is currently afforded. In the first of them, Lauren Wyner and Andrew D. Cohen focus on the role of the learning environment (i.e., second vs. foreign) in the development of target language pragmatic ability as well as the interplay of contextual factors of this kind and individual learner variables, concluding that the latter are often likely to trump the impact of the former. In the second, Feng Xiao offers a synthesis of research into the effect of proficiency on the acquisition of pragmatic competence, demonstrating that while more advanced learners are indeed likely to manifest greater mastery of pragmatic features, such an outcome is by no means guaranteed, it varies depending on the pragmatic features in question and may be mediated by contextual variables. These two overviews then speak to the complexities involved in gaining mastery of pragmatic features, primarily brought about by the dynamic interaction of different variables, which surely warrants more research in this area, particularly such that would offer a basis for sound and feasible pedagogical recommendations. The following two contributions represent empirical studies which seek to investigate the role of motivation in language learning. First, Csaba Kálmán and Esther Gutierrez Eugenio explore the relationships between adult learners' attributions and their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in a corporate setting in Hungary, providing evidence, among other things, that the former is fueled by ability and interest while the latter is driven, albeit to a smaller extent, by corporate culture, encounters with foreign professionals and, yet again, ability. Second, Awanui Te Huia presents the results of a qualitative study which explored the goals and motivations of the learners of the Māori heritage language, showing that their efforts to master the language of their ancestors may be reflective of their valuing of that language as a cultural legacy, and their deeply ingrained connection to the past and present speakers of this language. In the next paper, Joe Siegel and Aki Siegel shift the focus of attention to the development of target language skills, focusing on the role of bottom-up activities in honing listening comprehension. They report the findings of a small-scale research project in which the students benefitting from the inclusion of such activities outdid the controls on dictation and listening proficiency tests, also manifesting positive attitudes towards instructional options of this kind. Finally, the paper by Alexander Andrason and Marianna Visser represents an attempt, admittedly a highly successful one, to apply the affordances perspective (cf. Aronin & Singleton, 2012) to the concept of grammaticalization. They propose a model that rests upon the differential contribution of three influences, namely the factor, the parameter and the actor. Also included in the present issue are three reviews of recently published edited collections dedicated to the interdisciplinary nature of applied linguistics, the role of working memory in language

learning and the dynamics of second language motivation by Kata Csizér, Adriana Biedroń and Mirosław Pawlak, respectively. We are hopeful that, as was the case with previous issues of the journal, all of these contributions will be an inspiration for the readers and provide an impulse for further empirical investigations in the areas they touch upon.

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References

Aronin, L., & Singleton, D. (2012). Affordances theory in multilingualism studies. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 2, 311-331.