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Series Editor: David Singleton, *Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland*

# **Second Language Lexical Processes**

## **Applied Linguistic and Psycholinguistic Perspectives**

Edited by

Zsolt Lengyel and Judit Navracscics

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# ***Preface***

ZSOLT LENGYEL and JUDIT NAVRACSICS

This book provides a multidisciplinary perspective on processes in the L2 mental lexicon, including insights from psycholinguistics, corpus linguistics and educational linguistics. The novelty of the book is that the studies make reference not only to English but also to a Finno-Ugric language (namely Hungarian).

The four parts provide different perspectives of the lexicon and lexical processing. In Part 1, the two papers discuss the nature of the bilingual lexicon. David Singleton, in his paper, critically reviews evidence from various strands of research bearing on cross-lexical interaction and argues that, at some level, and in some sense, there is separation between the lexicons associated with the different languages known to an individual.

The structure and the build up of the bilingual mental lexicon are the focus of attention in the paper written by Judit Navracsics. Her goal is to find out whether the bilingual mental lexicon works the same way as the monolingual one or whether there are differences between the storages of lexemes.

In Part 2, the three papers highlight the questions of speech perception and production in second language lexical processing. In Mária Gósy's paper, monolingual and bilingual children's speech perception processing is compared in their two languages with the aim of finding specific similarities and differences in their perceptual mechanisms. The actual goal of this study is to investigate the speech perception subprocesses of Hungarian-speaking children, both in their first language (Hungarian) and in their second language (English), and to compare their data with that of Hungarian-English bilingual children whose dominant language is claimed to be Hungarian. In her study, Orsolya Simon summarises research findings on the relationship between L1 and L2 perception and

comprehension processes of a hundred 11-year-old and a hundred 12-year-old Hungarian schoolchildren. Eight standardised subtests on perception, lexical access and comprehension of both Hungarian and English (as a foreign language) were used for the research. Csilla Keresztes, in her project, controlled processing of visual stimuli and carried out an investigation by making medical professionals proof-read Hungarian medical texts. Hungarians in the field of medicine are significantly under the influence of the English language and tend to use various types of Anglicism.

Part 3 describes second language writing. In the first of the two papers, Ewa Witalisz discusses vocabulary assessment in writing with the focus on quantitative measures of learner production, that is, lexical richness, such as lexical variation (type-token ratio), lexical sophistication (the ratio of sophisticated word families to all word families) and lexical density (the ratio of content to grammatical words). Katalin Doró, in her contribution, investigates the lexical complexity of verbs in English narratives written by Hungarian high-school students and American children on the basis of four pictures. Authentic learner and native speaker data are compared using linguistic software tools to facilitate the initial stage of the linguistic analysis.

Part 4 introduces the lexicon in second language acquisition, both under natural circumstances and in the classroom environment. The paper, written by Zsuzsanna Gergely, contributes data to refute the idea of an initial single system of vocabulary and grammar. The data are drawn from the observation of the early utterances of a Hungarian-English bilingual child. Mixing happens in both directions. In her paper, Lidija Cvikić deals with intralexical factors that influence vocabulary acquisition in Croatian as a second language. The data were collected by using a vocabulary translation test. The same types of incorrect answers made by the speakers of two different L1 (English and Italian) confirm the intralexical nature of errors. In the study undertaken by Zsolt Lengyel, Judit Navracsecs and Anikó Szilágyi, L2 lexical processes are analysed with the help of cloze tests administered to Hungarians with English and German as target languages. The study provides the reader with valuable information and conclusions about the lexical processes deployed by subjects at different stages in their acquisition of their L2.

Research into the lexicon has always been hard to conduct; descriptions of cognitive and linguistic development are always subject to inference and uncertainty. These difficulties are compounded when two languages occupy the linguistic domain of mind. Questions of

integration, storage, vocabulary acquisition and assessment, word retrieval and lexical access are the focus of the studies reported in this volume, which includes reference to language users from a Finno-Ugric (Hungarian) and a Slavic language background.

The book is intended for the use of undergraduate and graduate university and college students majoring in any kind of second language studies, psycholinguistics and/or bilingualism researchers. It is also for the use of teachers and academics whose interests include a second language acquisition component.



*Part 1*

## ***The Nature of the L2 Mental Lexicon***