

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE LEARNER; INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION BY ZOLTAN DORNYEI; BOOK REVIEW

Momen Yaseen M Amin^{*,#,***}, Mahabad Salam Sofi^{***}**

^{##}Department of Translation, Cihan University Sulaimaniya, Sulaimaniya, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

^{}Department of English Education, College of Education, University of Al-Kitab, Kirkuk, Iraq**

^{*}Department of English, Iraq Eastern Mediterranean University, Famagusta, Cyprus**

Abstract

By taking a close look at the field of language learning, one understands that the psychology of teachers and learners play a crucial role especially in learning second language, in my Ph.D. study and in the course of SLA, I conducted a paper on the communication strategies and gender differences in language learning, and one of the distinguished resources that I depended on was Zoltan Dornyei's work. He is the author of 'The psychology of language learner; Individual differences in second language acquisition'. The book published in 2005 then revised and in 2015 published by Routledge and it becomes the primary reference for teachers and researchers of ELT departments around the world. The author presented the highlighted concepts of discussions and topics well formulated. The main objective of writing this book can be seen as an effort to come up with a monograph about the research on individual differences in language learning. Hence to this objective, the author presented a rich literature on the contemporary studies of the field. This paper is an attempt to review, critique the book from different perspectives, give further attention to the literature review, socio-cultural understanding, and also, examine the book from philosophical perspectives. *ASEAN Journal of Psychiatry, Vol. 24 (4) April, 2023; 1-5*

Keyword: Psycholinguistics, Language Learning, English Language Teaching, Zoltan Dornyei, Contemporary

Introduction

Psycholinguistics can be defined in different interpretations, but the simplest definition is finding the relationship between language and mind of human being [1]. Understanding psycholinguistic and finding its correlation with language learning, conceives language learning as a process involved to individuals in which information is formulated as the learner is exposed to comprehensible input, is given opportunities to both, negotiate, and receive negative feedback [2]. And to address the title of this book, Purba explains that the concept of 'language learning' is used as numerous scholars believe that a second language can be guided by Learning the language "intentionally" and "consciously" [3].

It is clear that psychology becomes an integrated icon with different fields of science, especially, human sciences such as education, linguistics, technology, and physiological interpretations, facilitate the proceeding of understanding these fields [4-6]. In this regard, and for highlighting the relationship between language and cognition, numerous scholars recognize their attention and focus on psychology and language [7]. They believe that psychology can accelerate understanding and answering different questions about language. One of the main sources of this field is the book of Zoltan Dornyei "The psychology of language learner; Individual differences in second language acquisition". Therefore, in this paper, it is tried to evaluate the strong and weak points and examine parts and content of the book.

Preface of the book

Author's background

Zoltan Dornyei is a Hungarian born British linguist. He is a professor of psycholinguistics in the school of English at Nottingham University in the UK. He is known for his work on SLA, and the psychology of the language learner, in particular on motivational factors in second language learning. He has published over 90 academic papers and 25 books such as teaching and researching in motivation, the psychology of language learner; Individual differences in second language acquisition, language attitudes and language globalization, motivational dynamics. Also, in 2007, he published his book on research methods in applied linguistics. He has also undertaken training in theology; his publications in this area include a research anthology on faith and language learning.

About this book

This concise book on Individual Differences (IDs) in SLA presents research on topics such as language aptitude, motivation, cognitive styles, student self-regulation, and personality traits. Its in-depth treatment of the field, will make it valuable to researchers in applied linguistics and second language (L2) studies. At the same time, its straightforward presentation and conversational tone should make it accessible to language teachers and students of L2 pedagogy, interested in understanding more about what individual learners bring to the classroom [8]. Psychology of language learners has been considered by many researchers, academics, and those interested in applied linguistics, the first version of which was published in 2005. The remarkable point of this book is that it focuses on language learners in particular, and this is what made the book stand out in its time and turned it into an up to date and different contemporary book.

Dornyei's masterpiece is a book with no pictures, the format, and colour of the cover of which is a combination of brown and ochre colours is well designed. Also, it attracts much attention. The font type, lines, and print quality are in line with modern standards. Characterizations, spaces, spaces between sentence components (words, verbs, adverbs, and

adjectives) are all problem free, diagrams and tables are very clear. Furthermore, there are no spellings or editing problems in the text of the book.

Dornyei classified his book into eight chapters in 270 pages. Initially, he begins with a brief review of individual differences and defines individual differences IDs and shares the literature about how the concept of individual differences IDs developed. Meanwhile, the author presents the taxonomy of individual differences and explains how he organized groups of IDs. In chapter two the author examines the differences among personalities and distinguishes them in particular from personality, temperament, and mood. Dornyei moves on to discuss personality and language learning in particular. By dividing the studies into early studies, extraversion and introversion studies, studies that use MBTI, and other studies, the author shows connections within the progression that could shed light on the relationship between personality and language learning.

“The taxonomical and theoretical complexity of the domain cannot be done justice in a single chapter such as this, as a small library could be filled with publications pertaining to the topic. Therefore, instead of attempting to provide a comprehensive summary, I first focus on conceptual and definitional issues and then describe the ‘big picture’ by outlining the main trends in contemporary personality psychology. Finally, I narrow the focus down to the relationship between personality and learning and especially language learning” [9].

Chapter three provides for examining the concept of linguistic aptitude and examines the related research trends in the 1990's. Then, he introduced the tests related to the assessment of language aptitude and stated the characteristics of each. There is also an example of each of these tests in the book, and the linguistic dimensions of these tests are discussed. The issues studied in traditional research, affect the variables such as age, first language and intelligence, and have been contrasted with new approaches to language aptitude. The chapter gives detailed elaborations on two widely used aptitude batteries: The Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB).

