Our title for this chapter expresses an underlying aim in this handbook, and one that carries three senses. Firstly, ‘opening up’ means collecting together theory and research into language awareness and making it accessible to more students and researchers. Secondly, it concerns the advancement of research into language awareness. And thirdly, it entails the exploration and expansion of language awareness in areas outside the traditional one of language teaching.

Exploring the Scope of Language Awareness

Defining language awareness has always been challenging. While, as we see in this handbook, various definitions are provided, Donmall (1992), in her Editorial in the first issue of the journal *Language Awareness*, notes that “Language Awareness has the great advantage of being a cover term for almost anything to do with language” (1). And perhaps we should not be too surprised to see a host of differing definitions of a concept. Dance and Larson (1976) reported over 100 different definitions of the term ‘communication’, for example, and Gass and Seiter (2004) set out a long list of differing definitions of ‘persuasion’ by different scholars. Insofar as definitions can operate like a “fence … designed to keep some things in and other things out” (Gass and Seiter, 2014: 24), the advantages of strictly identifying what is entitled to lie within the fence sometimes need to be offset against the risk of closing out proximal areas that might turn out to be of great value (e.g. to the better understanding and development over time of what lies within), or more integral than first viewed. Another approach might be to identify what one might see as ‘inner’ areas of the language awareness field, where there is most agreement around key features (e.g. explicit knowledge about *language*) and where these features are all present, and then also to accommodate areas extending outwards, where some but not all of these features are present (e.g. where there might be a focus on explicit knowledge about *nonverbal communication* – proxemics or chronemics, for example – rather than about language itself). Thus, we might consider van Essen’s (2008: 3) idea of the “core business of LA” being concerned with language teaching and language learning, and with language teachers and language learners, but we might also
readily embrace other areas such as “the world of work and issues in language-sensitive professions such as law and politics” (Donmall, 1992: 2) and transnational corporations (Codó, this volume). This is a project beyond the scope of this introduction, and perhaps one that might be taken up by the Association for Language Awareness (ALA). But it is the perspective that lay behind our initial planning of this handbook. Parts 1 and 2 can be viewed as closer to this “core business of LA”, while there are chapters in Part 3 reaching out and exploring beyond that core.

The understanding of the notion of ‘awareness’ among applied linguists owes much to the work of Schmidt (1995) and van Lier (1996, 1998), who saw it as a level, phase or facet of ‘consciousness’. Although in everyday life these two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, the latter can be seen as having a much more comprehensive meaning, referring to the response of an individual to their environment in the form of what Chafe (1994: 28) defines as a “self-centred model of the surrounding world”. Occasions of situated language use or specific communicative practices form part of this ‘surrounding world’ for which, if we want to survive in it, we need to develop a model of its functioning, including principles, rules and patterns. According to Schmidt (1995), consciousness can involve four different psychological processes: intention, attention, noticing and understanding. However, he associates the notion of awareness only with the last two, because they represent a more advanced stage in the process of modelling the surrounding world, as they rely on the individual’s capacity to focus on a particular phenomenon or event (noticing) and to establish or recognize a principle, rule or pattern (understanding).

Van Lier’s (1998) approach to the notions of consciousness and awareness is very similar to that of Schmidt in that he also considers four levels of consciousness, with an increasing degree of subjectivity and each including the previous one(s). Thus, at the most basic level, he proposes “global intransitive consciousness”, with which he simply refers to a general state of being attentive or observant in situated language use. The next level is defined as “awareness” or “transitive consciousness” and it has to do with the individual’s capacity to notice or focus their perceptual activity on a particular element or aspect of communicative practices. The third level of consciousness proposed by van Lier is “metaconsciousness”, and he divides it between “practical awareness” (the capacity to control, manipulate and be creative with language) and “discursive awareness”, which includes the individual’s access to a set of precise terms to analyse and discuss language as part of communicative practices. Finally, van Lier defines the fourth level of consciousness as “critical awareness” and it refers to the capacity to reflect on communicative practices as part of social and ideological practices.

We consider that, independently of the extent to which Schmidt’s and van Lier’s proposals may reflect how the mind actually works (an issue which, by the way, needs to be acknowledged for most psycholinguistic models of language competence), they represent very useful conceptual frameworks with which to approach both research and practice around the notion of language awareness. Beyond the conceptual issues, however, there is the reality of many researchers and practitioners, who at a point in time, and with probably different experiences, goals and theoretical bases, saw in the notion of language awareness a focalizing idea for what they were doing and one that could bring them together to join efforts.

The history of language awareness is well documented elsewhere (see, for example, Donmall-Hicks, 1997; van Essen, 2008), so we will look at it here only briefly and selectively. In 1989, a BAAL (British Association of Applied Linguistics) seminar on
Opening Up the Field of Study

Language awareness was organized at Bangor University in Wales, and its motivation is summed up at the start of the edited collection of papers that arose from it (that is, James and Garrett, 1992a): “Language Awareness (LA) is a term that crops up more and more in a widening range of academic and pedagogical contexts, and this growing frequency of use has brought with it a proliferation of senses of the label” (James and Garrett, 1992b: 3). The idea “was to assemble representatives of some of the various branches of LA, each with its own understanding of the term, and invite them to explore common ground and areas of difference in terms of definitions, objectives and means to achieve these objectives”. We mention this to emphasize the diversity of the field from the outset. In the context of the 1980s, there was the language awareness of Hawkins (1981, 1984, and also 1992, 1999) arguing for programmes of study in schools about language and how we learn languages, with Modern Languages and English teachers working together. Hawkins was responding to the poor literacy rates and the poor record of foreign language learning in UK schools, and in doing so was also seeking to arouse curiosity about language (realizing too, in his notion of the “school language apprenticeship” (Hawkins, 1999: 137) that the languages the students might need in later life might well not be the ones available in schools), and to counter prejudice and foster tolerance (in particular in response to racial and religious tensions in UK cities, especially at that time). In the same vein, language awareness programmes and materials were also being created and implemented by ethnic minority support services that were working with schools in many parts of the UK at that time. All of these programmes, as well as the Language in the National Curriculum (LINC) materials designed for the in-service training of teachers in their knowledge of the English language (see Carter, 1990), were concerned with increasing conscious knowledge about language in various ways, although this could involve raising to people’s awareness aspects of language that were already part of their implicit knowledge. In addition to these areas of language awareness work was the activity in the field of Critical Language Awareness (CLA), with its focus on students seeing and engaging with the ideological and political nature of language (e.g. Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1999; Clark and Ivanič, 1999). This also of course concerned the development of explicit understanding and knowledge about language.

In this same period, a role for conscious knowledge about language was also being argued in the second language acquisition (SLA) field, where there was a debate between those who favoured Krashen’s (1982) Monitor Model, which saw no useful part for conscious knowledge about language in second language acquisition, and those who opposed this view and argued, with evidence, that there was indeed a cross-over, and that conscious knowledge did indeed play a role. In this SLA arena, the argument for explicit knowledge was very much a counter to the comparatively monolithic ‘implicit-only’ standpoint of the Monitor Model, and so left the way open for a permeable interface: that is, complementarity rather than ‘explicit-only’.

Accordingly, then, both in this handbook and elsewhere, while authors might refer to the definition of language awareness posted on the ALA website: “explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use”, they also often write about both conscious and unconscious/nonconscious phenomena, as if recognizing that, in at least some areas of language awareness, it is not viable or useful to consider just one side of this coin. We see this not only in chapters focusing on beliefs and attitudes, but in chapters on other areas too. Just to take some examples, Llanes considers the roles of both explicit and implicit language knowledge in relation to Study Abroad programmes. Van
Leeuwen considers both conscious and unconscious knowledge in relation to composition in visual images. Bardovi-Harlig reports both implicit and explicit perspectives on pragmatic awareness, and suggests not seeing these as in binary opposition but as a continuum. As shown above, this notion of levels of awareness is also found elsewhere in the language awareness literature, albeit with different focuses (e.g. Preston, 1996; Schmidt, 1995; van Lier, 1996, 1998). While explicit knowledge tends to be at or more to the fore in some areas, such as the Hawkinsian field, and LINC, there is clearly an interest in the implicit side of things too. Preston (this volume) is encouraging of this, arguing that folk linguistics too has moved in the direction of studying implicit as well as explicit knowledge. And Kristiansen (this volume), researching in the sociolinguistic field of language change, finds implicit attitudes to be more revealing of the direction of language change than explicit attitudes.

1992 and Since

1992 was something of a milestone year for language awareness. In the wake of the above-mentioned 1989 BAAL seminar, Bangor University hosted the first International Conference on Language Awareness in 1992. At the conference itself, the journal Language Awareness was launched, published then by Multilingual Matters. At the same conference, the ALA was also founded, to which the journal was then affiliated, and which since that time has held biennial international language awareness conferences. And alongside all this, two edited volumes were published by Longman that same year, both of which are still much referred to: Critical Language Awareness (Fairclough, 1992) and Language Awareness in the Classroom (James and Garrett, 1992a).

‘Newness’ is a focus of attention in (at least) two ways in language awareness. One is that awareness-raising tends to involve noticing the gap between what one knows and what one does not know, or what one needs to know, and moving forward from what one knows (old knowledge) to seeing what is new and needs to be learnt. The other concerns a point made by Svalberg (2016: 9, and mentioned in Andrews and Lin, this volume) that in terms of the content knowledge language teachers need to have as a basis for their teaching, language is far from a static body of knowledge. There are always “new developments and new insights” to take on board (Andrews, 2007: 67). Since 1992 (just one year after Tim Berners-Lee created the world’s first ever webpage), a great deal has happened across the world that has required us to reassess our knowledge, perspectives, ideas and practices regarding language, culture and communication.

Although globalization is arguably not a uniquely contemporary phenomenon, it is in our contemporary era one that is particularly associated with the 1990s and onward. To illustrate, in their US survey, Fiss and Hirsch (2005: 47) found that more than 40% of their respondents in 1993 reported that they were not familiar with the concept of globalization, whereas just five years later only 11% of their respondents did not express a view when asked whether globalization was good or bad. While the concept of globalization carries variable values, associations and inferred meanings for people across the world (e.g. see Garrett, 2010), we will list here a few of the main characteristics that Coupland suggests, each having implications for language awareness:

- Massively increasing demographic mobility
- Developing ethnic pluralism, especially in urban settings
- Proliferation and speeding up of communication technologies
Increasing mediation of culture and greater cultural reflexivity
Increasingly familiar cultural landscapes, widely dispersed
A large shift to service-sector work, globally dispersed
More emphasis on individualism and projects of the self
Failing trust in professional (medical, legal, political) authority
Growth of middle class but accentuation of the rich/poor divide

*Coupland, 2010: 2*

As one would expect, many of the authors in this handbook consider changes associated with globalization and/or their impacts. Hence several include mention of the world-wide web and social media (e.g. Hall; van Leeuwen; Young; Finkbeiner and Schluer; Basturkmen and Philp) if not have their primary focus on them (Dooly), in terms of their effects on, amongst other things, language and language use itself, on increasing multimodality, on their cultural and intercultural aspects, and as a basis for new teaching and learning practices. The massive mediatization of the globalized world also reshapes language use, values and ideologies, and indeed awareness (e.g. Dooly, as well as Kristiansen’s chapter with its report on what is happening with the Danish language, and see also Mortensen, Coupland and Thøgersen, 2017, on the creative innovations in style and the intensified reflexive awareness generated by late-modern media).

The increasing numbers of people on the move and the developing ethnic pluralism link of course to the growth of multilingualism and third (or more) language acquisition (e.g. Jessner), plurilingualism (Oliveira and Ançã), diasporic communities and border protection agencies (Hatoss), internationalization in universities (Dafouz), and Study Abroad programmes (Llanes), language diversity in primary schools (Young), and language policies and practices in multilingual workplaces and organizations (Codó). Relatedly, Johnstone (2010: 387) notes that this increased geographical mobility and the resulting demographic heterogeneity in localities create “precisely the conditions that foster dialect and language awareness”.

As Codó reminds us in her chapter, though, people communicating ‘within the workplace’ are not necessarily ‘people on the move’, as our knowledge economy has developed more and more into a network (also internetwork) economy, with global teams of professional experts, contractors, customers, etc. working together from different locations around the globe. Such world-networked multilingual and multicultural environments are a significant development and an important focus for the language awareness field.

**The Handbook Chapters**

In planning the handbook, then, we decided to have three parts. Parts 1 and 2 would focus on what we have earlier referred to as ‘core’ language awareness, with its primary focus on the teaching and learning of languages, whether L1 or additional languages, and extending to intercultural issues and the field of human communication. Part 3 would include other perspectives on awareness which do not relate so directly to language pedagogy but are nevertheless concerned in various ways with language and communication – areas ranging from professional communication, translation, visual communication to other areas such as the social psychology of language, sociolinguistics, dialectology and the sociology of language.
Part 1

While it is for the most part not possible (or necessarily desirable) to separate teaching from learning, Part 1 contains a collection of chapters where the content leans more towards matters of teaching, or indeed teachers themselves. The handbook opens with two chapters covering two of the broad areas in language awareness. The first – Young’s chapter – is situated in the Hawkinsian tradition of language awareness. The second, by Ranta and Lyster, reviews research in the instructed second language acquisition (SLA) field. Young writes about language work in primary schools in the context of language diversity and migrant languages, and reports on several initiatives, including the large-scale EVLANG project and follow-up programmes in more countries. Here, with concerns of guarding against ethnocentrism, parochialism, prejudice and discrimination, as well as with objectives of, for example, promoting the values, knowledge and skills to prepare these children for engagement in citizenship, Young emphasizes the key role that teachers have in this process, and the importance of initial and continuing teacher education. She also discusses the sources of resistance to language awareness work, emanating from language policies and schools, as well as from some parents. Usually they show enthusiasm for children starting to learn an additional language at an early age, but it is harder to convince them of the value of learning about language and languages.

Attention then moves to another large field of language awareness work – instructed SLA. Ranta and Lyster ask how language awareness can influence second language learning, and they review the body of research into form-focused instruction (FFI). As the authors say, the FFI literature is now vast, with overlapping terminology and often contradictory findings, so their review here on what is pedagogically relevant is a contribution of high utility. Citing Spada (1997), they view FFI as any pedagogical way of implicitly or explicitly bringing learners’ attention to language form. The authors consider both reactive and proactive approaches to FFI, and emphasize and illustrate how FFI work in instructional settings also needs to be followed by phases of guided and communicative practice to improve target language accuracy and fluency. As we noted earlier, the implicit/explicit distinction in the way that FFI is defined is a familiar theme running through a great deal of language awareness work, including the chapters in this handbook, and this is by no means limited to the area of language learning and acquisition.

Our next two chapters consider teachers’ language awareness (TLA). Andrews and Lin address what second or foreign language (L2) teachers need to know about language in order to be effective, the increased attention to language awareness in L2 teacher development and the methodologies most associated with it, and teacher language awareness in the contexts where other subjects are being taught through the medium of the L2, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). They identify the knowledge bases that can be regarded as constituting TLA, and these include ‘subject matter knowledge’, including beliefs about the subject matter (SMK), and ‘pedagogical content knowledge’ (PCK), with PCK enabling teachers to draw upon their SMK to make it pedagogically usable. In L2 teaching, they add knowledge bases at the interface between these: knowledge of and about the language, and knowledge of the learners. Where there is a focus on the learning of both an academic subject and a language (e.g. Geography taught through an L2, as in CLIL), TLA becomes particularly challenging, and the authors outline some of the particular kinds of TLA
that might be needed (e.g. knowledge of genre and register), and illustrate how these might be included in teacher development programmes. In terms of language teaching itself, they refer to Svalberg’s (2016: 9) point that content knowledge for language teachers is constantly changing, and we might suggest that this is even more the case in this late modern period.

Borg writes about teachers’ beliefs, which, as Andrews and Lin note, have been viewed as part of TLA. Borg examines some of the current understandings of the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and practices, and considers why they are worth studying. His discussion of some of the published studies on beliefs raises some of the many difficulties that researchers face when trying to study them. He ends his chapter by contributing some guidelines to be borne in mind when researching language teachers’ beliefs and practices, as well as language awareness more generally. Along the way, Borg makes some useful distinctions between different types of belief. His distinction between professed and tacit beliefs appears to echo the explicit/implicit differentiation referred to above, and which also surfaces in Part 3 in the chapters by Kristiansen and Preston, in relation to attitudes (a similar construct). And his category of enacted beliefs relates to researchers’ attempts to infer people’s beliefs from the way they act. As in the field of attitudes, research into beliefs, especially if one is looking for links with behaviour, is characterized by great complexity, which makes it both a particularly challenging and an intriguing field of research.

In the next two chapters, our focus turns to the four skills, with Goh writing her chapter on the teaching of L2 listening and speaking, and Finkbeiner and Schluer reviewing the teaching of reading and writing. Goh starts by explaining that the teaching of listening and speaking has tended to move away from its focus on activity, on comprehension and fluency, on what learners can do and cannot do, towards what they can learn to do in order to become more effective listeners and speakers. Here, then, as learners develop awareness of themselves as listeners and speakers, of the demands of the tasks and of strategies that might enhance their performance, metacognition and metacognitive knowledge come to the fore. Goh contrasts the features of speech and writing, and then gives a more detailed breakdown and overview of spoken discourse, including speech genres, spoken grammar, lexical features in speech, and discourse intonation. She then discusses metacognitive awareness and research that shows its benefits, and finishes with some examples of procedures for teaching. A point that emerges in her chapter is that, although there has recently been more research into metacognitive awareness and L2 listening, there is a great need for more research into the impact of language awareness on L2 speaking.

Finkbeiner and Schluer outline the types of awareness needed for reading and writing – linguistic knowledge, world knowledge, strategic knowledge – and note that these are all multidimensional (e.g. linguistic awareness is lexical and grammatical, etc.). To these, they add cultural awareness. As we see in Malmkjær’s chapter on translation in this handbook, there needs to be some sensitivity to cultural differences and impact. They also relate reading and writing to the domains of language awareness set out in James and Garrett (1992b), and end their paper with some practical applications in the form of awareness-based approaches to reading and writing. In the course of their chapter, Finkbeiner and Schluer indicate some of the contemporary social changes that we need to be attentive to. One of these is the importance of lifelong learning at a time of rapid social change that has left behind the notion of just having one career through the lifespan. So literacy development becomes increasingly important for private and
professional life. The development of the world-wide web and wireless connection have also placed new and changing demands on readers and writers. Increasing multilingualism, too, means that classrooms are more and more diversified, requiring teachers to have more sensitivity to the ways languages, varieties and learners differ.

Our following two chapters continue in the direction of literacy, as well as literature itself. Wallace’s chapter is about the teaching of critical literacy, and she opens the chapter with definitions of literacy in the wider context of critical pedagogy, comparing and discussing perspectives relating to Foucault, Marx, Habermas and Freire, and outlining dilemmas facing critical educators (whose opinion or stance will be put across?, whose empowerment is our main concern?, whose awareness are we aiming at raising?, whose interpretation are we concerned with?). Wallace writes about the LINC project for UK secondary schools and also the work in CLA by Fairclough and other colleagues, both drawing upon Halliday’s Systemic Functional grammar, and also giving some examples of critical literacy teaching. She notes that, while the 1980s and 1990s were a productive period for CLA and critical literacy, they cannot currently be described as ‘hot topics’ in language teaching and learning. Resistance is a theme we encountered in Young’s chapter, and we see another instance of it here (e.g. with the LINC project being deemed too radical by the UK government of the time). Yet, as Wallace stresses (e.g. in relation to the “even greater need to interrogate the anonymity of internet texts”) and as Bartlett, Montessori and Lloyd show us in chapter 30, and as we have seen, inter alia, in recent presidential arguments in the USA, such critical work is crucial in the 21st century.

Hall’s chapter takes us into literature itself, in the broad sense of the creative use of language, ranging from everyday punning to “canonical literary texts”. Referring to Jakobson’s (1960) work, Hall notes that such creative language can be seen as drawing attention to itself. Unusual or deviant language, repetition, parallelism, all can create foregrounding, and indeed often, through their meaningfulness to readers, cause readers to slow down as they read them. So Hall’s focus is on the language used in these texts (in contrast to what he refers to as the “theory wars” in the literature departments of the 1980s), and indeed he sees such emphasis on stylistic matters as being of particular value in the burgeoning field of creative writing courses. He describes stylistics as asking the question “how does it mean?” rather than “what does it mean?” Second language pedagogy is increasingly taking stylistics and creative writing on board as a vehicle for developing students’ language awareness, as well as wider awareness of ideology and cultural differences. And in terms of new developments, Hall points to the world-wide web as a resource for, amongst other things, stimulating an awareness of more fluid multimodal communication.

The next two chapters look at English. The first, by Llurda, Bayyurt and Sifakis, considers English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and in particular whether it should be taught by non-native or native English-speaking English language teachers (by NNESTs or NESTs), while the second chapter, by Dafouz, focuses on English Medium Instruction (EMI) in higher education institutions (HEIs). Llurda et al., examining the issues and debate, align themselves with the argument that NNESTs have a superior level of awareness, as they have experienced learning another language as an additional language, and often through teaching methods that give more attention to the formal aspects of language than NESTs receive. They refer to Seidlhofer’s (1996: 67) statement that NNESTs are able to mediate between the languages and cultures in their use of appropriate methodology, but they point out that such teachers need to be familiar
with current methodological principles as well. Another part of this debate is the view that the English learners do not need to concern themselves with the English of native speakers or with any of the standard varieties of English, but should see themselves instead as users of the most widely used lingua franca. For Llurda et al., ELF awareness means directing English language teachers towards matters concerning the international use of English in multilingual and multicultural contexts. And they see ELF TLA as having three components – awareness of language and language use, awareness of instructional practice, and awareness of learning. From data gathered from participants in an ELF teacher education project in Turkey and Greece, they provide illustrative instances of teachers gaining awareness of each of these three components. In their first ELF awareness component, Llurda et al. include the processes of languaging and translanguaging, and in their third, they underline the significance of online activity as a forum for authentic communication in English with other non-native English speakers in different parts of the world, thus further promoting the value and reinforcement of ELF.

Dafouz’s chapter considers the opportunities for developing language awareness in the context of multilingual HEIs where there is EMI – that is, where academic subjects are taught in English, but usually, unlike CLIL, without an explicit focus on language learning or specific language aims. Dafouz points to the rapidity and scale of EMI’s implementation worldwide, albeit with considerable variation and variability. She provides a picture of EMI programmes in Europe, and looks at the common drivers for its introduction, from the global level to the classroom level. She invokes her ROAD-MAPPING framework to explain the dynamic nature of EMI and related research from an applied linguistic perspective. Language issues are at the fore in her analysis and at all levels – e.g. European agencies, national governments, HEI academic staff, administrative staff, students. For example, where previously English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) provision was available for more discipline-specific language development amongst students, many HEIs with EMI have removed this language support on the erroneous assumption that it is not needed where students are wholly or partly immersed in an English-speaking setting. She concludes by arguing for more attention to be paid to language awareness in EMI programmes, if they are to be “effective, credible and lasting”.

Part 1 concludes with a chapter on assessment by Figueras. She observes that in the titles of articles in the journal Language Awareness in recent years, and also in other specialized literature, there are very few references to assessment or testing. Correspondingly, in the assessment field, the term ‘language awareness’ is also scarce. Against this, though, we can see that there are references to assessment tucked away in several of the handbook chapters (for example, Boye and Byram; Finkbeiner and Schluer; Jessner; Oliveira and Ançã), which suggests that assessment is a frequent topic of interest and concern even if it is not uppermost on the agenda. Figueras emphasizes that while language has been gaining more importance in education, there are calls for assessment to contribute to and enhance language learning, and also that language awareness and assessment share concerns such as the needs of users, how learners respond to language activities, and how assessment may affect them. Figueras considers autonomy, self-assessment and peer-assessment, with particular reference to the European Language Portfolio (ELP), for example, as part of this project to raise language awareness and prompt conscious involvement in the learning process. Figueras sees a stronger relationship between assessment and language awareness as unavoidable,
but there are challenges. One is to ensure teachers understand how to make the best use of assessment to stimulate awareness. And, fundamentally, there is a need for assessors to establish what language awareness ‘looks like’, and how it may vary across different learners and contexts. And, interestingly, Figueras asks whether languaging and translanguaging themselves can be accounted for in the assessment process.

**Part 2**

In Part 2, we turn our attention more towards learners and learning. This part opens with an informative and useful chapter by Simard and Gutiérrez, taking us through the various constructs associated with metalinguistics that are so prevalent in the language awareness field. They include metalinguistic knowledge, metalinguistic awareness, metalinguistic reflection and activity, metalinguistic ability, and the manifestation of these – metalanguage. In each case, they consider how these have been defined in SLA and the general findings that relate to them in SLA metalinguistic research. Simard and Gutiérrez organize their review of the research according to the three main research approaches: correlational studies, studying relationships between the constructs and learning success; descriptive studies, examining the nature of these constructs and their use; and developmental studies, investigating their development in the wake of a single treatment or over a period of time. While the authors call for more work into the nature of these constructs and their development in L2 learners, their conclusion from the research is that some aspects of SLA gain from metalinguistic knowledge, awareness, ability and reflection.

Kalaja, Barcelos and Aro show how approaches to researching learners’ beliefs have evolved, moving from a focus on ‘what’ students believe to ‘how’ beliefs emerge and vary in different contexts. They start from the traditional approach, which regards beliefs as preconceived ideas that students have about L2 learning, which develop early on and show some stability, though may change over time. They then move on to contextual approaches, where beliefs are seen as dynamic and contextual, and which comprise a range of research methodologies, including discursive methods that move the focus from cognition to discourse, viewing beliefs as constructed through discourse rather than living in learners’ minds. Their chapter includes more recent developments in this area of research: for instance, the affective turn, studying the interrelationship between beliefs and emotions and actions of students, and how emotions can weaken or strengthen their beliefs. Kalaja et al. provide great clarity in their chapter by summarizing studies illustrating the various approaches they cover. They end their chapter with suggestions as to how teachers can help their L2 learners engage in reflective practice in order for the learners themselves to become more aware of how they go about language learning and why.

The next two chapters have their primary focus on plurilingualism. Oliveira and Ançã set out to establish the place of language awareness in plurilingual learners and their development. They draw upon Andrade et al.’s (2003) model of Plurilingual Competence (PC), in which PC is interrelated with dimensions pertaining to socio-affective factors, management of learning repertoires, management of linguistic-communicative repertoires, and management of interaction. Taking a post-2001, that is, post-CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) sample of relevant articles from peer-reviewed journals, they look at how far each of the PC model’s dimensions have so far been addressed in these. They then set the PC model against
James and Garrett’s (1992b) five domains of language awareness (cognitive, affective, social, power and performance) to establish how the PC model dimensions correspond to the language awareness domains. This reveals also how far the different language awareness domains are represented in the published articles, showing the cognitive domain being represented far more than the other four dimensions put together, with the power domain (CLA) all but absent. This allows them to see the gaps that future language awareness input might take into account. Oliveira and Ançã end their chapter by setting out how some teaching approaches promoting language awareness might be employed in the PC programmes.

Also against the background of multilingualism being the “new world order” (Aronin and Singleton, 2012), Jessner emphasizes the importance of moving beyond SLA research and theory, and of understanding and working with the qualitative differences between SLA and third language acquisition, or multilingualism. At the theoretical end, she invokes complexity theory to accommodate the important aspects of multilingual learning and use, including its variability and continuous change. The concomitant greater scope for crosslinguistic interaction too, for example, has implications in many directions, such as widening the scope of the construct of metalinguistic awareness, seeing language systems as interdependent rather than autonomous systems, and the practices of translanguaging and not attempting to keep languages apart in language classrooms. New instructional directions such as this, as has been the experience with language awareness work in some other areas, often suffer from a lack of good and available teaching materials, and Jessner points to this being the case here too, and, given the rate of growth of multilingual learning, this surely needs attention.

Internationalization has led to a rapid and large increase in students undertaking study abroad, e.g. taking degrees at HEIs in other countries, or spending shorter periods of study through exchange programmes. Usually, although not always, this entails their studying through another language. Although research into study abroad (SA) is still relatively new, a fair body of findings is emerging. As Llanes stresses in her chapter, most of the studies that have been conducted to date into SA have not been designed with language awareness specifically in mind. Hence her chapter is a very helpful review of the work done so far to see what can be found that relates to the concerns of language awareness. Her review shows that explicit knowledge seems to play an important role when learning an L2 in an SA context, with those with higher pre-departure levels experiencing the largest gains. Gains also appear to be quite durable, and Llanes considers this in relation to their experiencing some implicit learning while away, or their automatizing their knowledge in the SA setting. Many students appear to see SA as a turning point at which they experience a marked improvement in their L2. She notes though that a lot more research needs to be done (e.g. with larger numbers of respondents, and with more age-groups). This is an important and growing area of research for those interested in language awareness.

Basturkmen and Philp review the research into collaborative tasks and peer-interaction in language classrooms. Such activities, they explain, provide opportunities for students to co-construct knowledge and, within SLA, align well with cognitive and sociocultural views, as well as research into noticing and attention. Basturkmen and Philp point to a number of variables that have been found to make a difference in how awareness accrues in such work: for example, mode (written or
spoken), task-design, and learner factors such as their proficiency, and their interaction patterns. The knowledge creation and knowledge consolidation processes that these activities can generate clearly give them a significant place in understanding language awareness in language learning. There is much more to explore in this field in the effort to ensure effective peer interaction and language talk. Newer directions pointed to earlier are also relevant here: e.g. the use of translanguaging and the different types of activities afforded by the use of new media.

Dooly’s focus is squarely on social media, and stresses how such mediated communication is now the undeniable norm in our professional and personal lives, and its multimodal nature is essential to understanding the relationship between language awareness and social media. Dooly notes that an explicit focus on language awareness is hard to find in the social media and language learning literature. Yet, as she shows, there are many links, such as the increased opportunities for intercultural exchanges, for noticing and becoming aware of specific language features, and for conscious planning of communication strategies (compared to face-to-face communication). Alongside this, though, Dooly finds some potential difficulties, e.g. learners being less receptive to feedback from online peers. Social media arguably vastly expand the possibilities for language learning, but, as Dooly notes, it also has to be kept in mind that they bring much more complexity to language learning.

Bardovi-Harlig reviews the research into pragmatic awareness. She quotes Cenoz’s (2007: 135) claim that the development of pragmatic awareness is crucial for the intercultural speaker to be competent at the behavioural level. It is also seen as an outcome of its own, however, since helping learners to develop such awareness (e.g. through activities in which they make discoveries themselves) means that they are more able to engage in it autonomously outside the classroom (akin to Hawkins’ notion of apprenticeship). They can then decide for themselves whether to adopt L2 pragmatics or not, since this also involves matters of the personal and social identities they wish to feel and project, and how they wish to be perceived. Summing up some of the research, Bardovi-Harlig writes that pragmatic awareness appears to contribute to pragmatic gains. But there are variables that need further investigation: for example, the type of instruction, learners’ proficiency, language contact.

Phonological awareness, Derwing points out, varies considerably across learners due to a range of variables. These include linguistic factors, such as similarities and differences between L1 and L2 inventories and how these are perceived. (This also suggests a need for more work in this area in multilingual/plurilingual fields.) Other variables are learner factors such as age, aptitude and attitudes towards the L2 community as well as perceived attitudes of the community towards the learners, and the degree and quality of L2 exposure, including the role of instruction. As Derwing emphasizes, some factors are simply outside our control, such as what our L1 is, which foreign languages are available for us to learn at school, and if we are migrants, which language we are expected to learn in our new setting, and how that community judges us. But there are some factors where we may have more control, such as motivation and exposure. A general conclusion, in any event, is that awareness-raising and explicit instruction play a central role in helping learners achieve long-term changes in their pronunciation. TLA therefore plays an important role, and teachers often feel they lack the preparation they need.
Part 3

In Part 3 of the handbook, we sought to assemble a range of chapters focusing on other kinds of contexts or fields of activity where language and communication and language awareness of some kind have a role, and on the kinds of ideas about language that people normally or often operate with and the ways in which these might impact on their everyday social or professional affairs. Part 3 opens with a chapter by van Leeuwen considering how language awareness can be extended to the practice of everyday photography. Many of our chapters have mentioned the importance of considering multimodal messages (not least, Dooly’s). And indeed, we can here take as a starting point that “All texts are multimodal. Language always has to be realized through, and comes in the company of, other semiotic modes” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1998: 186). Van Leeuwen starts his chapter by outlining signifying systems involved in composition – information value, salience, and framing (an illustrative application of these to the layout of newspaper front pages can be found in Kress and van Leeuwen, 1998). He then draws upon two theoretical approaches to explore the ‘composition awareness’ that underlies decisions about how we take photographs. These approaches are firstly practical knowledge, comprising Bourdieu’s (1977) ‘knowing how’ (broad flexible principles) and ‘knowing that’ (explicitly formulated rules), and secondly various types of normative discourses in one way or another suggesting to people what they should or should not do. Referring to these in relation to photographs and accompanying commentaries, van Leeuwen compares the different aesthetics – popular and scholastic – and considers how composition awareness, like language awareness, can range from explicit pedagogical discourses to forms awarded higher cultural value. (See also Hall’s chapter on creativity and literature.)

The next two chapters in Part 3 are concerned with attitudes, comments and beliefs about language. Preston writes about folk linguistics: that is, what ‘non-linguists’ say about language, which, as Preston notes, can sometimes point linguists towards aspects of language they themselves were not aware of. His chapter has much to offer language awareness. His view of metalanguage shows how we ‘talk about’ language in many more ways than are usually mentioned in the core work on language awareness, and even at a nonconscious level. He also, through this folk linguistic lens, gives encouragement to the language awareness interest in the sorts of ideas people usually operate with (see start of previous paragraph), in addition to giving more consideration to the role of implicit as well as explicit knowledge than the ALA’s current definition suggests.

Kristiansen’s chapter also discusses language awareness from a sociolinguistic angle, considering how it relates to language change – whether awareness follows change or drives it. He touches on fundamental issues for language awareness, such as its having both cognitive and evaluative dimensions, and also whether awareness operates on an on/off basis or in terms of degree. In this latter case, he refers to the three stages in Labov’s characterization of language change: indicators, markers, and stereotypes, and to Preston’s four-dimensional model of language awareness (1996, and his chapter in this volume). Kristiansen draws from his own work on language change in Denmark, where there has been considerable de-dialectization along with the spread of Copenhagen speech (Copenhagenization), and the emergence of two standard Danishes (Kristiansen, 2001). In particular, he points to his language attitudes research among young people all over Denmark. When these respondents were aware that they were
being asked about their language attitudes (which we can call the explicit condition), they reported that they preferred their local dialect to Copenhagen speech. But when the data was collected in another way, so that they were unaware (which we can call the implicit condition), they strongly downgraded their local dialects in comparison with Copenhagen speech. Weighing up these findings (e.g. in relation to Labov’s ideas and the particularities of Denmark), Kristiansen concludes that, while the regional dialects may be receiving some protection in overt ideology, the language change embodied in Copenhagenization is being driven by covert attitudes.

Lasagabaster also looks at language attitudes and sociolinguistic awareness in his chapter on minority languages. He anchors his chapter in Spain, and in particular the Basque language, but draws his themes out to other minority contexts where of significance. He mentions the currents working against minority languages. Globalization, for example, carries pressures on families towards fostering more dominant languages in children for their social, economic, if not geographical, mobility. In the case of Spain, Franco’s dictatorship is also mentioned for its repression of minority languages. But Lasagabaster draws attention to language policies and to the positive developments over recent years for the Basque language in Spain: the greater popularity of school models where Basque has more prominence; the growing proportions of Basque speakers, especially in younger age-groups; the dramatic increase in the proportion of teachers who are able to teach through the medium of Basque (90%, compared to 20% in the early 1980s). Lasagabaster sees an important role for language awareness in the training of teachers of minority languages, extending to the political, social and cultural aspects of their particular minority language, and the importance of instilling sociolinguistic awareness in learners.

Hatoss’ chapter is centred on diaspora communities and the ways in which language awareness research and perspectives play a part. She quotes Yelenevskaya and Fialkova (2003) “immigration mobilises laypeople’s awareness of language” and points to the way in which languages and their speakers find themselves in new power relationships. Specifically, her chapter looks at intergenerational aspects of language shift (where the mother tongue is not transmitted to children and grandchildren) and gives a particular focus to theories and concepts relevant to language awareness. Amongst these are subjective ethnolinguistic vitality theory, and the shift in perspective from the idea of immigrants as passive participants within a location to seeing them as individuals in multi-layered linguistic ecologies, where their language choices are strongly indexical. The power relations in migration contexts are also an important area for critical language awareness. One of the particular areas that Hatoss picks out concerns the identification processes used by government officials (e.g. border protection authorities). This area, she notes, is fraught with issues of human rights and social justice. At the end of her chapter, one is left in no doubt that this is an important field for language awareness work, where it can have significant social impact.

In Boye and Byram’s chapter on intercultural communicative competence, they consider similarities and differences between awareness of language and awareness of culture. They begin by treading a path through the related concepts of intercultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, transcultural communicative competence, cultural knowledge, cultural awareness and critical cultural awareness. Cultural awareness is defined as “a conscious understanding of the role culture plays in language learning and communication in both first and foreign languages”. To this they add that it should also be critical, and that such critical engagement should be as much
directed at aspects of one’s own culture as at others. Their chapter extends to Risager’s (2006) notion of ‘languaculture’, and so also ‘languaculture awareness’ (LCA), to reflect how language and culture are related in the experiences of individuals in their languages and language varieties. The authors also consider and exemplify how LCA might be developed in foreign language education. One of the difficulties in this field which they mention is that of assessment. To modify Figueras’ (this volume) question here, “what does LCA look like?” And although there are continuing moves to find sets of gradable descriptors, Boye and Byram interestingly also refer to Kramsch’s (2009: 119) argument that there can be instances in which what cannot be assessed should nevertheless still be taught.

Malmkjær considers language awareness in relation to translation (including interpretation). At the broader level – of the general public’s awareness of translating and translation – she reports that this is worryingly low, given how much of the information that reaches us every day is in translation, and that news agencies, for example, can be regarded as “vast translation agencies” where reliability is often questionable. For translators themselves, Malmkjær sees language awareness as particularly important, since the task involves taking a text in one language, with its own rules and used by its own native speakers in their native setting, and then turning it into a text that is ‘fit for purpose’ in another language, with its own rules and for another population in another setting. One needs awareness of how both languages work. There may be differences in linguistic constraints: for example, where word orders have to be different and so nuances are easily lost. Malmkjær explains and exemplifies some of the many challenges in translating. For example, even if there is an expectation of ‘semantic commonality’, translators will take into account the purpose of the translation and who the audience will be. Malmkjær shows how intercultural awareness as well as language awareness may be involved in translation, and she gives an illustration of this with an Aboriginal version of Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland. In terms of awareness-raising in translators, comparing translations of differing quality is mentioned as one approach. She concludes her chapter by pointing to how little research has explored potential relationships between language awareness and translation.

In her chapter on multilingual and multicultural organizations, Codó sets out how language is the primary form of economic production in sectors such as education, tourism, customer services. Its central place is accompanied by language regulation, standardization and hygienization (Cameron, 2000) on the one hand, but at the same time for some kinds of flexible workers, multilingual competences are also in demand. As the central medium through which people operate in the global economy, language is also the foundation for various forms of organizational power, control and inequality. Codó takes us through how research into intercultural communication has progressed over the years, from reified to social constructivist perspectives in culture, and towards studies giving more attention to the impacts of different aspects of communication and language. In workplace studies, some of the focus has been on investigating who gains and who loses from specific language policies and practices (e.g. through feelings of isolation or professional inadequacy), and gatekeeping studies have included analysis of what happens in interactions for gaining access to the organizations or to specific resources such as places on training schemes, social benefits, healthcare, etc. Such studies highlight the need to raise language awareness issues in multilingual organizations, especially as our social and work lives becomes more textually mediated, knowledge-based and network-based (e.g. see Fairclough, 1999).
Our handbook ends with a critical perspective. Bartlett et al. outline and extend Gramsci’s approach to the concept of hegemony, and show how language and discourse play a key role in the process of keeping elites in power, while also providing the resources for the development of an opposing hegemony relating to the different interests and histories of oppressed classes. Opposing groups try to define ‘key’ signifiers (such as ‘democracy’ or ‘sustainability’) after their own beliefs, and to get a sufficiently large proportion of the population to accept the concepts at face value (below the level of conscious awareness) to ensure they become and remain guiding principles. Bartlett et al. examine such contesting of terms and concepts in three different contexts. One is a negotiation between an international development organization and indigenous communities in Guyana, another concerns small business federations and big business, and the third concerns the Indignados (15M movement) in Spain. In each case, the authors provide a linguistic analysis of texts through which key terms are negotiated and potentially become implicit norms (‘social imaginaries’) accepted by the significant majority of the population as reality and as a guide for their behaviour.

Conclusion

The chapters in this handbook show research into language awareness – in many and diverse areas – to be encouragingly productive. Some of these, such as TLA, are long established. Other chapters show bodies of relevant research in newer areas but which have not yet become fully associated with the language awareness literature (e.g. Llanes’ chapter on Study Abroad). And others point to the scope and need for language awareness involvement where so far it is still relatively sparse. Figueras makes this clear in relation to assessment, for example, while many chapters show that language awareness researchers and practitioners are seeking more development in assessment matters. At the same time, too, the changes permeating our professional, social and personal lives through globalization, and new media and the world-wide web in particular, have generated new, if often complex, arenas in which language awareness needs to be active.

Language awareness often encounters resistance. Young’s chapter draws attention to this in relation to schools and parents. Alongside this, Young also points to the role of language awareness work for promoting democratic ideals. Wallace refers in her chapter to the UK government’s refusal to publish the LINC materials. She points to how critical literacy and CLA are no longer ‘hot topics’, and she ends her chapter by stressing the significance of such work to provide the “tools to challenge discriminatory discourse”. Finkbeiner and Schluer in their chapter also emphasize the important role of critical literacy in safeguarding the basis of democratic societies. Wallace emphasizes that the need for such work does not go away. And indeed, that need may be even greater. As is well documented, globalization is far from totally benign, and continues to generate, amongst other things, deeper inequalities. Alongside this, there are claims from recent research by Foa and Mounk (2017) of a pattern of decline (in the countries they surveyed) in the proportion of younger citizens committed to democracy. They refer to this as democratic deconsolidation. Notwithstanding recent high youth votes such as in the June 2017 UK national election, if Foa and Mounk’s longer-term trends are confirmed, CLA arguably holds even greater importance.
We end this introductory chapter by briefly indicating five significant issues that LA researchers and practitioners may need to confront and pursue.

1 The first has to do with the ultimate sense of promoting LA and the fact that any action undertaken towards equipping individuals with greater capacity to reflect upon themselves and their environment represents an improvement for the person as well as for society. From this perspective, it may be necessary for LA researchers and practitioners to give more attention to the transcendental function of language as a tool for ‘doing’ identity and social membership, the understanding of which can make us more efficient, effective and perhaps better citizens. This stance takes LA work beyond the restricted territory of a cognitive approach to language pedagogy and use, and into the much wider field of understanding social behaviour.

2 The second (connected) issue is the critical stance of LA. Here, we refer to several researchers and practitioners seeing the development of language awareness as a means of questioning the social/intellectual order, and repairing what they consider social injustices, in which language plays a key role. These injustices may include aspects such as the manipulation to which individuals may be subjected through verbal communication, and the consequences of the different prestige of certain language or varieties in specific social contexts.

3 Thirdly, we refer to what Block (2014) defines as the “lingual bias” in second language acquisition research. By this he means the excessive emphasis on the linguistic aspects (morphology, syntax phonology, lexis) of communicative practices, at the expense of other accompanying means of communication that individuals utilize, such as aural, spatial and visual resources. This historical emphasis on the linguistic aspects of communication has led to a scarcity of metalanguage and analytical models to allow LA researchers and practitioners to analyse and explain communicative practices in all of their semiotic complexity.

4 Parallel to the last point, concerning the extent to which LA work is ready to accommodate the semiotic complexity of situated communication, we point to how far LA is ready to accommodate social multilingualism and individual plurilingualism as ‘unmarked’ models for LA research and practice. Indeed, concepts such as ‘translanguaging’, ‘multilingual repertoire’ or ‘integrated language curriculum’, now so common in the literature, arguably already carry an acknowledgement of a changing reality in which more and more individuals deal with two or more languages on a daily basis. This fact may have cognitive implications. An example would be explaining lexical selection as the result of a uniform system in which “see” and “ver” (Spanish for ‘see’) form part of an individual’s single lexical repository with different collocational rules for each lexical item, independently of the language in which we may classify the item. However, as important as the cognitive consequences, approaching LA work from a multilingual perspective forces the analyst and the practitioner to start from specific communicative practices rather than from the system of a language, and this can contribute to strengthening the link between LA and the individual, not only as a language processor but also as a participant in social encounters and practices.

5 We also consider important the distinction between ‘LA researcher’ and ‘LA practitioner’. Although it is often the case that the two roles coincide in the same individual (e.g. language teachers engaged in research on LA), it is not always clear that the two must coincide in terms of specific techniques, models and metalanguage to be employed.
Therefore, it is important to clarify the perspective one takes when working on LA. This topic is necessarily connected with the use of ‘emic’ vs. ‘etic’ categories, taking into account their usefulness depending on the goals of the intervention, whether to facilitate language users’ understanding or to construct knowledge in a precise and systematic way. The notion of ‘teacher language awareness’ (e.g. see chapter 4) is an example of LA work adapted to the needs of the practitioner rather than the researcher, because the goal here is not so much to equip students with an exhaustive system to account for language use but to provide them with an ‘approximate system’ that can facilitate their (as well as their learners’) understanding of how language works.

Beyond these five areas, the chapters in this handbook show that there are many fields where language awareness work of various kinds can play a valuable role. We hope that researchers and practitioners, established or new, will take up these challenges.

References


Opening Up the Field of Study


