

ANETA PAVLENKO, ADRIAN BLACKLEDGE, INGRID PILLER, and MARYA TEUTSCH-DWYER. **Multilingualism, Second Language Learning, and Gender.** 2001. Mouton de Gruyter: Berlin, New York Pp. ix, 356.

In this volume, the editors claim that ‘multilingualism has important implications for the relationship between language and gender’ (2). The book is a collection of eleven essays by the editors and other contributors describing gender, social relations, ideology, and second language learning (SLL) in multilingual settings. Their goals are to exceed the monolingual bias that has defined the field of language and gender studies and to understand gender as a system of social relations and extensive practices. The authors focus on the role of gender identities and social inequalities in multilingual communities.

This book explains gender in SLL from the viewpoint of feminism. Susan Ehrlich demonstrates in “Gendering the ‘learner’: Sexual harassment and second language acquisition (SLA)” (103-29) that female learners show possible superiority in SLA. She cited some linguists’ research: Burstall (1975) described that girls had substantially higher scores than boys on all French achievement tests in British primary schools; Boyle (1987) reported that female university students were superior in general language proficiency (14). The research proves gender differences in SLA. However, in some communities, women are less proficient than men because of fewer opportunities for education and labor (26). Oxford (1994:141) admits the sociocultural basis to the differences: “ These differences may, at least in part, be innate-and thus in fact sex differences-but most are likely to be socioculturally developed” (108). Based on my learning experiences, I agree with Ehrlich about female superiority in SLL, and I support Oxford’s idea that gender differences are connected with sociocultural development. I have seen many Korean immigrant women learn English slowly because they don’t have many chances to learn English or to get a job, whereas Korean immigrant men learn English faster than women

because they have more opportunities to work. It explains that gender differences in second and foreign language acquisition are based on social contexts.

I also found an attractive essay about the sexual harassment of women in SLA. Polanyi (1995) asserts that female learners have experienced sexual harassment very often in study abroad program because of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds (113). Ehrlich adds that women's negative attitudes towards the target language and culture affect their acquisition of the target language (116). When I started studying English in America, a writing teacher commented to a female classmate, " You have changed your partners many times like a prostitute." The teacher said it was a joke, but it was sexual harassment. The classmate went back to Korea with a negative view of Americans and ESL programs.

Another interesting essay is "New directions in multilingualism, SLL, and gender" by Aneta Pavlenko and Ingrid Piller (17-52). The authors present recent developments in the field of language and gender for the study of multilingualism and SLL. They also suggest new guidelines for the field of language and gender with questions such as, 'how do different gender, age, class, and race groups participate in the local economy, and how is this participation mediated linguistically?' and 'what are the values of languages and language varieties used in the community, and how is gender reflected in these beliefs?' (40) In order to improve our study of multilingualism, SLL, and gender, it is important to find the problems. When we keep asking about these problems, we may find good solutions or new directions.

This volume helps to explain gender differences and social relations in SLL. Through this book, I found out SLL is closely related with gender; however, it does not explain multilingualism enough. Most authors describe SLL and gender differences, but they did not describe multilingualism in detail. Pavlenko and Piller said, 'the field of language and gender

will benefit from considering multilingual contexts' (39). I wish this book had multilingualism as a separate part from SLL and gender to help people understand and support multilingualism more.

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