



University of Silesia
Institute of English
Sosnowiec
POLAND

26th International Conference on Foreign / Second Language Acquisition

Szczyrk, Poland, 22-24 May 2014

Material culture in studying second/foreign language acquisition and learning

First Circular

Dear Colleague,

The Institute of English at the University of Silesia is pleased to announce the 26th International Conference on Foreign and Second Language Acquisition (ICSFLA). As it was in the past, our conference this coming year will focus on a specific aspect of research in second language acquisition and foreign language learning. The main theme of the 26th ICSFLA is

Material culture in studying second/foreign language acquisition and learning

The theme of the 26th conference is fairly new as a research theme, however it has already gained quite a lot of scholarly recognition in the second language acquisition (SLA) and multilingual language acquisition (MLA) research field. Through choosing this theme we would like to contribute to this quickly developing field. What is material culture in SLA/MLA? What is the range of themes it covers? The old distinction between material and non-material culture denoting the difference between physical objects, resources and spaces that people describe as culture (referring to the former) and non-material culture expressing the nonverbal aspects such as beliefs, values and language among others (referring to the latter), tends to be disregarded in modern research. This fairly new approach to language research comes from not so new but theoretically well-grounded studies in sociology and ethnography (Aronin 2013). In the context of second language acquisition/learning, possible research areas of material culture issues (*ibid.*) can refer to the material culture of learning: artifacts (books, authentic materials, realia) used and a historical perspective on their use. The research on material culture in SLA can investigate the learning and teaching environment of the FL classroom *versus* L2 acquisition. Also the way material objects reflect identities, beliefs and attitudes can be the focus of scholarly studies on material culture. Material culture artifacts (objects, events) and language as their integral element can be explored with a view to establishing their relationship. An important aspect of today's language learning and teaching embraces internet and virtual materiality which mark a significant area of language research and belong, undeniably, to material culture aspects of language research.

As we do every year, if you do not feel comfortable with the main theme of the conference and would like to present your empirical research in different areas of SLA, we will also review these proposals with the view to accepting them for presentation during the conference, provided they are at the appropriate level of expertise and academic rigour.

A couple of years ago we introduced an additional event held during the conference, namely a Ph. D. workshop. The response to it has been overwhelmingly positive over the past two years, thus, the upcoming conference will also offer this opportunity for new Ph.D. candidates to present their research projects. The lead facilitators will be Prof. Aneta Pavlenko (Temple University) and Prof. Danuta Gabryś-Barker (University of Silesia), but also other scholars experienced in the supervision of doctoral projects in SLA. The workshop is open to all Ph. D. students in SLA/MLA and the prospective participants are asked to send a 500 word description of their Ph.D. thesis proposal for a 10-minute presentation and then feedback discussion of it with the facilitators and other workshop participants.

We are pleased to announce that the following scholars working in the field of material culture have expressed their willingness to present plenary papers at our conference:

Prof. Larissa Aronin (Oranim Academic College of Education, Tivon /Trinity College, Dublin)

Prof. Vivian Cook (University of Newcastle)

Prof. Hanna Komorowska (University of Social Sciences and Humanities/University of Warsaw)

Prof. Aneta Pavlenko (Temple University, Philadelphia)

Prof. David Singleton (University of Pannonia, Hungary)

The conference event will be held in our usual place, the holiday resort of **Szczyrk** in the Beskidy Mountains, southern Poland. The dates are **22nd to 24th May 2014** (arrival on Wednesday, **21st May** is recommended). The conference venue will be the **Hotel META**. All conference participants will be accommodated there. The details concerning the conference fee will be announced in the second circular soon.

All those wishing to contribute papers or just to attend presentations and Ph.D. workshop, are welcome to participate in the conference. Paper abstracts should be sent before **31st January 2014** to **our e-mail address: szczyrkconference2014@gmail.com**. The registration form, including the paper abstract, should be sent as an attachment to the above e-mail address. Additionally, to facilitate the procedure of building the conference database, all participants are kindly asked to type their entry details into an Excel document (baza2014.xls), filling in all the columns in the second row below the blue headings, and send it back as a separate attachment, changing its name to SurnameName.xls (in Excel 2003 format). Both the documents necessary for registration can be downloaded from our webpage at <http://uranos.cto.us.edu.pl/~icfsla/index.htm>

For conference-related matters please contact the Conference Organisers, at the following address:

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