Although I have edited or co-edited a number of volumes over the past 15 years, including those published in honor of distinguished friends and colleagues in the fields of second-language acquisition and applied linguistics, none of them has been as special and personal as the present collection of papers, dedicated to Prof. Krystyna Drożdzial-Szelest. The reason for this is that I have had the privilege to get to know her in so many different roles over the past 25 years since I became a student of English philology at the start of the 1990s at the School of English of Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland. At the outset, she taught a course in foreign language methodology that I attended, then she supervised my M.A. thesis and doctoral dissertation, and, finally, she acted in the capacity of the reviewer of the monograph that I wrote as a requirement for my postdoctoral degree. In a word, she was my unquestionable mentor, a source of inspiration, and someone from whom I was able to learn a great deal. She has never ceased to perform these roles but has also assumed several new ones, that of a colleague, with whom I have had a chance to work, cooperate on a number of projects, attend conferences and serve on the board of the Modern Language Association of Poland, but also a close friend with whom I have talked about things that could not be more unrelated to foreign language teaching and learning. Most importantly, though, all of this has by no means been only my experience because Krystyna Drożdzial-Szelest has performed some or all of these roles to tens, or should I say hundreds, of those involved in research on foreign language pedagogy and teacher training in Poland and other countries. On the academic level, her contribution to research on language learning strategies, particularly her book published in 1997, can hardly be overestimated. On the pedagogic level, she has always been a devoted, enthusiastic and inspiring teacher, respected and cherished by her students, someone who has tirelessly spent hours reading and commenting on homework assignments, B.A. and M.A. papers and chapters of Ph.D. theses. What surely speaks for itself is the fact that over the course of her academic career Krystyna Drożdzial-Szelest has successfully supervised 20 doctoral dissertations and that number is bound to grow in
the near future, a feat that very few scholars would be able to match, let alone
surpass. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, on the personal level, she has
always been an affable, approachable, friendly, ingenious, smart, and witty person,
endowed with a great sense of humor, a true live wire and someone who is always
fun to be with. It is perhaps all of those qualities combined but first and foremost the
high esteem in which she is held in the academia that accounts for the fact that so
many eminent scholars but also her colleagues and former doctoral students have
agreed, with little deliberation, to contribute chapters to this edited collection.

The outcome is truly impressive, a monograph comprising 19 excellent papers,
both theoretical- and research-based, which address the ways in which the chal-
lenges of second and foreign language education in the present-day globalized word
can be confronted. The book has been divided into three parts, each including
contributions that are linked by a common thread. Part I, Challenges of language
teaching and learning, is the most extensive but also the most general in nature,
bringing together nine contributions devoted to the concept of mission in English
language teaching, the need for applications in our field, language instruction in
non-specialist departments in universities, the role of emotions, gestures and cre-
ativity in language learning, the use of simulation in the development of intercul-
tural communicative competence, teaching business English, and a comparison of
aspects of language education in Norway and Poland. Part II, titled Challenges of
researching language classrooms, comprises six papers reporting the results of
original research projects focusing on the use of think-aloud protocols in translation
tasks, the link between ambiguity tolerance and willingness to communicate in a
second language, the application of retrodictive qualitative modeling in the study of
motivation, learners’ awareness of the role of their mother tongue in learning
second and third languages, the impact of instruction in affective learning strategies
on anxiety levels, as well as universal characteristics of effective language teachers.
Part III, Challenges of teacher education and development, includes four chapters
concerning such issues as the contribution of metaphor to the development of
knowledge about language teaching methodology, the pitfalls of adopting neolib-
eral policies in teacher education, long-term development of teacher identity, and
the role of international experience in shaping future teachers’ beliefs about the
need to foster intercultural communicative competence. I am confident that all the
papers included in this collection will, on the one hand, constitute important
signposts for those researching the processes of second and foreign language
teaching and learning, providing food for thought and a source of ideas for future
empirical investigations, and, on the other, serve as well as an important impulse for
teachers who are willing to engage in professional reflection and are constantly on
the lookout for ways in which their classroom practices could be enhanced.

I would also like to express my profound gratitude to all to contributors to this
volume, who, without any hesitation, not only consented to write up their chapters
on very short notice, but also agreed to offer invaluable feedback on each other’s
papers, and instantaneously reacted to all the requests for missing sources or other
revisions that had to be made almost overnight. I believe that I am speaking also on their behalf in declaring that the endeavor was definitely worth the effort as there are few things that are more rewarding in the academic world than putting together a collection of papers in honor of such a distinguished scholar, a valued colleague, and an exceptional person as Prof. Krystyna Drożdż-Szelęst.

Kalisz, Poland

Mirosław Pawłak
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