

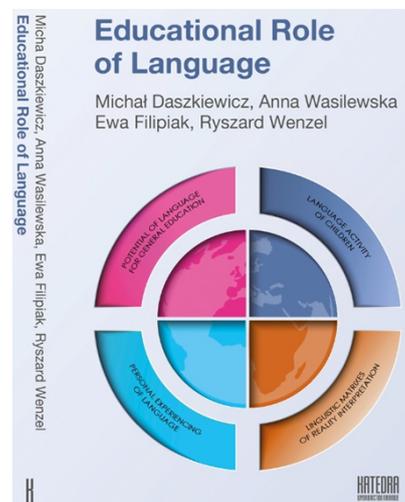
“EPISODE” I (9-10 June 2016)



Educational Role of Language.
Learn to Speak, Speak to Learn

At the first ERL conference (held in Poland) **four areas** were recognised – *Potential of Language for General Education, Language Activity, Personal Experiencing of Language, and Language Matrices of Reality Interpretation*. It was attended by academics representing **21 states** (in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America). The framework of ERL **joint research** was discussed and some international **projects** were commenced (incl. *Oracy in School Culture*). In order to systematise the ERL circle and their research problems, the entire realm of interest (within and across the four areas) was organised around ‘factual’, ‘reflective’, ‘phenomenal’, & ‘argumentative’ questions (depending on study constructs).

The general direction of ERL was outlined by the then hosts Michał Daszkiewicz and Anna Wasilewska (*On the Idea of Conference and Projects*), and further detailed by the plenary speakers including Ryszard Wenzel (*Predictions on General Education and the Role of Language in it*), Ewa Filipiak (*Language as a Cultural Tool for Development and Learning – Lev Vygotsky’s Approach*). These were complemented by foreign presenters including Professors Judy Clegg (Sheffield) and Carey Philpott (Leeds), Otilia Sousa (Lisbon), Marcel Capraru (Craiova) (addressing the relationship between social disadvantage and language development, the language of pedagogical practice, parents and educators’ interaction, and the psycho-neural mechanism of language acquisition, respectively), as well as a group of other Polish professors (talking on, inter alia, cognitive mechanisms, revitalisation of indigenous languages, and humour and word play in literature for children). The group sessions, organised around the four areas mentioned above, were filled with researchers of many different nationalities (additionally supported by Gdańsk University students).



ERL I Scope – included:

How do L1 and L2 interplay in education?

How significant is the child's language activity for his or her cognitive, social and emotional development?

How do different nations experience the ability to speak a foreign language?

How do children's utterances reflect understanding/transformation of the social and cultural world?

The ERL I conference led to the creation of **ERL Network**, the main idea of which has been to **foster cooperation between academics working on issues at the intersection of pedagogy and language**, and to spark **joint grant applications in the interdisciplinary field of linguistics and education** (apart from -on a narrower scale- shared informal studies by individual academics within the ERL circle). The network has used a shared online spreadsheet (with access requested by email) in which ideas and calls for research are exchanged. The network has members from all the continents and remains open to new-comers with fresh ideas. Among those that have thus far contributed to the network’s development in its various dimensions and activities are Paula Budzyńska (Toruń), Sigríður Ólafsdóttir (Reykjavik), Eleni Griva (Florina), Laura Kerslake (Exeter, later Cambridge). Many others have helped to move our initiative forward and authored papers in ERL-oriented journal volumes, incl. Anna Baker from Johannesburg, Daiva Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė from Vilnius, Agnieszka Nowak-Łojewska from Gdańsk, and Giuliana Ferri (Warwick, later London). The journals in which the ERL papers were published are well-reputed and ranked (incl. *Issues in Early Education* and *Beyond Philology*, both issued in Gdańsk).

In the meantime...: Monograph *Educational Role of Language* (see at: wnkatedra.pl/pl)

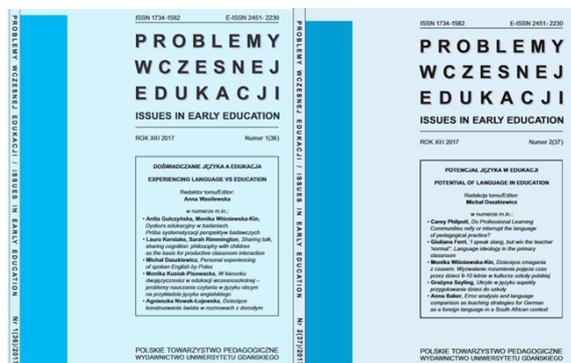
“EPISODE” II (13-14 June 2017)



Educational Role of Language.
Its Social and Cultural Determinants

The second ERL conference (hosted by the same university as ERL I) was also organised around the four areas, although – for the sake of clarity – they started to be differently named: *Language Beliefs* (what learners and teachers *think of* language), *Language Activity* (what they *do with* language), *Language Experience* (later referred to as *Language Affect*) (how they *feel about* language), and *Language Matrices* (how they *perceive the world through* language). The participants represented **26 states** (in Asia, Australia, Europe and North America) and many of them had by then become members of ERL Network’s **research teams** (as presented online).

ERL II was started with Prof. Wasilewska’s discussion on *Expansion of the Linguistic Paradigm in Social Sciences* and Michał Daszkiewicz’s talk on the *ERL Framework and Its Direction*, and further developed by the next plenary speakers incl. Deborah Zuercher (Hawaii), Roderick Nielsen (Deakin), Isaac Calvert (Oxford), Janine Myck-Wayne (California), Monika Kusiak-Pisowacka, Melanie Aplin & Leela Koenig (*The English-Speaking Union*), Chizuko Suzuki & Saki Kijama (Nagasaki), who addressed multilingualism, teacher language awareness, Hebrew educational terminology and its pedagogical prescriptions, elicitation vs language delays, intercultural competence, oracy as preparation for life, and critical thinking in students’ English utterances, respectively.



ERL II Scope – included:

What function of language is assigned by educational systems of different countries?

How is children’s language activity valued and assessed in educational systems of different countries?

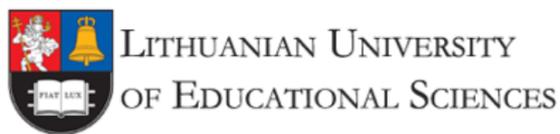
What differences can be observed in pupils’ approach to their native and foreign languages?

What image of the world is reflected by textbooks used by pupils in particular countries?

The ERL II conference prompted the formation of **ERL Association (ERLA)**, the mission of which is (1) **to study and boost the position of language in education**, and (2) **to bridge the gap between linguistic and educational studies**. Its founding (by Michał Daszkiewicz, Anna Wasilewska, Anna Basińska, and Dobrochna Hilderbrandt-Wypych) marked the introduction of four other areas – *Language and Schooling*, *Language and Culture*, *Language and Methodology*, *Language and Personality*, referred to jointly as ‘**Scope Major**’ (with the first four areas comprising thenceforth ‘**Scope Minor**’ and their names being slightly modified to cover *Language(-)Beliefs*, *Language(-)Activity*, *Language(-)Affect*, *Language(-)Thinking* – the hyphenating of names imply their double interpretation, that is, for instance, what our beliefs concerning language are and, conversely, how language itself determines our beliefs). Additionally, the association’s framework incorporates ‘**streams**’, construed as issues which cut across the two ERL scopes/eight areas. The geographical extensiveness of ERLA has been reflected by joint publications and projects and seen as a necessity for the educational role of language worldwide to be properly (qualitatively and quantitatively) researched. The sub-issues falling within ERLA’s eight areas are exemplified on its website.

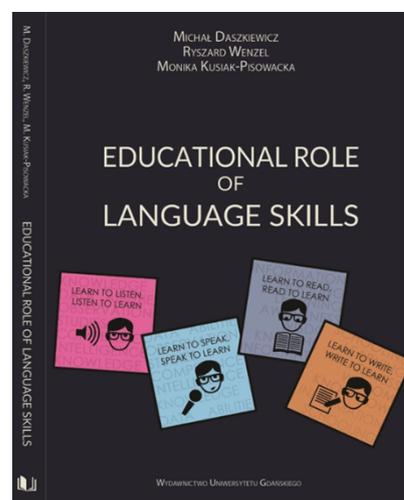
In the meantime: ... The framework of coordinated ERL (3-dimensional) research was put forward (see [www](http://www.educationalroleoflanguage@gmail.com))

“EPISODE” III (13-14 June 2018)

Educational Role of Language
How do we understand it?

The third conference was very significant in that the ERL cycle began to “travel”. It was held in Lithuania (with the **hosts** being led by Gerda Mazlaveckiene assisted by Jurga Cibulskiene and Egle Petroniene) around the theme raised at ERL II by Isaac Calvert representing the University of Oxford. The rationale beyond the conference structure was reflected by the overall headings given its two days, i.e. *Intercultural Reflections* and *Intercontinental Projects*. Regular participants (ca 40%) were joined by people attending for the first time (ca 60%) and coming from countries not represented earlier such as Afghanistan, Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, or Hong Kong.

The two opening talks given by Alina Reşceanu & Monica Tilea (Romania) and Cristina Berry (USA) addressed *a cross-country analysis of teaching FL writing and the role of perseverance in language learning*, respectively (which had been meant to reflect how ERL welcomes studies falling within different **educational domains** – cognitive and affective (here), as well as axiological and psychomotor). They were followed by presentations on the developments of ERL, *language of schooling, perspectives of teachers on language education*, and – on the next day, more incl. *the application of Personal Constructs Theory to critical literacy and language analysis, students’ attitudes to multilingual learning* - by Michał Daszkiewicz (Gdańsk), Helmut J. Vollmer (Hamburg), Karen Swabey (Tasmania), Branwen Bingle (Greenwich), and Eleni Griva (Florina), respectively. The group sessions partially reflected the said division into four educational domains and emphasised some ERL’s “pulsating themes” such as CLIL or bilingualism.



ERL III Scope – included:

What theories and studies shape your understanding of the educational role of language?

What language activity do we view as particularly conducive to development & learning and why?

What (intercultural/multilingual) language experience is fostered by your (school's/country's) educational system?

What language matrices underlie your (school's/country's) educational system?

The ERL III conference proved some participants to become ERL “veterans” as some of them came already for the third time (from Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia – the first and the last of which were represented one year later for the fourth time in a row (sic!) by Jens Haugan from Inland University of Applied Sciences and Elena Kovacikova from the University in Nitra, respectively). It also marked the stage where another newly-born tradition was followed, namely the inclusion of ERL Network’s symposium and ERL Association’s (open) meeting in the conference programme. Whilst the former was meant for discussions and workshops focused on joint ERL projects, the latter was intended for talks on the further development ERL initiatives and – equally importantly – introduction of the framework to our potential **new members**. It is also in Vilnius that it was emphasised that ERL is about the **broad understanding of the educational role of language**, that is how it determines education, as opposed to its narrow understanding confined to how important language competence (especially in L2/FL, particularly English) is for students’ success in work and/or life altogether. **ERL Network** and **ERL Association** share this understanding, with the difference between them being that the former focuses predominantly on the ‘Scope Minor’, and the latter – on the ‘Scope Major’, ‘Scope Minor’, and the relationships between the eight areas.

In the meantime: ... Monograph *Educational Role of Language Skills* (see at wyd.ug.edu.pl)

“EPISODE” IV (17-18 June 2019)

Educational Role of Language.



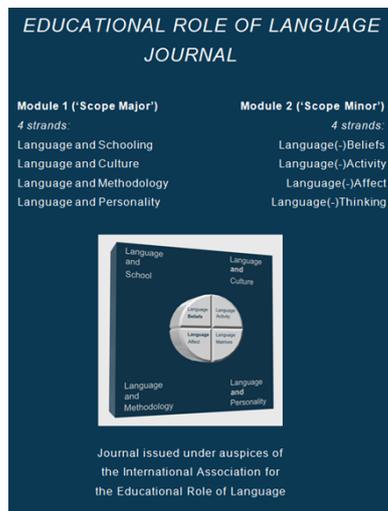
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From Theory to Practice, from Practice to Theory

The fourth conference was special not only due to its number in the sequence (with many things in the ERL framework being in classified and subdivided into **four**), but also because of the event being handed over by and to ERL **regulars** to each other. ERL IV was held in Romania, with the hosting team of Monica Tilea, Alina Reşceanu and Oana-Adriana Duta. Its theme – under yet another ‘tradition’ – was formulated by a participant of the previous conference, namely Patrick Errington from the University of St Andrews. Held on outstanding university premises, the conference was marked by a remarkable load of enthusiasm symbolised by different types of specific material produce (photo). ERL IV was also the first conference to have been organised around the *Scope Major*, with separate **Discussion Groups** and its two-day sessions within and across ERL strands.

ERL IV was opened by the hosts with a presentation of a Romanian-Icelandic (ERL-derived) project on *educating language students for democratic citizenship* followed by M. Daszkiewicz’s talk on *composing and researching personal language constructs of English tenses*. The plenary sessions also included discussions of “*trigger word*” in teacher preparation, *metalinguistic knowledge acquired through Romance linguistics courses*, and *the reciprocal relationship between epistemological beliefs and classroom conversation* by Anita Bright (Portland), Cecilia Mihaela Popescu & Anamaria Preda & Alina Resceanu (Craiova), and Byeonggon Min & Naeun Choi (Seoul), respectively. The discussion groups addressed the themes of **Forms of Communication** (incl. a talk on linguistic challenges in the therapy of autism by Agata Wentz (Cracow)), **Language Programmes** (incl. a discussion on the English subject curriculum in Norway (Knut Øystein Høvik), **Interactional Skills** (incl. a talk on the dynamic assessment of ESL teachers’ classroom interactional competence (by Salomi Snehalatha Bolleddu (The Open University)), and **Beyond Language** (incl. Philosophical Pragmatics in Communication by Raluca Balica of the hosting university).



ERL IV Scope – included:

How does the language of schooling support students’ beliefs, activity, affect, and thinking?

How is the intercultural competence developed through L1 and L2/FL education?

What implications for research and teaching methods follow from the “linguistic turn”?

How personally relevant is the language employed in educational theories and practices?

Since the first half of 2019 the realm of ERL Association has constituted the framework of its biannual **ERL Journal**, the two modules of which correspond to ERLA’s *Scope Major* and *Scope Minor*. Whilst initially the papers included pertain to diversified topics, the journal’s underlying idea is to publish volumes “belonging” to specific ERL areas (or ‘strands’, as they are referred in the journal) along/alternately with special issues requested by ERL academics from within and outside ERLA or ERL Network. Papers are solicited by **Strand Coordinators** from Croatia (Dragana Bozic), Germany (Elisa Bitterlich), Spain (Raquel Sanchez Ruiz, Elena Gomez Parra) and others. ERL Journal is international, interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed and double-blinded. It rests on the overarching premise of language shaping our reality and education, and includes both **theoretical and empirical** papers, presenting qualitative and quantitative approaches. It strives to retain **geographical extensiveness** and **balance** on multiple levels, and to have a reader-friendly and ground-breaking character, with the former achieved by means of an approachable language and the latter by promotion of innovative papers highlighting the educational role of language.

In the meantime: ... <https://clie.org.uk/links> - ELRA on the first position of international organisations