

Research into the Process of Learning and Acquiring English as a Foreign Language at the Department of English, Zagreb University

Mirjana Vilke
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Zagreb

In the recent years it has been widely recognized that many extralinguistic factors, most of them of a psychological or social nature, determine the linguistic development of an individual in the primary (L1) as well as secondary (L2) acquisition of language. A complex network of interacting factors are at work in any learner trying to acquire a foreign language in any situation. It is the language teaching theorist's job to contribute to an understanding of this multilevel process of language acquisition and to make this knowledge accessible to the classroom teacher.

Our primary concern throughout the years has been the role of the L1 (Croatian) in learning L2 (English), as well as the learners' age, which must be considered in designing teaching strategies. A considerable amount of work has also gone into analysing the affective factors present in the process of studying English in this particular socio-cultural environment.

This paper will present our results in investigating Selinker's concept *interlanguage*, the applicability of the *natural order hypothesis* and Lenneberg's *critical/sensitive period hypothesis*, as well as some of the results of our long-term research into the process of acquiring English by young school learners. Finally, the basic principles of the schemata of teaching English in our schools will be presented.

There are many ways in which teacher-training course could be organized at a Department of English Language and Literature. It has to cover both the practical needs of the future teachers and supply them with a theoretical background of the subject they will be teaching. Research and empirical evidence suggest that learning a foreign language in a limited number of school lessons is more successful if the learners are given insights into the language system. According to Chomsky, a child acquiring his mother tongue tries to discover a system of rules by which the language functions. In foreign language learning, this process may be observed in the number

of mistakes learners make which originate in erroneous hypotheses about how the foreign language operates.

Applied linguistics is the discipline that has developed significantly during the last twenty years and that has provided us with many answers of how a learner advances in his process of learning a foreign language and what the teacher should do to facilitate the process. But what is actually the relationship between applied linguistics and the teaching of foreign languages? For Pit Corder (1973) »The applied linguist is a consumer of theories, in that he attempts to make use of the explanations they provide about the nature of language in order to plan and execute language teaching programmes. He is not a creator of theories – that is the role of the theoretician. However, the applied linguist must be a **discriminating** consumer; that is, he must be able to decide what is or is not a relevant theoretical approach for his purposes. In order to make this decision he must not only be familiar with a wide range of possible theories about language; he must also understand what phenomena the theorists attempt to explain, the methods they adopt and the philosophical presuppositions which lie behind their theories.«

This was the view that prevailed in the anglophone literature and use. In our part of the world *applied linguistics*, as an umbrella term covered much more than the theoretical framework for the teaching of foreign languages. From the beginning of its existence it meant »linguistics applied to« and included studies in translation, machine translation, speech therapy, lexicology, etc. As for the teaching of foreign languages yet another term was traditionally employed – *metodika* – that can hardly fit any taxonomy of linguistic disciplines and which was sometimes translated into English as »metodics« or »methodology« meaning the actual techniques and procedures of the class work.

After several years of search for the adequate labels for work, the term *glotodidaktika* (glottodydactics) was introduced at our Department for »the study of foreign language learning and teaching« which according to the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1985) elaborates the first meaning of the term *applied linguistics*.

Graphically, the issue is the following:

APPLIED LINGUISTICS

GLOTTODYDACTICS studies based on relevant results of linguistics, psychology, and other disciplines related to both language and teaching and research in the field.

METHODS (*metodika*) classroom procedures, action research, based on the issues of the work in glottodydactics.

In the present paper I shall attempt a brief review of the fields of interest in the area of glottodydactics (as a part of applied linguistics) that has been our preoccupation for the past twenty years. The underlying idea for our efforts was to find the ways to facilitate the process of learning a foreign language and improve the stan-

dard of the outcome – ideally, a fluent, competent speaker of English. The work including the research was conducted in conjunction with diploma works of honours students as well as M. A. theses and doctoral theses often interdisciplinary, and different scientific projects. The results were published in the proceedings of the conferences, professional magazines, and other publications.

Pedagogical implications of contrastive analysis and error analysis

During the sixties the climate both in Europe and the States was specially inclined to development of contrastive analyses projects. One of such projects was the Croatian-English contrastive project headed by professor Rudolf Filipović of Zagreb University. The main objective of the Project was an examination of systemic differences and similarities that exist between Croatian and English at all levels of linguistic description. A detailed contrastive analysis of the two languages was expected to provide sufficient information about their elements and structures to enable comprehensive and useful comparison. The results obtained with the help of modern linguistic science would serve as a sound foundation for improved teaching of both languages. It was also hoped that the work would enrich linguistic theory and practice in both languages and provide a better insight into the structure of the two languages. The main pedagogical task of the Project was to devise teaching techniques for each particular language structure to avoid interference of negative transfer from the mother tongue – Croatian.

Before starting any work, the linguists' theoretical statements about the relations of the structures in the two languages and the predicted errors resulting from them had to be examined in the class. The results obtained by the tests either confirmed, supplemented or disproved contrastive analysis predictions of errors. Via tests we obtained a very good insight into the structures being examined, and also developed our own ideas that were not always in accordance with the theses which were taken as universally valid at the time. So, for example, we could not fully agree with Selinker's neat classification of errors according to five equally important processes central to language learning, which were advanced in his original article on *interlanguage* (1972). We found that the mistakes of language transfer were easy to identify as they can be traced to the linguistic patterns of the L1. However, they were much more difficult to avoid or eradicate than those originating in other areas and they are the cause of most of the »fossilized structures«.

The work on pedagogical materials ambitiously aimed at embracing all the basic structures on morpho-syntactic level, but unfortunately, it was much more

demanding a job than we hoped it would be. Nevertheless, from what has been done we could deduce valuable hints for the development of teaching strategies. What is perhaps even more important is that we became more aware of the problems in connection with the learners' mother tongue, Croatian, and now although contrastive analysis has not been »in« for a long time, all of us who were involved in the work on the project, remained contrastivists in our heart of hearts, not from the point of view of contrastive analysis methodology but rather, from the point of view of a general approach to foreign language teaching and learning strategies. With the growing tendency to stress the importance of learner's awareness of language system, a sound contrastive approach becomes more important and extended to extralinguistic studies (e.g., cultural studies).

The process of acquisition and learning of foreign languages at an early school age

A project in progress

The aim of starting the work on this project was a vision of future native speakers of Croatian who could use English in their life and work. This is why we planned to move the start of the process of learning English from ten to six or seven years. The pragmatic idea behind the undertaking was - why not use the period of human life when the child has plenty of good will and time, when the daily chores and duties are not pressing and when the child is at its best to acquire certain aspects of language performance.

It would provide enough time for the child to reach a high standard of proficiency by the end of secondary education when the need to use a foreign language actually arises.

We actually started to look for an optimal age to begin institutionalised learning of foreign languages in the seventies when in a series of »natural experiments« we tested the phenomenon of language-learning blocks which according to Lenneberg (1967) appear at puberty. A comparison between eight year old and eighteen year old beginners of English showed that the former group had advantages especially in pronunciation. We turned to this age group equipped with Piaget's rich evidence of their characteristics and abilities (Vilke 1976a). To discover more about the potential achievements of children of this age we based our investigations on the evidence, available at the time, of children's acquisition of their own language as well as a second and foreign language. Our evidence came from varied sources such as psychology, developmental psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, interlanguage studies, morpheme studies and last but not least,

the experience of teachers who worked with this age group. They always seemed to claim that the results of work could be very good if the children were approached in the right way. (Vilke 1976b)

Our first pilot project started in 1973 and our eight year olds who started their English at the age of 8 were quite successful. The project did not bring about fabulous results for reasons that now seem quite transparent but it supplied us with insights that helped us to shape the present project (Vilke 1979) which started in 1991.

In 1991 we directed our efforts in two interrelated directions. One was the investigation of different aspects of children's performance, conducted by applied linguists and psychologists using the methods of research employed in the field – tests, questionnaires, interviews. The other was the actual work of teachers in the class. The teachers were encouraged to use their own creative ways of teaching, depending on their intuition and the requirements of the individual groups of learners, as well as their own (the teachers') personality traits. However, there were a few conditions that had to be fulfilled, since teachers should make children happy and relaxed during the classes.

We completed five years of the project. The first generation of our learners have had English for five to four periods a week in groups of 12 to 15 learners for four school years. About 500 hundred learners of the first, second, third and fourth grade are learning English in this way in Zagreb – 18 classes altogether, with an addition of one class in Rijeka, Split, and Pula and three in Osijek which covers 200 more children. Approximately the same number of learners of German and French are included in the project scheme of work. It is a small sample of learners if any generalizations are attempted, but on the other hand, it is much easier to conduct systematic observations, exchange ideas and apply different measuring instruments if the number of learners is limited. We are well aware that whatever results are achieved they will be valid in our sociocultural environment while in any other area they will have to be verified as many extralinguistic factors cannot be avoided in any classroom research. However, it is our hope that when our educational authorities decide to introduce foreign languages into the first grade of primary school on a large scale, we shall be ready to offer a rational, minutely elaborated approach.

In the present stage of the project we can offer tentative answers to questions about:

- optimal age to start
- characteristics and abilities of children of this age
- model of a teacher
- selection of the linguistic material
- fluency and accuracy of children's performance
- optimal conditions

The entire adventure of introducing English into the first grade of primary school should lead to one goal – to make the child accept it as an alternative medium of communication through a natural and enjoyable process. This is much easier said than done and will require a lot of hard work on the part of many people, but it seems that results achieved so far show that we are on the right track.

Studies on attitudes and motivation of learners of foreign languages

Investigations of learner attitudes and motivation for foreign language learning were prompted by two sources. On the one hand, results of research done in this field with second language learners (Lambert and Gardner 1972) seemed not to be absolutely relevant to our learners, who were learning foreign languages. On the other hand, many people here were surprised by the fact that Croatian learners of English, for example, were highly motivated for learning English but their learning outcomes did not really match the motivation observed. Some attempts that were made in the beginning to study attitudes and motivation pointed out how complex such research is: studies appeared that were carried out with sophisticated statistical methodology but did not really show what was relevant for our learners as the studies started from wrong premises. There were also some interesting reports about the learners' motivation, based on the observation of teachers. The first comprehensive study of foreign language learner motivation was carried out with EFL learners by dr. Jelena Mihaljević Djigunović from our Department, who actually started a systematic research into the affective domain of the learners. Her work was prompted by a number of MA theses and diploma essays written under her supervision. Her studies pointed out a new typology of motivation among Croatian learners: the pragmatic-communicative (referring to the wish of the learner to use English for practical purposes such as understanding lyrics or songs in English, instructions in manuals and the like coupled with the wish to be able to communicate with foreigners, not necessarily native speakers), the affective (referring to the wish to know English because it is a beautiful/interesting/logical/simple language) and the integrative type (referring to the learner's wish to integrate into the other linguistic-cultural group). In contrast to the findings of Lambert and Gardner, the results of her studies showed that achievement correlated only with the pragmatic-communicative type. The same author discovered interesting relations between such affective variables as attitudes towards the teacher and towards the classes and achievement. Through including a number of other variables (age, gender, effort, ability to learn, desire to learn) the author managed to produce a profile of the successful Croatian learner of English as a foreign language (Mihaljević Djigunović

1992). It pointed out significant differences between relevant variables that contributed to the typical male and female successful learners. Female learners were found to be more sensitive to elements comprising the teacher setting.

Teaching goals

Teaching goals as we see them should be in the first place communicatively oriented. However, there are some other basic principles we advocate in any kind of teaching English:

1. Teaching should take into account the cognitive abilities of the learners.
2. It should be based on the linguistic system learners already possess, that is, their mother tongue.
3. It should emphasize learning as opposed to teaching.

1. English as a foreign language should be learned cognitively

Cognitive learning sounds like a tautology, as it is hard to imagine that cognition could be excluded from any process of learning. But those who have experienced the principles and techniques of the AV and AL methods, which were the predominant methods used in FLT for so many years, will remember the effort that had been made to exclude the intellect from the teaching and learning of foreign languages. The insistence on the cognitive came as a reaction against the mimicry, memorization and imitation which produced rather poor results.

The cognitive abilities of the learners depend on various factors. Some are still difficult to define, as we know so little about the mental processes at work while an individual learns, but the age of the learner is certainly the most important. If the presentation of grammar is an obvious requirement in a cognition-based approach, it should differ substantially according to the age of the pupils.

Considering Piaget's authority and the positive evidence from a number of teachers working with children, we could hypothesise that 7–11 should be a favourable age to start a foreign language. This is the stage of Piaget's concrete operations. 9 years is the age when children start foreign languages in the school system of Croatia. But grammar for the children of this age should satisfy certain demands if it is to be productive. No grammatical metalanguage, that is, grammatical terminology, should be used at the beginning. It should be introduced gradually, as the child develops intellectually. As the child reaches 11 or 12 years of age grammatical explanations can be introduced, but they should be made »psychologically real«.

that is they should be given in the language understood and used by the child. This should demand a deformatization of the jargon traditionally used in the school grammar-books. Grammatical terminology is gradually supplied not as an abstract inventory that causes memorization problems but rather as a help in the process of getting to understand how the foreign language system functions.

In puberty a very pronounced change in the attitude of the learners towards a foreign language takes place. Even if do not accept Lenneberg's idea of puberty as a landmark for biological reasons alone, in language development (Lenneberg 1967) puberty is nevertheless a turning point, probably for a variety of biological, psychological and social reasons (Vilke 1979). Experience and research have proved this many times. At this point, or rather when students reach 14 or 15 years of age, the procedures in teaching should change, as from this time on they will be directed to cognitively and emotionally developed persons, capable of abstract thinking and reasoning.

The students' motivation for studying foreign languages becomes in many cases instrumental, their ability to imitate deteriorates, and their understanding of language as a system of communication becomes more profound, provided they have been given a fair chance to develop it through tuition.

2. English should be learned contrastively

It has been experienced over and over again that as soon as an L2 is taught and learned in formal classroom situations in the L1 country, transfer from L1 dominates the entire learning process. No matter what we feel about contrastive analysis as a linguistic discipline, we must admit that a systematic approach to the learner's L1 is necessary as it is always present overtly or otherwise in the process of learning L2 in an L1 setting.

No one doubts any more that L1 interferes in the learning of L2 or, shall we say, that it is being transferred to it. Transfer is perhaps a more comprehensive term than interference, as transfer can be both positive and negative, whereas interference has definite negative connotations. It seems to me that positive transfer between an L1 and L2 so far has not been sufficiently utilised in the process of learning foreign languages (Vilke 1983).

If negative transfer is to blame for the majority of mistakes we make in a foreign language, it is the positive transfer that helps us to learn it at all.

It seems that, contrary to the assumptions behind most methods used in this century, mother tongue experience helps in acquiring a foreign language. Vygotsky,

who investigated the interdependence between the development of thought and language in children says:

»Success in learning a foreign language is contingent on a certain degree of maturity in the native language. The child can transfer to the new language the system of meanings he already possesses in his own. The reverse is also true – a foreign language facilitates mastering the higher forms of the native language. The child learns to see his native language as one particular system among many, to view its phenomena under more general categories, and this leads to awareness of his linguistic operations.« (Vygotsky 1962:110)

In the presentation of a foreign language, identical or similar features in the system of both L1 and L2 should be presented to the learners, as finding familiar items increases their feeling of security and, consequently, their motivation to proceed. An unknown foreign language in all its complexity may easily discourage even those learners who take learning seriously.

But, on the other hand, items that are different in L1 and L2 should also be brought to the attention of the learners, in order to avoid negative transfer present at all levels of foreign language performance.

A distinction can be made between linguistic and extralinguistic negative transfer, and the linguistic transfer can itself be further subdivided into the transfer on the phonological level, the morpho-syntactic level and – one should logically expect – on the semantic level. However, transfer on the semantic level actually loses the characteristics of a purely linguistic transfer and merges into the transfer of the concepts of socio-cultural norms valid in the learners' L1 (Vilke 1983). E. Oksaar has systematized sociocultural behaviour patterns by the cultureme model (Oksaar 1979). The realization of a cultureme occurs by means of a behavioreme, which may be verbal and/or extraverbal. She claims that learning a language requires the mastery of situational norms (Oksaar 1983). This exerts another heavy demand on foreign language teaching strategies.

It might be of some interest that, contrary to the investigations carried out in the States (Dulay and Burt 1973) our research indicates that negative transfer is present even in children when they learn a foreign language - in our particular case it was English – in the setting of L1 culture. Our findings did not support the *natural order hypothesis* advanced by Dulay and Burt according to which only 3% of mistakes children make could be traced to L1. The difference in the results of the investigations could be accounted for by the difference between English as a second language, which was the case in Dulay and Burt's investigation, and English as a foreign language, which was the case when we conducted our research. So far, many erroneous hypotheses have evolved from the lack of distinction between a *second* and a *foreign* language.

3. Learning should be given priority as compared to teaching

Teachers teach many things, but learners learn only some. Why is this so? We do not know much about the actual process of learning, probably because so far we have devoted most of our attention to the ways and techniques of teaching.

We have been interested in the input – the teacher's presentation, and in the output – the learner's performance, but little thought has been given to the way the learner acquires his level of performance.

Realizing that something should be done about this, a project was initiated in Zagreb in 1982; a group of post-graduate students (English department, Zagreb University) began a research programme on the nature of the spontaneous interaction of our learners of English. About 400 primary school learners of English from 10 to 14 years of age were interviewed; the interviews were recorded, transcribed and made ready for each researcher to investigate from a different aspect. By investigating this corpus, the students' interlanguage in fact, we obtained more insight into what goes on in the learners' minds during the process of learning. Their mistakes, that is the deviations from the norm, and consequently, the difficulties in learning, shed some more light on the process of learning English at the primary school level.

For many years it was taken for granted by both teachers and learners that the entire learning that takes place in the field of foreign languages must be accomplished in the classroom, during language periods. So in the classroom we had tape-recordings, pretty pictures, all sorts of »authentic« materials. Not much intellectual effort was demanded from the learners, and alas! not much learning took place. The results were much poorer than we would have expected.

As we felt something had to be changed, we offered a new syllabus that places much more stress on individual learning. The materials that have been designed for this new approach were learner-oriented. But designing materials for individual study means that the learners – from the age of 9 – should be able to use them without difficulty at quiet moments in their homes. Therefore, they will be supplied with handbooks to study from. In the handbooks, all the necessary explanations were given in Croatian. They included references to the negative transfer data as well as exercises to overcome interference. A key to exercises was given so that the learner could check his performance. The handbooks organized in a semiprogrammed way lead the learners through the difficulties of English. The handbooks of this type are at least twice as long as the corresponding textbooks. The textbooks, on the other hand, are richly illustrated, completely in English and contain communicative games and exercises. In this way the teachers are able to spend more time than before on communicative exercises and the learners are offered the opportunity to study the foreign linguistic system.

This has been a brief overview of the basic theoretical issues that were pursued in our Department in the area of glottodydactics for the last twenty years. What are the future prospects? We shall try to follow the needs of our consumers -

both the teachers and learners of English, as we have done in the past. If we are to judge by some indicators the research into the process of foreign language learning at an early age will have to be pursued and the techniques of class work reexamined in the light of the widely adopted trend of raising language awareness of the learners. Further investigations of the learner strategies used in communication will have to be explored as well as the influence of the affective domain on the success in learning the language. We shall go on trying to help the teachers and the future teachers in solving many problems of their jobs getting new insights into this most complex of phenomena – human language and its many uses and functions.

REFERENCES:

- CHOMSKY, Noam (1966). North East Conference.
- CORDER, Pit, ed. (1973). Editors Preface in *Readings for Applied Linguistics*. O.U.P.
- DULAY, Heidi and Burt, Marina (1972). »Should we teach children syntax?«. *Language Learning*, no. 22, 235–252.
- DULAY, Heidi and BURT, Marina (1974). »Errors and strategies in child second language acquisition«. *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 2.
- FILIPOVIĆ, Rudolf, ed. (1974). *YSCECP Pedagogical Materials 2*. Zagreb: Institute of Linguistics.
- FILIPOVIĆ, Rudolf, ed. (1975). *YSCECP Studies 6*. Zagreb: Institute of Linguistics.
- FILIPOVIĆ, Rudolf, ed. (1985). *Chapters in contrastive grammar*. Zagreb: Institute of Linguistics.
- GARDNER, Robert C. and Lambert, Wallace (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House.
- IVIR, Vladimir and KALOGJERA, Damir, eds. (1991). *Trends in Linguistics, Language in Contact and Contrast*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- LENNEBERG, Eric (1967). *Biological Foundations of Language*. J. Wiley.
- MIHALJEVIĆ DJIGUNOVIĆ, Jelena (1990). »Research on motivation for learning English as a foreign language – A project in progress«. *Studia Romanica et Anglica Zagrabiensta (SRAZ)*, vol. 35, 151–160.
- MIHALJEVIĆ DJIGUNOVIĆ, Jelena (1991/1992). »Attitude towards the teacher as a factor in foreign language learning«. *SRAZ*, vol. 36–37, 143–152.
- MIHALJEVIĆ DJIGUNOVIĆ, Jelena (1993). »Effects of gender on some learner-dependent variables in FLL«. *SRAZ*, vol. 38, 169–180.
- MIHALJEVIĆ DJIGUNOVIĆ, Jelena (1993). »Investigation of attitudes and motivation in early foreign language learning«. In: Vilke and Vrhovac 1993, 45–71.
- MIHALJEVIĆ DJIGUNOVIĆ, Jelena (1995). »EFL learning: the effect of affect«. In: Nizegorodcew and Kosiarz-Stolarska 1995, 69–74.
- MIHALJEVIĆ DJIGUNOVIĆ, Jelena (1995). »Attitudes of young foreign language learners: a follow-up study«. In: Vilke and Vrhovac 1995, 16–33.
- NIZEGORODCEW, Anna and Kosiarz-Stolarska, Anna, eds. (1995). *Second and Foreign Language Acquisition*. Krakow: Towarzystwo Autorow and Wydawcow Prac Naukowych, Universitas.
- OKSAAR, Else (1979). »Zur Analyse der kommunikativen Akte«. *Sprache als reales System*, 391–404.

- OKSAAR, Else (1983). »Language learning as cultural learning«. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata*, no. 2-3, 121-131.
- PIAGET, Jean (1952). *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*. New York: International University Press.
- SELINKER, Larry (1972). »Interlanguage«. *IRAL*, vol X, no. 3, 209-231.
- VYGOTSKY, Lev (1962). *Thought and Language*. The M. I. T. Press.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1974). »Teaching modal verbs to SC learners of English«. In: Filipović 1974, 44-70.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1974). »Teaching the present perfect tense in the SC speaking area«. In: Filipović 1974, 71-82.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1975). »On compiling pedagogical materials«. In: Filipović 1975, 64-77.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1976). »The age factor in the acquisition of foreign languages«. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata*, no. 8, 179-190.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1976). »Implications of the age factor on the process of acquisition of an L2«. *SRAZ*, vol. 41-42, 87-104.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1979). »English as a foreign language at the age of eight«. *SRAZ*, vol. 24, no. 1-2, 297-336.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1983). »Linguistic and conceptual transfer from L1-L2 in children«. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata*, no. 2-3, 285-295.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1985). »Teaching relativization to Croatian speaking students of English«. In: Filipović 1985, 534-562.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1991). »The compromise system of Croatian learners of English«. In: Ivir and Kalogjera 1991, 483-492.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1991). *Vaše dijete i jezik – materinski, drugi i strani jezik* (Your Child and Language – mother tongue, second and foreign language). Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1993). »Early foreign language learning in Croatian primary schools«. In: Vilke and Vrhovac 1993, 10-26.
- VILKE, Mirjana (1995). »Children and foreign languages in Croatian primary schools – four years of a project«. In: Vilke and Vrhovac 1995, 1-15.
- VILKE, Mirjana and Vrhovac, Yvonne, eds. (1993). *Children and Foreign Languages*. Zagreb: Faculty of Philosophy.
- VILKE, Mirjana and Vrhovac, Yvonne, eds. (1995). *Children and Foreign Languages II*. Zagreb: Faculty of Philosophy.

ISTRAŽIVANJE PROCESA UČENJA I USVAJANJA ENGLESKOG KAO STRANOG JEZIKA NA ODSJEKU ZA ENGLESKI JEZIK FILOZOFSKOG FAKULTETA U ZAGREBU

U članku se govori o područjima istraživanja procesa učenja engleskog jezika koja su provodili članovi katedre za glotodidaktiku. Istraživanja su obuhvaćala različite vidove procesa učenja engleskog jezika. Najviše je rezultata postignuto u istraživanju odnosa između hrvatskog jezika kao materinskog i engleskog kao stranog, u ispitivanju učenja engleskog obzirom na dob učenika posebno na ranu školsku dob i istraživanju afektivnih faktora u učenju.

U članku se analiziraju i osnovne karakteristike pristupa učenju engleskog jezika kako ga provodi ova katedra: učenje u prvom redu ima za cilj uspješnu komunikaciju, a da bi se ona postigla učenje se treba temeljiti na aktiviranju kognitivnih osobina učenika, treba uzimati u obzir odnos engleskog prema hrvatskom jeziku i kulturi i dati prednost procesu učenja u odnosu na poučavanje.