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The Modern Language Journal

MLJ Reviews

Edited by JUDITH E. LISKIN–GASPARRO
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THEORY AND PRACTICE

BOERS, FRANK, & SETH LINDSTROMBERG. (Eds.). *Cognitive Linguistic Approaches to Teaching Vocabulary and Phraseology*. Berlin, Germany: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008. Pp. x, 396. $152.00, cloth. ISBN 978–3–11–019630–6.

This collection of studies and essays explores the potential for cognitive linguistics (CL) to foster second language (L2) lexical knowledge and improve vocabulary instruction. CL has developed out of a number of linguistic fields that attempt to explain the relationship between form (phonological, phrasal, grammatical, etc.) and meaning: construction grammar, mental spaces, emergentism, and grammaticalization, among others. CL rejects the notion that there is an innate linguistic module that motivates language acquisition, proposing instead that language acquisition results from general principles of learning that are employed in nonlinguistic domains, such as mathematics. Because CL asserts that language knowledge is integrated with other knowledge stores, it assumes that the learners' generalized analytical abilities can be called on by instruction to promote language learning. CL-inspired teaching practices encourage students to learn words and phrases through structural elaboration and deep processing of vocabulary, such as through multiple sensorial channels (e.g., writing, speaking, listening, defining, making connections). The editors imply that CL-inspired techniques could assist with L2 acquisition beyond vocabulary and phrases, as the editors assert in their introduction that "a prominent element of CL theory is the lexis–grammar continuum" (p. 1). Curiously, the issue of grammar within a CL perspective is not explicitly treated in the volume.

Throughout the text a number of potentially effective techniques are considered. Teachers and materials designers are encouraged to engage students in considering the nonarbitrary motivations for the forms that words and phrases take rather than simply ask students to memorize their meanings. The metaphorical motivation for a phrase like "it's beyond me" to express incomprehensibility is one such relationship on which instruction could capitalize. Other semantic and diachronic motivations for words' meanings include metonymy (e.g., *throne* is metonymic to the concept of power). A CL perspective on language learning can elucidate the nonarbitrary form–meaning connections in phrases such as "hook, line, and sinker," whose syntax also reflects a chronology.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part contains empirical studies testing the efficacy of the CL perspective on L2 vocabulary and phrasal acquisition. The chapter by Beréndi, Csábi, and Sövecses as well as the one by Skoufaki explore the effectiveness of students guessing lexical meaning by considering words' metaphorical motivations. Condon's work studies the effects of including CL-motivated phrasal learning during the course of a semester. MacArthur and Littlemore study the extent to which learners can autonomously guess the meaning of figuratively used phrases. The study by Boers, Lindstromberg, Littlemore,

Stengers, and Eyckmans discusses some limitations of pictorial mnemonic devices on the retention of the formal aspects of lexical items that instruction targets. The second part of the book promises to go beyond the laboratory with a series of proposals on how to alter instruction to incorporate CL considerations of the formal, semantic, and diachronic motivations for vocabulary and phrases. Caballero and Suárez-Toste show how language for specific purposes could employ CL techniques. Verspoor proposes that bilingual word associations can help to identify potential instances of first language transfer. Walker argues that teachers should not assume that although collocations (e.g., *run + department > run a department*) occur together frequently, collocation terms do not occur together arbitrarily. He argues that factors such as etymology and prototypical literal sense account for many collocations in a language. Niemeier proposes pedagogical practices that capitalize on the basic semantic notions of boundedness/unboundedness to teach vocabulary. Boers and Lindstromberg remind CL materials designers that not only semantic but also structural motivations account for how phrases are configured, exploring the effects of sound repetition (e.g., alliteration) on phraseology. Boers and Stengers present a corpus analysis to show that the experiential source domains of various idioms in Spanish and English are not the same. Although interesting, Piquer Píriz's study does not fit the mold of the rest of the studies of the book's second part. She argues that children can learn vocabulary using techniques that ask them to employ what they know about figurative language.

Cognitive Linguistic Approaches to Teaching Vocabulary and Phraseology is a mix of empirical support for a CL approach to teaching vocabulary and phraseology with proposals for improving the pedagogical grammar and concomitant premises of lexical instruction. The studies are quite modest in scale and methodological rigor. Yet, as a whole, they offer intriguing suggestions for incorporating structural elaboration and deep processing into our day-to-day instruction and materials development. It strikes this reviewer that instructors would need a good deal of linguistic training to use these techniques reliably. This observation is not meant as a criticism, but, rather, it underscores the linguistic training that the CL approach requires of teachers.

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BRINTON, DONNA M., OLGA KAGAN, & SUSAN BAUCKUS. (Eds.). *Heritage Language Education*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Pp. xiii, 367. $130.00, cloth. ISBN 978–0–8058–4803–8.

This collection of chapters presents an ample variety of research carried out to foster an understanding of both issues concerning heritage languages (HLs), in general, and the special circumstances of heritage language learners (HLLs). Therefore, there is an effort to incorporate research regarding many different types of HLs, including Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, French, Russian, and Korean, in many different countries with varying policies regarding the status and treatment of HLs in relation to the dominant language of the community. The volume is accessible and applicable to a wide audience from preservice teachers to policy makers. The treatise is divided into three major sections: "Heritage Speakers: Demographics, Policy, and Identity," "Heritage Speaker Profiles and Needs Analysis," and "Program Development and Evaluation." The preface sets up some of the problems to be visited in the research, such as coming to a consensus on the meaning of the relevant terminology for the topic—how to define the *heritage learner* and, additionally, a brief description of the chapters to follow. Each chapter is well positioned within the tripartite division, and, when applicable, within each chapter there are references made to other chapters in the collection that reinforce cohesion and coherence among the research topics.

The introductory chapter deals with the relevant terminology to be employed throughout the volume and discusses the difficulties of establishing consensus for the definitions of the terms regarding HLLs. The idea of a continuum is set up, and varying scholars' interpretations of the terms and various models of biliteracy are presented. In addition, the core issue of language as problem or right is presented as the overarching theme to be considered in the context of HL learning.

Part 1 of the volume convenes research relevant to issues regarding identity and citizenship with respect to heritage speakers. There is a mixture of theoretical research and empirical research and case studies. Tucker's chapter deals with the theoretical issues of monolingualism and bilingualism in a global context. Lo Bianco presents research regarding English, Scots, and Scottish Gaelic in the United Kingdom regarding sedition and parochialism and corporate identity. Duff presents research on Canadian HL

education and discusses the shift in terminology from *heritage languages* to *international languages*. Wiley follows with a case study on a Chinese dialect and how to define legitimate HLLs. Valdés, González, López García, and Márquez present the role of educational institutions in language maintenance and explore the barriers that impede language maintenance. Part 1 closes with McGroarty and Urzúa's treatment of bilingual proficiency in the corporate world with case studies. Some of the research, although interesting, is based on a single individual or a small group of participants, so that one questions how relevant the findings are in a global context. One cannot help but feel that some of the findings are anecdotal and cannot truly represent the majority of those heritage groups.

Part 2 gathers research on heritage speaker profiles and needs analyses. Polinsky begins the section with insight into HL narratives across three distinct populations—heritage Russian speakers, full Russian speakers, and English speakers—and analyzes their narrative writing in terms of several grammatical components. Kanno, Hasegawa, Ikeda, Ito, and Long analyze guided narrative pieces among five different classifications of learners of Japanese in an effort to identify and classify common writing characteristics. Friedman and Kagan analyze the clausal and grammatical structure in the narrative writings of three different groups of Russian students in an effort to identify issues that should be addressed pedagogically. Parodi follows with a study on the timely matter of stigmatized Spanish (in terms of vocabulary, orthography, grammar, and culture) inside and outside the classroom. Douglas presents research on an individualized curriculum based on data collected on a small group of students of Japanese. The chapters in part 2 present interesting research that is relevant and pertinent to those interested in the writing abilities of HLLs and programmatic options to serve this diverse group of students. This latter point provides a smooth segue into part 3, which deals with program development and subsequent evaluation. Part 3 begins with a paper by McGinnis that focuses on Chinese HL education in the United States. He concludes that despite efforts to the contrary, we are still failing at integrating HLLs into the education system. Peyton follows with an essay on Spanish for Native Speakers programs, focusing on benefits and challenges. She presents recommendations and models for in-service teacher preparation. She includes an excellent appendix, giving a comprehensive listing of support materials. Christian presents research on school-based programs for HLLs and how the pressure to feel American discourages many HLLs from maintaining linguistic and cultural ties to their heritage. Sohn and Merrill present their findings on the Korean/English dual language program in Los Angeles, which point to the need to strengthen K–12 language and content instruction and to build Korean language study as a separate academic discipline. Their findings are timely and relevant to other HL programs that exist, as well. Cohen and Gómez present data collected over a 5-month period regarding the positive effects of the scaffolding technique of modeling in a content-based science class conducted in Spanish. Swain and Lapkin carried out research with a small group of seventh-grade students enrolled in French immersion classes in Canada. They analyzed the important role that language production through various group activities had in the process of language learning. Lynch presents research using an asset-based approach, as opposed to the traditional needs-based approach, to HL learning. Finally, Au concludes the section with research on salvaging HLs and how childhood experiences may help adults (re)learn their heritage language.

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CARROLI, PIERA. *Literature in Second Language Education: Enhancing the Role of Texts in Learning*. New York: Continuum, 2008. Pp. ix, 217. $150.00, cloth. ISBN 978–0–8264–9916–5.

This volume's origin as a doctoral thesis is apparent in its style as well as its structure: review of the literature, research methodology, reports of findings, and implications. At the book's center are Carroli's phenomenographic studies on students' attitudes toward literature and approaches to reading, conducted between 1998 and 2000 in the Italian program at Australian National University, Canberra. Her data, collected from students in third- and fifth-semester language courses as well as a literature course, includes surveys, interviews, comments from an interactive forum on the meaning of literature, teachers' notes, and students' journals. Findings from her first study, along with her review of the literature, inform a pedagogical experiment in her Italian literature course. Based on observations that most subjects initially hold narrow views of what constitutes

literature and are largely unaware of its potential as a source of insight on language and culture, Carroli endeavors to promote broader definitions as well as more discerning reading. She follows up literary assignments with questions that require students to reflect on the act of reading; for example, "How did you organize your reading experience? Where did you read? How did you start?" (p. 194). Throughout the course she urges students to consider cultural and linguistic elements of a given text as well as its literary features, and she encourages them to discuss textual themes in the context of their life experiences. Analyzing the outcomes of that course, Carroli concludes that "confident, competent (and happy!) students can be promoted by repeated reading combined with an interactive and holistic pedagogy aimed at fostering a sense of community as well as developing language, culture, and literary competence" (pp. 184–185).

Carroli's passion for literature is obvious, and her research makes some significant contributions to the body of work on literature's role in language classes. She points out accurately that most studies have paid scant attention to students' voices, whether to the students' initial perspectives on literature or to their insights on their experience in literature classes, and her survey questionnaires and interviews are useful correctives. Her observations on the effects of students' attitudes toward literature in enhancing or constraining their performance in literature classes and her encouragement of action research on the part of literature teachers also promise to inform and enhance second language (L2) literature instruction.

Many of the pedagogical strategies that Carroli advocates are not new—for instance, repeated reading has been studied since at least the 1970s, and Jerome Bruner first made his case for the curricular spiral in 1960—but they remain solid general advice for teaching literature. Teachers seeking more specific guidance from this book are likely to be disappointed. Although Carroli does describe at length the methods she used in her experimental class, this is primarily a research account. An appendix includes four pages of activities, about half of which are targeted at teaching specific literary texts in Italian or English as an L2. Although some of the activities are intriguing, the instructions sometimes tend toward the telegraphic, and readers would benefit from more details on how to conduct them.

One issue that receives surprisingly little attention, especially given the volume's broad title and express intent to "highlight the link between students' perceptions of literature, their approaches to the study of L2 literature and their learning outcomes" (p. 2), is the generalizability of results from Carroli's particular participant pools. In her conclusion she briefly addresses that question, asserting that "the variety in age, language and literary background of the relatively small sample enhances the generalizability" (p. 176). However, virtually all of her participants share one potentially significant characteristic: a highly positive predisposition toward literature. Among the fifth-semester participants, for instance, at the outset 92% were already voluntary readers of literature in the first language, 75% read literature in the L2, and 83% agreed with the statement that "literature should be included at all levels of the degree" (p. 60). On the first survey of students enrolled in the literature course, 100% agreed that "literature should be included in the L2 curriculum" (p. 107). Although she does mention finding that "several students were not habitual readers of literature in their native language" (p. 184), samples in which such participants are so few as to be noteworthy make it difficult to generalize. Thus, although Carroli's approach appears to have encouraged a group of students who, in general, already liked to read literature to read it more discerningly in the L2, an admirable accomplishment on its own, further study would be helpful in establishing whether this approach would yield similar results in classes in which most students report at the outset that they do not like literature and do not read it voluntarily in any language—a majority response in many language programs.

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CARTER, RONALD, ANGELA GODDARD, DANUTA REAH, KEITH SANGER, & NIKKI SWIFT. *Working with Texts: A Core Introduction to Language Analysis*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge, 2008. Pp. xxii, 264. $30.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–415–41424–1.

This book fosters knowledge and skills in the field of language analysis. To achieve this goal, the authors offer a well-structured compilation of theoretical material, together with a complete corpus of activities, different types of texts, and well-reasoned comments and answers to these activities. The volume not only brings together the main developments in linguistic studies with a focus on language corpora and

computer-mediated communication, but it also provides the basis for correct and adequate text analysis. Its seven units focus on a different linguistic feature to offer a complete view of how distinct types of analyses are carried out depending on each area of language: "Signs," "Sounds," "Words and Things," "Sentences and Structure," "Text and Context: Written Discourse," "Text and Context: Spoken Discourse," and "Applications." This book bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and useful practice in the field of linguistic analysis, which makes it a valuable resource for those interested in teaching or in widening their understanding of the linguistic skills needed to conduct successful analyses.

The introductory section presents the aims and structure of the different chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on signs and how written texts contain more than printed words. The book offers clear examples to make theoretical content easier and more accessible, and it combines theory with activities and samples of texts. It covers aspects such as the definition and types of signs, visual examples, and how they represent levels of shared knowledge within a culture. The authors introduce definitions and explanations of key terms (e.g., symbolism, anthropomorphism, representation, initialism). It also deals with how "individuals bring their own experiences and feelings to different images" and signs and how signs include ideas behind them depending on many factors (p. 7). This thought is strongly linked to the universality of signs, which also figures into the theoretical explanations.

Chapter 2 deals with sounds, considered as the "basis of speech" (p. 37). This chapter is presented as an exploration of the relationship between sounds and texts, as well as introducing the International Phonetic Alphabet, the notion of Received Pronunciation, and the basics of phonetics. This chapter explains the arbitrary relationship between sounds and the symbols representing them. Activities include transcription, working out words represented by symbols, and identifying several aspects of speech. Commentaries and answers to the displayed activities are closely linked to theoretical content, clarifying examples or excerpts from texts, as well as including illustrative personal experiences and comments. Extension activities enable students to continue practicing and to check their understanding of the material.

Chapter 3 presents the relationships between words and things, as well as the distinct meanings that can arise depending on those relationships and that help to explain such concepts as metaphor, denotation, connotation, taboo, and euphemism. According to the authors, "the analysis of a text usually starts at the level of the word" (p. 59), which makes readers "look more closely at the way words work within texts" (p. 59). There is also a detailed definition of *word* and other smaller units, such as free, bound, inflectional, and derivational morphemes.

Chapter 4 presents patterns of English grammar. Grammar is defined as the central resource and, therefore, the fundamental means that allows humans to make and communicate meaning. In their presentation of textual units and patterns, authors advance the idea that "there are patterns of grammar across the whole text" (p. 105). The chapter contains a description of basic units such as subject, object, and verb, as well as the connections among them that allow sentences to have meaning. At the end of the chapter, the description of verb features promotes a sound understanding of active or passive meanings in sentences.

Chapter 5, "Text and Context: Written Discourse," deals with some of the language devices that "enable whole written texts to work" (p. 141). This chapter introduces discourse analysis, which considers the way "texts work across the boundaries of single sentences" (p. 141). The chapter treats issues and patterns such as both lexical and grammatical cohesion, anaphor, substitution, and ellipsis, together with an abundant set of clarifying examples, activities, and commentaries. The end of the unit is devoted to presenting different grammatical structures and distinct sentence functions.

The companion chapter 6, "Text and Context: Spoken Discourse," studies speech events, which the authors understand as language used by speakers to give information and ideas, express emotions or intentions, or do other things. Fundamental issues such as the politeness principle and the parameters guiding conversations among human beings are also presented. The social side of conversation along with the maxims that rule successful communication are also taken into consideration. Computer-mediated communication and some of its rules are discussed in this chapter to illustrate the links between speech and the Internet. The authors also provide guidelines for readers' research, focusing on collecting speech, media dialogues, and transcription.

"Applications," the last chapter, is devoted to guidance on next steps in the "development of analytical skills" (p. 247) following this text, which is a first course in language analysis. The chapter contains recommendations on reference materials, and it presents ideas on what should or

should not be included in future analyses. This is a valuable volume for newcomers to linguistic analysis, and it provides solid guidance for readers who would like to conduct analyses of different aspects of language.

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ECKERTH, JOHANNES, & SABINE SIEKMANN. (Eds.). *Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching: Theoretical, Methodological, and Pedagogical Perspectives*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2008. Pp. 313. $69.95, paper. ISBN 978–3–631–57330–3.

Eckerth and Siekmann's volume is a useful contribution to scholarship on task-based language teaching (TBLT). The 10 chapters, which are distributed among an introductory chapter by Eckerth and three main sections ("Classroom-Based Research," "Language and Cognition," and Task-Based Assessment"), present the work of scholars in Canada, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States. Although the book will be of less direct use to language teachers than general works on TBLT, it nonetheless contains ideas and materials that teachers will find helpful.

Eckerth's opening chapter, "Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching—Old Wine in New Bottles?" offers a sound introduction to scholarship on TBLT. The author's goal is to provide the reader with a framework for understanding research on TBLT, as well as the relationship between research and pedagogy. Eckerth provides a balanced treatment of the benefits and shortcomings of four different approaches, attempting to integrate them along a continuum from a product to a process orientation and from seeing the second language (L2) learner as a "passive data processor" to an "active, reflective, and intentional subject" (p. 19). Eckerth then addresses some key issues of task and syllabus design, focus on form, and the many manifestations of task-based pedagogy in the literature. He then closes with a framework for understanding the link between research and teaching through a task-based approach. The answer to the question of whether TBLT is "old wine in new bottles" is thus that it is neither old wine in new bottles nor a "revolutionary new approach to L2 research and teaching" (p. 36). Rather, it is a "sound development of research procedures and pedagogical options" (p. 36), both deeply rooted in the history of research and pedagogy. Eckerth also reminds us that in research as well as curriculum design, what is designed and taught, what occurs during a task, and what is learned are often very different.

In chapter 2 Schart presents an action research study of a beginning German language classroom in Japan. From a sociocultural perspective, Schart seeks to understand the cultural fault line between Western ideas about tasks and task-based learning and how TBLT actually plays out in the Japanese L2 classroom. After spending too much ink defining and discussing action research, the author shares details of the study. However, ultimately, the chapter promises more than it delivers, even though Schart poses some crucial questions about how the social and cultural dynamics of the students and teacher in interaction may affect the process and the outcomes of task-based instruction.

By contrast, in chapter 3 Pesce provides a concise report on a quasi-experimental study of Spanish L2 grammar learning and teaching. The author explores ways grammatical knowledge can contribute to language learning. Adopting a process-oriented, constructivist approach, Pesce concludes that the source of grammatical knowledge and the type of task influence the process and outcomes of learning. The author notes that the complexity of learners' reflections about tasks appears to contribute to learning, but simply activating and verbalizing L2 knowledge during tasks does not translate directly into improved test results. Crucial for language teachers, according to Pesce, are the learning context and the learning habits of students when implementing task-based instruction.

In chapter 4 Eckerth presents a study of consciousness raising in learner–learner interactions. Eckerth found that students' interactional patterns did not differ with different types of tasks. He also found that the tasks fostered rich, complex communication and L2 hypothesis building and that there were noticeable short- and medium-term linguistic gains.

Still following a constructivist, sociocultural thread, in chapter 5 Ishii looks at consciousness raising through collaborative reflection. Ishii frames his study around questioning the "assumption that individuals will learn the teacher-targeted knowledge if they follow a pre-planned sequence of tasks" (p. 120). Ishii adopts a complex, dynamic view of what happens when learners engage in language tasks in the classroom and asserts that learners are "not passive individuals subjected to the transmission of knowledge, but are active participants who have their own

individual goals, prior histories, and abilities" (p. 121). Looking both at learning outcomes and the process of learning over time, Ishii concludes that layered, long-term, and in-depth feedback contributed to students' interlanguage development.

In chapter 6 Siekmann presents a study of peer scaffolding in pair communication while carrying out tasks called WebQuests. The study has two main purposes. First, it yields a descriptive analysis of the ways that students engage in peer scaffolding. Second, Siekmann makes important observations about the ways learners' orientation to each other and to the task affects both the process and the outcomes. Like Ishii and other contributors to the volume, Siekmann underscores the importance of avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach to TBLT.

Part 2, comprised of two chapters, focuses on language and cognition. Krüger makes use of think-aloud protocols to explore cognitive processes in task-based learning. The investigation combines learner task-based interaction from a Piagetian constructivist perspective with Bourdieu's notion of habitus to consider learners' individual histories. As with Schart's chapter, Krüger indulges in more preliminaries and theoretical discussion than necessary. Through a case-study examination of two of the participants, Krüger makes an interesting case for the social construction of knowledge through tasks, but the reader cannot shake the feeling that the study's purpose is to demonstrate the validity of the constructivist paradigm.

In chapter 8 Heine shifts the focus of the volume from classroom L2 learners to learners in "subject-specific contexts," from L2 learning processes to general problem solving during completion of tasks, and from constructivist and sociocultural paradigms to cognitive linguistics. Heine presents problem-solving theory as a macrotheoretical framework for task-based learning. Her motivation is to "investigate the role that the processing of linguistic concepts plays in general problem-solving activities" (p. 204). Although the chapter is thorough and contains a useful introduction to tenets of cognitive linguistics for the uninitiated, it is also longer than it needs to be to make its points. In addition, the presentation of the research study is disappointing, as Krüger never provides information about the methodology; rather, in a footnote she refers the reader to a forthcoming publication for a detailed account (p. 213). All the same, Krüger's data excerpts do reveal interesting ways that language is used as a tool as the participants engage in general problem solving during tasks.

The last part of the volume, also made up of two chapters, examines assessment through language tasks. Vollmer considers the integration of learning and assessment. At 50 pages, this chapter is the longest in the volume, but it offers an important and original contribution to the scholarship on TBLT with an in-depth treatment of the complexities both of student performance on tasks and of assessing that performance.

The final chapter, by Kessler, details the linguistic and pedagogical implications of what he calls *second language profiling*. Despite the dubious U.S. association of the word *profiling*, Kessler's proposal derives theoretically from Pienemann's processability model and technically from Pienemann and colleagues' Rapid Profile computer-based assessment technique. Kessler addresses the problem of creating L2 tasks that combine attention to both form and meaning that are also geared toward the individual learners' current interlanguage. Although it is doubtful that the Rapid Profile program will catch on broadly, the chapter provides the reader with much to consider in the assessment of learner interlanguage and design of tasks.

The contributions in this volume are based on an eclectic range of studies, the majority of which focus on the instructed L2 classroom. Although the editors claim that the volume presents a range of theoretical frameworks, sociocultural and constructivist paradigms dominate the collection. The opening chapter does a good job of drawing the forest before the subsequent chapters dive into the trees, yet the volume would surely have benefited from an epilogue or short summarizing chapter or from brief introductions to each of the three sections.

The insights and findings in the various contributions would be of interest and use in seminars on L2 teaching, in general, or task-based language teaching and learning, in particular, but likely only selected chapters would be read under the time constraints of such seminars.

On a final note, like any edited volume that represents a range of topics and derives from diverse sources, an index would have been useful to the reader, especially because each chapter includes its own list of references. It is also unfortunate that the volume went to press with numerous misprints and typos. Although the reader is able to look past them to the substantive content of the chapters, it nonetheless makes for repeated momentary distractions during reading.

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ELLIS, ROD. *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xxvii, 1,142. $58.39, paper. ISBN 978–0–19–442257–4.

Few people in second language acquisition (SLA) research and practice have the kind of encyclopedic and commanding knowledge of the field as does Rod Ellis. This second edition, which extends the 1994 publication by roughly 300 pages, provides yet more persuasive evidence for his intellectual engagement with and contributions to nearly all facets of the core activities in SLA over close to three decades. Anyone wishing to get a competent one-stop-shopping overview of the field could hardly do better than to consult this impressive publication. The nearly monumental page count aside, that assessment also recognizes the eminently readable treatment of its chosen subject matter (i.e., through well-structured themes and topics, helpful summative tables within the individual chapters) and the welcome scholarly apparatus provided at the volume's conclusion (i.e., a 30-page glossary of key terms, a 110-page bibliography that includes publications to 2007, and both author and subject indexes).

With that combination Ellis should well be able to reach his two primary intended readerships: beginning students desiring to find their way in what is, increasingly, a bewildering interdisciplinary field and established researchers and practitioners who will appreciate its handy reference quality. As for the third group of intended readers—classroom teachers—Ellis acknowledges the ambivalent and indirect relationship of SLA research to their sophisticated and informed educative concerns and practices and, reflecting his own position as a researcher, encourages them to build their own explicit theory within which SLA research would provide what he calls "insights."

Both in tenor and scholarly demeanor, Ellis's treatment of SLA is summative, evaluative, and studiously concerned with providing an objective account of the field—one that is traditional in the sense of being mainstream SLA for at least the last two decades. The volume enacts stance and conveys that position in eight parts, where the first and the last provide bookend discussions respectively of key issues within the preferred conceptual framework of SLA research and epistemological considerations central to the entire enterprise. In between, parts 2–4 constitute the core of how SLA has been studied. Thus, the four chapters of part 2 introduce readers to approaches to describing learner language (e.g., analysis of learner errors, developmental patterns in SLA, variability in learner language, and pragmatic aspects of that language). Part 3 addresses external factors that have been used to explain SLA, primarily through the constructs of input and interaction and, more recently, diverse social aspects. Its corresponding part 4 turns to internal factors adduced to illuminate second language (L2) learning, among them language transfer, diverse cognitive accounts (with cognitive accounts of language production meriting a separate chapter-length entry), sociocultural theory as one of the major new entrants into discussion since the original 1994 publication, and a revisiting of the 1970s interlanguage theory in its two major approaches—one being more typologically and, therefore, crosslinguistically oriented and the other more concerned with underlying innate universals.

From that core set of concerns, Ellis takes readers to three areas that could be considered as either cutting across the previous interests or as specifying them through a perspective that might actually refocus them. Part 5, in a single chapter, is devoted to explaining individual differences in SLA. Another single-chapter treatment lays out the neuropsychology of SLA. Like the consideration of a socioculturally inspired theoretical stance to approaching SLA, this is one of the expansions from the earlier edition. It relates some of the major insights into the brain bases for comprehension and production in terms of such constructs as procedural and declarative knowledge, the role of attention and motivation, and ways of imagining access to both the first language (L1) and the L2. Rounding up this triad, part 7 focuses on classroom SLA, thereby reiterating an interest in teaching and learning of L2s that has long distinguished Ellis's take on the topic, whether or not one agrees with his foci or conclusions. For Ellis, instructed language learning is best considered from two perspectives: (a) an understanding of the classroom as a locus for interaction and how teachers might go about promoting forms of interaction deemed to be supportive of language learning and (b) the nature of teachers' direct interventions, in other words, a focus on teacher behaviors, where these can be categorized as more direct or as more indirect. Following a strong strand in SLA research, direct teacher interventions are equated with form-focused instruction, with an emphasis on the acquisition of grammar, less so L2 pragmatics in terms of speech acts, and some consideration of the mediating influences

of aptitude and motivation. The choice of topics and their treatment (including informative tables regarding research on various subtopics, such as forms of interaction and feedback) amply show not only that Ellis is one of the main actors but also that these foci summarize the game on SLA's center court. The ubiquity in common parlance of concepts and constructs that originally hail from this research environment in which they typically had highly contextualized and highly technical meanings—form-focused instruction being exhibit number one—assures that careful students of these chapters will, at the same time, engage in socialization work that is indispensable for their ability to join the SLA disciplinary community.

In the concluding part, Ellis shows that he is well aware that the surety of the representations he has made throughout this extended and multifaceted journey through SLA research depends on what he calls epistemological issues. An empirical researcher at heart but one with a strong commitment to the classroom, he chooses to delimit them in terms of the nature of data deemed to be conducive to the research enterprise, indeed admissible; of theoretical preferences and their consequences; and via the pedagogical applications such stances have spawned. It is noteworthy that ontological issues regarding the nature of knowing in languaging do not rise to the fore. Nevertheless, Ellis embarks on an insightful journey, welcome for its forthrightness, even-handedness, and comfortable awareness of its positionality, through major issues that have variously animated and also divided the SLA field over close to 40 years. Ellis shows himself well informed about the stance taken by others in a way that makes his willingness to consider their position even when he does not share their predispositions all the more appealing.

Whether, in the end, readers will find that this kind of disciplinary urbanity and the self-professed epistemic relativism Ellis attributes to himself convincing may well turn out to be context dependent (i.e., dependent on the role one wishes to attribute to language and to human cultural and historical knowing and being). Thus, given developments in the field, his stance that "theories should be evaluated in relation to the context in which they were developed and the purpose(s) they were intended to serve" (p. 942) accords with the judgment that SLA research has benefited from the positing and increasing strengthening of alternative paradigms. Additionally, differences aside, one cannot but sign on to his advocacy of more replication studies and more longitudinal research to shore up the field's often remarkably fragile and unstable claims. At the same time, to probe no further than pitching these matters in terms of absolute or relative relativism as contrasted with the scientism of the heretofore dominant approach in an exercise of disciplinary peace-making would seem to bracket out the challenge that SLA research must eventually meet: how to incorporate the fundamentally semiotic and historically dynamically evolving meaning-making quality of language as a resource for meaning-making, for societies and individuals, and of language learning as gradually appropriating the capacity for such situated meaning-making.

Ellis's thoughtful comprehensive treatment, the fruits of reflective professional practice in the thick of things, can provide a most welcome wealth of information about where we came from, where we now are, and where we yet need to go—and why.

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FÉLIX–BRASDEFER, J. CÉSAR. *Politeness in Mexico and the United States*. Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2008. Pp. xiv, 195. $149.00, cloth. ISBN 978–90–272–5415–3.

As I was reading this book for this review, my traveling companion noticed its title and asked me "Are Mexicans more polite than Americans?" The book's title can be misleading. The reader needs to open the book to notice that it is about refusals. The first line of the introduction reads "the objective of this study is to examine the similarities and differences in the realization patterns and the perceptions of refusals by educated male native speakers of Mexican Spanish and U.S. English in formal and informal situations" (p. 1). A more representative title would avoid misinterpretation of the book's content.

The book follows a structure very similar to a dissertation. Although not mentioned in the book, a quick search in Dissertation Abstracts International reveals that the author's dissertation research was indeed on refusals in Mexican Spanish, U.S. English, and second language (L2) learners of Spanish. Upon reading the dissertation abstract, it becomes evident that this book is part of the author's dissertation research and, thus, follows a classic layout: literature review, methodology, results, and conclusion and discussion.

The author presents a comprehensible and complete bibliographic review on the scope of politeness and refusals in chapters 1 and 2. After briefly revealing historical facts about the origins of polite behavior and defining the term *politeness*, the author provides an extensive overview of different approaches to politeness. He includes traditional perspectives on politeness principles and universals and more innovative views on politeness in politic behavior, the notion of involvement or independence in social interaction, and others. This chapter is fundamental for anyone interested in politeness. A detailed review of empirical studies on refusals is presented in chapter 2.

In describing the methodology for the study in chapter 3, the author first analyzes the advantages and limitations of different research methods often used in pragmatics research. This analysis serves as a justification for his methodology. The instruments used to collect data were role plays and retrospective verbal reports. The latter instrument is perhaps the most valuable contribution this study makes to cross-cultural pragmatics research. For years, discourse completion questionnaires have been the main instrument used in pragmatics research. Retrospective interviews offer an inside view on perceptions of verbal and nonverbal behavior. Forty university students from Mexico and the United States participated in this study. Six refusal situations were used to represent different power and social distance relationships. A research assistant was trained to perform the role plays with the participants. Right after the role-play session was finished, the researcher performed the retrospective verbal reports. The interactional data were analyzed according to the types of pragmatic strategies used as well as internal modifications within the turn.

Results from the role plays as well as from the retrospective interviews are presented in chapters 4 and 5. Although the analysis of the data and, thus, the results obtained are detailed and well reasoned, these two chapters are sometimes tedious to read. The amount of information presented distracts the reader from the patterns of behavior. In the final chapter the author reaches some interesting conclusions and discusses them within notions of face negotiation and refusals across languages. Among these conclusions, we read that in a hierarchical system, Mexican Spanish participants show higher levels of indirectness, tentativeness, and formality when refusing someone of a higher status. American participants, however, are more straightforward in their responses. During the role plays, there was an insistence after the participant had first refused. The results indicate that in Mexican society an insistence is expected and, thus, is not a face-threatening act. During such an exchange, Mexican Spanish speakers see the opportunity to negotiate face needs.

This book sheds some light on the limited knowledge we still have about cross-cultural pragmatics, and in that sense, it is a valuable contribution. The author acknowledges that comparisons between his study and other studies of refusals need to be interpreted in light of the data collection procedures used. This is perhaps one of the limitations of the current study. Verbal report data are indeed a positive complement to role-plays, but some methodological compromises result. The role plays were semistructured, which helped in controlling some variables, such as the presence of insistence. However, this elicitation instrument calls into question how interlocutors negotiate face needs in the conversation because one participant, the research assistant, is clearly in control of when to start and finish. Furthermore, the study included only six social situations involving a refusal, representing a combination of social distance and power variables. The author also acknowledges that regardless of the verbal patterns in pragmatic strategies used, he found much individual variation. Finally, the verbal report data are mostly analyzed qualitatively, which does not help in the generalization of results.

In conclusion, this book is not a book about politeness in Mexico and the Unites States, as the title claims. It offers a valuable but limited view on how middle-class male university students negotiate and perceive refusals in Mexican Spanish and U.S. English within the constraints of six semistructured role plays and verbal report data. The literature review and the analysis of the data are commendable, but the final conclusions and generalizations need to be interpreted within the limitations of the methodology used.

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HAZNEDAR, BELMA, & ELENA GAVRUSEVA. (Eds.). *Current Trends in Child Second Language Acquisition: A Generative Perspective*. Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2008. Pp. vi, 363. $158.00, cloth. ISBN 978–90–272–5307–1.

As the title of this volume indicates, its 12 chapters are connected by a shared generative perspective

on the acquisition of a second language (L2) by children, as well as by a concern with the connections between child and adult second language acquisition (SLA), on the one hand, and between first language (L1) acquisition and SLA, on the other hand. Otherwise, they are an eclectic lot, varying in the phenomena examined, methodologies, and the languages of the participants.

Verb morphology is the most studied phenomenon, featured in six chapters. Determiners and word order patterns are discussed in two chapters each, pronouns in three chapters, and verb omission in one chapter. The children's L1s include Azerbaijani, Chinese, English, Farsi, German, Japanese, Russian, and Turkish. Dutch, English, French, and Greek are the L2s investigated. Methodologies include longitudinal and cross-sectional studies, as well as experimental studies. A brief summary of each chapter follows.

Haznedar and Gavruseva begin with an overview of general SLA issues as well as the content of specific articles in the volume.

Ionin, "Progressive Aspect in Child L2 English," examines the development of progressive structures in the English of a Russian-speaking child, concluding that finiteness morphology and aspectual morphology develop independently. As *–ing* forms are learned, bare verbs gradually specialize to nonprogressive meanings. Development is parallel to that of L1 learners, but transfer effects are also possible.

Meisel, "Child SLA or Successive FLA?" considers German-speaking learners of French, focusing on clitic pronouns and finite verb morphology. Comparing them to children learning both languages simultaneously, he argues that child SLA is more similar to adult SLA than to L1 acquisition.

Brouwer, Cornips, and Hulk, "Misrepresentation of Dutch Neuter Gender in Older Bilingual Children," compares L1 and L2 speakers of Dutch with respect to the latter's overgeneralization of the determiner *de* at the expense of neuter *het*. They conduct an experiment intended to determine whether the problem is merely one of mapping or of misrepresentation of gender, and they suggest that L2 learners initially lack representation of gender in their grammars, gradually developing an awareness of it without fully mastering the mapping of gender differences to forms.

Chondrogianni's chapter, "Comparing Child and Adult L2 Acquisition of the Greek DP: Effects of Age and Construction," examines the acquisition of Greek definite articles and morphologically similar direct object clitics by Turkish learners. She finds effects of both structure and age in the results, and she discusses some of the problems her results present for previous hypotheses.

Gavruseva's chapter, "The Development of Copula and Auxiliary *be* and Overgeneration of *be* in Child L2 English," shows that the auxiliary develops more slowly than the copula, compatible with the hypothesis that AspP Asp(ect)P(hrase) is underspecified. There do not appear to be transfer effects in the acquisition of the copula, as results are comparable across L1 backgrounds, but transfer may play a role for some in the acquisition of auxiliary *be*.

In "Truncation in Child L2 Acquisition," Prévost considers verbless utterances of Anglophone children learning French (for which the target language requires a verb). He argues that in such sentences, no functional category is projected; instead, in these learners' grammars, a root clause may be NP, AP, PP, or VP, as well as CP.

Mobaraki, Vainikka, and Young-Scholten's "The Status of Subjects in Early Child L2 English" is a longitudinal study of two Farsi-speaking children. They argue for the absence of initial case marking in the child grammars, shown by noncontrastive use of nominative pronouns. The first case contrasts appear with the copula. Comparison of the data to those of a Turkish child reveals different results, suggesting early transfer effects.

In "The Morphology/Syntax Interface in Child L2 Acquisition," Geçkin and Haznedar examine the acquisition of verb morphology by Turkish-speaking learners of English. Although they find many uninflected forms, there is no evidence of inflections being used incorrectly, which they take as a challenge to claims that acquisition of syntax depends on prior acquisition of morphology.

Blom, in "Testing the Domain-by-Age Model," considers the hypothesis that in some domains of language (e.g., syntax), child L2 acquisition is more like adult SLA, whereas in others (e.g., inflectional morphology), it is more like child L1 acquisition, and finds no support for the model. Child and adult learners of Dutch show differences in their acquisition patterns in both domains.

Unsworth's chapter, "Comparing Child L2 Development with Adult L2 Development," discusses methodological issues pertaining to such research, especially concerns with the comparability of child and adult data. She proposes a new proficiency measure usable with both age groups for better comparability, testing it with a study of object-scrambling by English-speaking learners of Dutch.

The chapter by Paradis, "Tense as a Clinical Marker in English L2 Acquisition with

Language Delay/Impairment," compares typical and impaired acquisition of tense morphemes in English as an L2. He finds that impaired children show some similarities to L1 English learners with similar impairment, as well as similarities to typical L2 acquisition.

I admit to some puzzlement as to the organization of the chapters, which appears to have been done after the fact rather than by any a priori principle. The sections identify what the editors call themes, but some themes are represented by only one chapter and some chapters cover several themes. Some sections relate to specific structures and others to learner populations, but there is much overlap. One section is entitled "Comparisons of Child L1, Child L2, and Adult L2," but virtually every chapter alludes critically to these comparisons. The "Morphological Variability" section is the largest, with four chapters, but several other chapters also deal with morphology (including some quite structure-specific studies mysteriously included in the "Introduction" section, along with the one truly introductory paper), whereas others in that section are as much about syntax as morphology. The divisions are thus not helpful in structuring the volume for readers.

Although some chapters provide fairly technical generative analyses of the phenomena discussed, the generative perspective is more often reflected in shared assumptions, such as the acceptance of analytic categories and principles from that tradition and a commitment to Universal Grammar as one factor in acquisition. The chapters are uniformly interesting and clearly written, although there are a distracting number of typographical and copyediting errors in some of them. The contributions to this volume should be of interest to anyone concerned with the nature of child SLA and the relationship between child and adult acquisition, regardless of theoretical orientation.

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MCCAFFERTY, STEVEN G., & GALE STAM. (Eds.). *Gesture: Second Language Acquisition and Classroom Research*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Pp. vii, 321. $53.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–8058–6053–5.

This book contains much luscious information on the occurrence of gesture in the context of second language (L2) learning. It is full of interesting facts about gesture that individuals who are not familiar with gesture, and even those who are familiar, will find interesting. Some of this information seems intuitive, like the fact that a teacher's eye gaze can guide a teaching interaction. Everyone can remember the stern gaze of a teacher when called upon to answer a question. Some of the information is not so intuitive, like the fact that gesture reflects linguistic structure.

Although there is a wealth of information in the collection of chapters in this book, I found myself wondering what it all meant. This book reflects the beauty of mining interesting information about behaviors that occur under the communication radar and the challenges of processing all of this information without some kind of filter to make sense of it. I was not sure of the editors' purpose in producing the volume. They state in the preface that their goal is to focus on gesture in the context of L2 learning. To focus on a phenomenon without explicitly connecting it to some anchoring theoretical (or even practical) perspective is not sufficiently satisfying. There did appear to be some intention to link gesture to big psychological, psycholinguistic, and cognitive theoretical questions, such as whether language is a natural or nurtured process, whether gesture is produced for internal or external purposes, and whether gesture provides evidence about the relationship between language and thinking. The organization of the book and the lack of explicit connections between its contributions and larger theoretical questions left me a bit bewildered.

The major sections of the book were oddly titled and did not reflect clear differences among the sections or among the research reports in each one. For example, both the "Gesture and Making Meaning in the L2" and "Gesture and Communication in the L2" sections contain reports on how gesture is used during interactions. In fact, the entire book focuses on gesture in the context of social interaction involving L2 learners. The book could have been organized around the most basic distinction: gesture production and gesture comprehension. By focusing on this dichotomy, the larger theoretical questions might have begun to be addressed. So let us see how this might have played out.

The chapters that focus on gesture production (i.e., gesture as output from the learner) suggest a few ideas. Six of the reports provide evidence that gesture production reflects acquisition of a new language and new cultural ideals (McCafferty; Platt, and Brooks; Negueruela and Lantolf; Gullberg; Yoshioka; and Stam). Specifically, when linguistic or cultural characteristics of a new language appear in gesture, it suggests that

linguistic or cultural assimilation is complete. Interestingly, this idea has also been suggested in non-language-learning contexts. In my own and colleagues' research, we have found that when children and adults explain mathematical concepts, gesture information signifies where these individuals are in the learning process; that is, gesture can reflect a new representation (for solving math problems or a native language system), whereas the speech reflects an old representation (a new one for math problem solving or a new language system that is being acquired); both representations co-exist and are simultaneously activated when confronted with a task (be it linguistic or math problem solving).

With this focus on the description of gesture production during acquisition of a skill (be it problem solving or a new language), we now have insight into how mental representations change. A new representation does not supplant an old representation. It becomes integrated with the old representation through a gradual process. One question that this phenomenon raises is whether gesture is a critical mechanism for change. Gesture is likely to occur during the execution of these tasks and, if inhibited, may (with respect to mathematics learning) prevent learning. This finding suggests that gesture may function internally for the producer to help the acquisition process. Moreover, these findings may suggest a reason for speech–gesture integration. The simultaneous (or nearly simultaneous) occurrence of speech and gesture, especially during problem-solving tasks, may assure the integration of old and new representations or, to use a term from some of the authors in the book, the internalization of a new system (in the case of L2 learners, a new language system).

A subset of the chapters that focus on gesture production (i.e., the three by Gullberg, Yoshiokia, and Stam) show evidence for gesture reflecting linguistic structure. This finding suggests that language structure and grammar can have an impact on thinking processes. It is compelling that gesture representations can be modified by the language structure in which it is produced. A Spanish speaker, for example, will use verbs that focus on path of action (e.g., "the cat went up the pipe"); this linguistic-specific representation is reflected in their gestures as well (e.g., a flat hand moves upward). As a Spanish speaker acquires English, the representation changes in speech and in gesture to reflect the English structure through the use of manner verbs (e.g., "the cat climbed up the pipe" coupled with hands that represent grasping the pipe). This evidence may suggest that language drives the way we think about the world.

The remainder of the chapters focus on gesture comprehension (i.e., gesture as input to the learner; Olsher; Kida; Jungheim; Sime; Faraco and Kida; Tabensky). In all but one chapter (Kida's), the authors suggest that gesture produced in the social environment has an impact on L2 learning. This notion has also been reported in other learning contexts (i.e., with respect to acquiring math concepts). These chapters then address a couple of big questions. They begin to lend support for the role of nurture in the process of language acquisition, at least for L2 acquisition. In addition, this set of chapters also suggests that gesture has an external function in communication (except Kida, who suggests that gesture production is not geared toward the listener; gesture does not change as a function of whether the listener is visible); that is, gesture communication is detected (although often unconsciously) and can benefit the listener in terms of aiding in the acquisition of an L2.

Finally, I have a few comments about the accessibility of this book to a general audience. I realize that this book is intended for a specialized audience of those interested in gesture, particularly in the context of L2 acquisition. Although the information is applicable to big psychological theoretical questions such as "How do behaviors, knowledge, and beliefs change?" the editors have identified their intended readership too narrowly. Gesture is not just an interesting behavior. It reflects some aspect of mental representation. In the communication context, gesture and speech together are mechanisms by which information is transmitted. A connection drawn between these specific phenomena and other broader psychological phenomena might allow for appreciation by a broader audience.

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ENGLISH

CHRISTISON, MARYANN, & DENISE E. MURRAY. (Eds.). *Leadership in English Language Education: Theoretical Foundations and Practical Skills for Changing Times*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Pp. xiv, 270. $39.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–8058–6311–6.

It is rare to find a contemporary book dedicated to the professional skill of language program administration for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Although the book

is a collection of chapters contributed by experienced professionals, the editors have maintained a clear focus: "In this volume we will be focusing on leadership, on the qualities and activities of those in leadership roles and those who lead without being in a formal positional role of management of leadership" (p. 1). This statement accurately describes the situation in many English language programs in which the formal positions of teacher and administrator do not always match the responsibilities that individuals are called on to perform.

The list of contributors is impressive, as it includes several who have played leadership roles both in their home institutions and in professional organizations. Among them are directors of English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs, coordinators of TESOL training programs, a graduate school dean, and former presidents of TESOL, the professional organization. They are experienced with public school teaching as well as postsecondary teaching, with domestic ESL teaching as well as with English as a foreign language teaching. The editors have evidently attempted to find contributors from a wide range of experience with the administrative part of language teaching.

The topics addressed in the book are likewise far-ranging, from roles and responsibilities of leaders, to skills needed in leading, to practical concerns in ESL leadership. The editors have authored 8 of the 16 chapters in the book, which gives the book a well-focused approach. With such a wealth of useful chapters, there is scope in this review to look briefly at only three, each central to the aims of the book.

In chapter 3, "A Model for Leadership in English Language Teaching," Christison and Murray set out principles of good practice in leadership in ESL programs. They assert that "leadership intelligence can be activated through specific activities that lead to effective leadership" (p. 27). They review principles of leadership and describe a variety of leadership roles that teacher/administrators play in achieving success in leadership, such as the Selector, the Connector, the Problem Solver, the Evaluator, the Negotiator, the Healer, the Protector, and the Synergizer. Leaders who can assume these roles can inspire the teachers around them toward more effective teaching.

In chapter 7, "Leading from Behind," Anderson contributes a thoughtful set of suggestions for teachers who are not formally assigned a position of leadership but who find themselves in leadership roles among their colleagues. Anderson identifies five different activities that can be used to develop skills in effective leadership, including participation in leadership development, learning about the organization, learning about one's own limits, supporting other colleagues in stewardship, and evaluating the effectiveness of work toward an established direction (p. 113).

In chapter 12, "Building a Communicative Toolkit for Leadership," Clarke and Edge present a valuable set of tools for communicating effectively with colleagues to achieve leadership. Among them are the following suggestions: (a) "avoid simply reacting" (i.e., create a space before reacting to the comments of others to provide room for consideration); (b) "focus on now": avoid the distractions of implications for future actions; (c) "establish clear expectations and strategies"; (d) "identify your sphere of responsibility and influence"; (e) "identify your options, and the consequences of each one"; (f) "learn to see how your problem is part of a large pattern"; (g) "rehearse your role in the situations you have identified as likely to occur"; and (h) "celebrate how far you have come, rather than agonizing over how far you have to go" (pp. 193–196). These important practical suggestions will enable teacher/administrators to cope successfully in the responsibilities they are given.

Program administration is not usually included in the curriculum offered in the training of language teachers, and yet many new teachers find themselves in positions with administrative responsibilities, even when they do not have administrative appointments. Although the writers are experienced in English language teaching, the principles and practical advice pertain equally to all teachers in foreign language teaching settings where they have administrative responsibility. This book is a valuable and long-awaited complement to any language teacher training professional library.

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KACHRU, YAMUNA, & LARRY E. SMITH. *Cultures, Contexts, and World Englishes*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Pp. ix, 211. $41.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–8058–4733–8.

Foremost, as a member of the Outer Circle of English and someone who has spent many years studying and teaching English both in Inner and Outer Circle nations, I find this book quite

appealing and am impressed by the depth and breadth of treatment of the topics and issues found on its pages. Kudos to authors Kachru and Smith for giving this long-awaited book to the millions of students, researchers, educators, and practitioners of the many Englishes around our ever-shrinking global village. This painstaking study will foster cross-cultural understanding by increasing awareness within and among the three circles of English. Its pages pulsate with cutting-edge research and analyses, as well as words of wisdom and caution on the state and status of English—or rather, Englishes—around the world. Is there one single superordinate English, with many subordinate varieties, or has English evolved into one big family of Englishes with many varieties and idiosyncrasies around the globe, each variety neither inferior to, nor subservient to, the other? Is English just one language with one norm, or is it a world of Englishes with a plurality of norms? These are some of the questions Kachru and Smith handle so masterfully and with a great deal of elegance in this welcome volume, with strong and demonstrated theoretical and methodological underpinnings, showing both sides of the debate at every turn of the way and choosing one after carefully weighing its pros and cons. This is a book I wish I had had as a graduate student of linguistics many years ago!

With its 26 vibrant pages of usable references from all the movers and shakers of the field and over 180 pages of smooth-flowing text, this book serves as a handy reference for anyone who loves, or even despises, or is just simply fascinated by the many roles that the English language has played historically over the centuries, as it has moved from its original home in the British Isles to the utmost reaches of the globe. It also serves as a useful tool in the hands of those who may be interested in the current and future roles of English as it takes on even newer roles in our ever-flattening world.

The book is comprised of three broad sections. The first section, "Verbal Interaction and Intelligibility," contains four chapters that address micro-issues such as cooperation, context of culture, parameters of politeness and intelligibility, and politeness. Part 2, "Sound, Sentence and Word," deals with micro-issues such as sounds and rhythm, phrases and sentences, and words and collocations. Part 3, "Conversation and Writing Styles," handles issues of conversational interaction, interaction in writing, and contextualizing world Englishes literatures. This last part also addresses the broader issues of legacy and relevance in world Englishes as it tackles the pervasive psychological issues of attitudes and ideologies. Each chapter of the book contains a list of suggestions for further reading, mini research projects, and discussion questions leading to further exploration of the issues raised in the chapters.

In the final analysis, *Cultures, Contexts, and World Englishes* throws light on the consequences of globalization on the English language, especially with respect to the English curriculum cross-culturally and the teaching of English to speakers of other languages. It has even wider implications for the English language teaching profession worldwide. The book reads easily, and the reader is quickly drawn into the world of the English family of languages. It is not an intimidating text to engage, in spite of the serious nature of the issues it addresses. The authors have done an excellent job of making it accessible to both novice and expert alike. It can be used for both graduate and undergraduate courses without compromising its integrity.

As a result of the many topics and issues well handled on its pages, this volume is highly recommended to educational policy makers in all the three Circles of English, English educators, ESL and English-as-a-foreign-language teachers and students, applied and sociolinguists, theoretical linguists, researchers in human communications, anthropologists, English and literature department chairs, and, of course, to all those who are interested in the contemporary history of the English language and the broader topic of language in human society in general.

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LIU, JUN. (Ed.). *English Language Teaching in China: New Approaches, Perspectives and Standards*. New York: Continuum, 2008. Pp. xvi, 340. $49.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–8624–8076–7.

For the past 30 years, *communicative competence* has been a catchphrase within the field of foreign language teaching. It has been the lofty goal appearing in language standards, curricula, syllabi, teaching materials, and assessment, and it has served as the key foundation of the communicative approach. It has become so popular that language teachers have to relate their teaching to the notion of communicative competence. Otherwise, they will be considered unprofessional, a sign that

they lack adequate pedagogical training. However, what is communicative competence? How can it be defined? More importantly, how do we reconceptualize it in the 21st century, and how do we contextualize it in different teaching and learning settings? These are challenging questions and pressing issues that are debated and that remain unanswered. With the aim of addressing the issues of what communicative competence entails in a new era of English language teaching and how it should be contextualized, this volume reconceptualizes communicative competence from different theoretical perspectives, explores its possible contextualization in China, and presents a multidimensional model for evaluating teaching methods.

The book comprises three parts, totaling 17 chapters. Part 1, "Teaching English around the Globe," covering six chapters, redefines communicative competence from different theoretical perspectives. Chapter 1 by Liu ("The Place of Methods in Teaching English around the World") surveys the English teaching methods that are currently used and proposes a new theoretical framework of language teaching methods for language teachers in the 21st century. Chapter 2 by Larsen-Freeman ("Redefining Grammar in Contextualizing Communicative Competence") discusses how grammar should be redefined in language teaching and suggests a dynamic and adaptive system of grammar that includes form, meaning, and use. Chapter 3 by Kramsch ("The Uses of Communicative Competence in a Global World") explores the type of communicative competence that is needed in a global age and emphasizes the need to reconceptualize communicative competence from a social semiotic perspective. Chapter 4 by Murray ("Teaching and Learning Communicative Competence in an E-era") describes the need to redefine communicative competence in an age of rapid technological development and argues that its conceptualization in the current e-era should include electronic literacy. Chapter 5 by Díaz-Rico ("Reimagining Second Language Acquisition as Performative Practice") shows that second language (L2) learning is akin to a performative activity. She concludes that this novel understanding can provide new directions for second language acquisition (SLA) research and new avenues for pedagogical practice. Chapter 6 by Liu ("Empowering Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers through Collaboration with Their Native English-Speaking Colleagues in EFL Settings") stresses the need to develop multiple social identities for nonnative English teachers and exemplifies collaboration between nonnative English-speaking teachers and native English-speaking teachers in an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) setting.

Part 2, "Learning and Assessing Communicative Competence," consisting of four chapters, centers on the issues related to the learning and assessment of communicative competence. Chapter 7 by Stoynoff ("Assessing Communicative Competence: From Theory to Practice") examines the evolution of theoretical conceptualization of communicative competence and provides a context-sensitive approach to assessing communicative competence in practice. Chapter 8 by Scovel ("Learning Communicative Competence: Insights from Psycholinguists and SLA") demonstrates how the human mind shapes the movement of language and speech in the learning of communicative competence. He conjectures that interaction among various factors is the key to the acquisition of communicative competence. Chapter 9 by Liu ("Critical Period Hypothesis Retested: The Effects of Earlier English Education in China") is an empirical investigation of English learning among elementary school children in China. Liu concludes that early English language education does not necessarily yield better learning outcomes. Chapter 10 by Connor ("EFL Writing: Intercultural Implications of Testing") reveals that current models of writing assessment are not sensitive to cultural and ideological variations. Connor argues that a cultural/ideological level should be added to the existing models.

Part 3, "Contextualizing Communicative Competence in P.R. China," consisting of seven chapters, presents examples to illustrate the possible localization of communicative competence in the Chinese context. Chapter 11 by Snow ("Sustaining Self-Directed Language Learning in the Chinese Context") reports the results of self-directed learning projects, showing that they can be useful for increasing learner awareness and experimentation in an L2. Chapter 12 by Zhao ("Using Media to Teach Culture-Specific Gestures in the Chinese Context") presents an empirical study of gestures and suggests that culturally specific gestures in the target language should be introduced to language learners through media like movies and videos. Chapter 13 by Peng ("Willingness to Communicate in the Chinese EFL Classroom: A Cultural Perspective") provides cultural insights into Chinese students' willingness to communicate and proposes that students need to develop linguistic, cognitive, affective, and cultural readiness for L2 communication. Chapter 14 by Hensen Edwards ("Teaching Pronunciation in Twenty-First Century China: Models and

Methods") evaluates traditional models of pronunciation teaching based on American English and British English and explores Chinese English and potential models of English as an international language. Chapter 15 by Xu and Liu ("The Effectiveness of Anonymous Written Feedback from Peers and the Teacher on Revisions in China") examines the effectiveness of peer review and discusses possible ways to enhance its effectiveness. Chapter 16 by Braine and McNaught ("Adaptation of the 'Writing Across the Curriculum' Model to the Hong Kong Context") describes how the Writing Across the Curriculum model, developed in the United States, is adapted to the Hong Kong context and puts forward that it is rarely useful to adopt a language support model from elsewhere without careful adaptation. Chapter 17 by Liu ("Beyond Communicative Competence: A Pedagogical Perspective") is an epilogue for the volume and further analyzes the concept of communicative competence from the learners' perspective.

One of the impressive features of this book is its attempt to reconceptualize the notion of communicative competence from the perspectives of linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociosemiotics, cross-cultural communication, and SLA in the 21st century, a new era characterized by globalization, information explosion, cultural confluence, and rapid technological advances. Also unique in this book is its convincing argument that there is no universal model or omnipotent teaching method. What works in one setting does not necessarily work in a different setting. Any model or teaching method has to be contextualized and localized to be efficient and effective. A third impressive feature is its novel and sharp insights into some pressing issues of English language teaching in China.

Despite these merits, some minor blemishes are also evident. First, the date for the origin of the notion of communicative competence has not been consistently described in the book. Whereas some chapters state that it was born with Dell Hymes's famous 1972 article, other chapters make it clear that it originated from Dell Hymes's well-known 1971 seminal book. Another regret is that this monumental book lacks an overarching framework for reconceptualizing and contextualizing communicative competence with the incorporation of various perspectives presented in the book, which would have been helpful for L2 teachers. The third possible improvement lies in the editing. A couple of typos can be detected. Additionally, both British English and American English spelling norms can be spotted. Furthermore, the presentation format of one chapter has no outline, so it is not consistent with the presentation format of other chapters.

In sum, this book has made a solid and significant contribution to the field of applied linguistics by presenting new perspectives on our understanding of communicative competence and by providing empirical studies on how to contextualize communicative competence in China, an EFL setting in which there are millions of English language learners. As one of the first serious attempts to reconceptualize the notion of communicative competence in the 21st century, this book should be of immediate interest to the language pedagogue, and it will be an extremely valuable resource for L2 students, teachers, and researchers.

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FRENCH

MAGNIN, MICHÈLE, & VÉRONIQUE FLAMBARD–WEISBART. *Scén@rios: Pédagogies du virtuel, Atelier de lecture et d'écriture*. Boston: Thomson Heinle, 2007. Pp. viii, 216. $80.95, paper. ISBN 1–4130–1599–9.

Scén@rios is a process-oriented program that creates a structured context within which students exercise their skills in reading and analyzing literary texts and then use those texts as models to compose their own written work. As such, *Scén@rios* is suited for students above the college intermediate level who are able to interpret literary texts and who already have a strong foundation in the linguistic structures of the French language. The program consists of a black-and-white textbook entirely in French and its companion Web site.

Taking their cue from Francis Debyser's (1996) notion of global simulation in the teaching of foreign languages, the authors propose that each student construct a fictional identity and that the ensemble of the fictional personages of the class (or of smaller groups) simulate living as tenants in a French apartment building, a context that is maintained throughout the entire course. The end product is a detective story written by the class or by each group in which the students as tenants figure as the characters. The program is tightly organized into 10 *Structures*. Each *Structure* presents a *Texte modèle* from literature, followed by an *Explication de texte* exercise that guides the

student to interpret the form and content of the model text. An *Écriture extensive* takes the form of first-person journaling on the part of the fictional personage based on the genre and linguistic functions presented in the model text. The *Stylistique* section provides targeted practice in an appropriate linguistic function and refers the student to the keyed grammar appendix. Finally, the *Écriture intensive* section guides students to write essays or compositions that serve as material for the collaborative writing project.

The companion Web site, which is not password protected and is accessed from the publisher's Web site (www.heinle.com), is not to be considered as ancillary material. Rather, it is integral to the *pédagogie du virtuel* as students do research to create the fictional lives they describe. For example, to construct the milieu in which they live, students are directed to interactive maps of several French cities and then to sites that permit them to find rental apartments and resources in the neighborhood, such as supermarkets, museums, parks, and bakeries. Here *Scén@rios* shines as a tool that brings together real French culture, albeit in virtual space, and the fictional world the students are creating. In this respect, *Scén@rios* fulfills admirably well the authors' intent that instructors do not teach culture; rather, instructors act as virtual-reality animators and the students as players.

Heavily weighted on student activity, *Scén@rios* is the process-oriented and collaborative workshop it intends to be. The textbook is replete with open-ended and thought-provoking questions as well as exercises, organizational grids, and even drawing spaces for students to externalize their conceptualizations. Constant reference is made to the Web site, and a good deal of student collaborative interaction is channeled through email. For this reason, as well as to support the role of the instructor as animator and overseer, *Scén@rios* would be enhanced by the interactive modules of course management software such as Blackboard.

Although it is admirable that each of the *Structures* begins with a literary text, it is also likely that some of the model texts and some of the *Explication de texte* exercises may be beyond the reach of students with little literature experience who have registered for a course in reading and writing French. Such may well be the case with the *Structure* in chapter 3 (*Le décor*), for example, which uses a text from Proust and elaborates on the ramifications of memory, the creation of images, and the implications of metaphor and metonymy. Additionally, it will be the task of the instructor as animator to provide the leap between the model literary text and the level of writing the students are expected to produce. Thus, one wonders if the average student as reader will be able to identify himself or herself as the potential "writer" summoned by the Oulipo text in the very first *Structure*. It is, however, supremely appropriate to use an Oulipo text to launch a workshop on writing under the constraints of global simulation.

Scén@rios is not a grammar-driven program, but the authors have wisely included, at appropriate junctures, references to linguistic structures explained in the appendix. However, one wonders why, on the one hand, the use of the infinitive with an imperative sense is omitted in the appendix when its use in the corresponding literary text is prevalent and critical and, on the other hand, the use of the *passé surcomposé* is mentioned in the appendix although it is not to be found in the literary text of the corresponding *Structure*.

The notes for the instructor in the instructor's edition provide not only some valuable insights into the literary texts for each *Structure* but also some practical classroom and workload management tools, such as methods to handle, rate, and annotate first drafts and revisions of students' writing. For this purpose, a comprehensive *grille d'évaluation* is downloadable by students to include with each writing assignment submitted.

Scén@rios represents a much needed move from the simple, isolated role-plays characteristic of lower level French courses to a culturally rich simulation extended over an entire course. Both the simulation and the cultural research on the Web are sure to be high-interest activities that support the authors' intent that students "create their own context and practice the language within it" (p. 7).

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ITALIAN

CAPEK–HABEKOVIĆ, ROMANA, & CLAUDIO MAZZOLA. *A vicenda: Lingua*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009. Pp. xiv, 338. $78.75, paperback. ISBN 0–07–353527–3. *Workbook/Laboratory Manual*. $50.94, paper. ISBN13 978-0073274379. *A vicenda: Cultura*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009. Pp. xxiii, 225. $39.38, paper. ISBN 0–07–327435–6.

The two-volume program *A vicenda* is intended for intermediate-level students of Italian. The core

volume *Lingua* reviews and expands upon the elementary language structures covered in the first year of instruction, whereas the companion volume *Cultura* offers a broad perspective on Italian culture through authentic readings and communicative activities. *Lingua* is structured like most introductory language texts: 12 chapters with an opening page and picture to introduce the topic, an overview of communicative goals and grammar structures, a series of suggestions to promote conversation in class, author-written dialogues to introduce the grammar and vocabulary of the chapter, a list of new words and expressions, a grammar section, communicative activities to practice new vocabulary and grammar, a review, and a writing section. Each of the 12 chapters in *Cultura* develops the theme of the corresponding chapter in *Lingua* through two main authentic texts and is followed by reading strategies and communicative activities aimed to develop reading, speaking, and writing skills while developing cultural competence.

Although the two volumes have been developed as components of a comprehensive language program, *Lingua* and *Cultura* are two independent texts that can be used independently by instructors. *Lingua* offers a thorough review of first-year material, but it is not a mere repetition of already learned structures. The presentation of grammar is contextualized and communication based. The topic of the first chapter is family and friends; the communicative goals are identifying people and things, describing one's own personal space, talking about the present, and expressing personal likes and dislikes; and the grammar includes nouns, articles, prepositions, present tense of regular and irregular verbs, idiomatic uses of *avere*, *fare*, *dare*, and *stare*, and the use of *piacere* and impersonal verbs. The activities suggested to the instructor and students are communicative and interactive, promoting the practice of the grammar structures selected for review in the chapter, along with implementing the new vocabulary. Motivated and engaged by the opening dialogue featuring a modern Italian family, which contradicts the traditional stereotype, students are more likely to talk about their own family dynamics as prompted by the activities.

Students approaching the intermediate level of language learning are often confronted with the task of adapting to a text format that greatly differs from the introductory text to which they have grown accustomed in their first year of learning. *Lingua* introduces challenging material and activities within a structure that is familiar to students. This student-friendly feature accomplishes the sometimes hard-to-reach goal of leading the students progressively to a higher level of language skill.

The 12 chapters in *Cultura* offer a broad cultural perspective on the same themes introduced in the corresponding chapters in *Lingua*. The readings are expertly selected, and they effectively expose the readers to the growing diversity of contemporary Italy. The topics range from changing Italian family dynamics and food habits, to the issue of same-sex marriage, and to the recent waves of immigration to Italy from North Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. The authenticity of the reading material and the focus on current topics foster class discussions and promote language proficiency while meeting the goals identified by the ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning of Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Chapter 10 is devoted to the history and fortune of the "Made in Italy" brand. The first reading is an excerpt from a 1998 Italian book by Marco Fortis that provides the students with an historical and geographical overview of the development of Italian economy and the fortune of the "Made in Italy" products. The second reading, adapted from an article that appeared on Kataweb Motori, focuses on a single product that has become a symbol of the Italian lifestyle, the famous Vespa scooter by Piaggio. The choice of such a popular icon appeals to students and encourages communication. Students are encouraged to research other products that represent Italian culture and to compare them with American products that are viewed as American symbols inside and outside the United States. Therefore, students are not only advancing their communication skills while gaining cultural competence about Italy, but they are also reflecting on cultural differences by comparing Italian culture with the culture of their own country. They will ultimately be able to place Italian and American culture within a broader perspective, by investigating the impact of Italian and American products in a global economy. While learning about Vespa, students are introduced to business-related topics and vocabulary such as the development of the product and the production of a prototype, the design, the marketing, and the popular culture surrounding Vespa, from cinema to art. Students are able to make connections between what they learn in the Italian class and in other academic subjects—in this case business—thereby enhancing their learning in both areas.

An additional feature of *A vicenda* is *Una storia complicata*, the story of Alex and Lele, two

Italian friends whom students get to know through the chapter-opening dialogues in the *Lingua* volume. The (mis)adventures of Alex and Lele are narrated in seven episodes in the *Cultura* volume. *Una storia complicata* provides students with an opportunity for independent reading, a feature that is often integrated into intermediate language classes with the inclusion of a reader to the list of texts. The inclusion of this story in the language program avoids the need for an additional text and has the advantage of developing two characters who are already familiar to the students.

The program is accompanied by a *Manuale di esercizi* that is thematically coordinated with the *Lingua* volume, and an Online Learning Center that provides the students with access to the audio program accompanying the listening activities in the *Manuale di esercizi* and offers the instructor more teaching resources.

Depending on the goals of the course and the number of contact hours, the instructor may use both texts, *Lingua* and *Cultura*, in an integrated syllabus or decide to use either one of them exclusively. Other viable options could be adopting *Lingua* as the main text complemented by selected readings from *Cultura*, or even focusing on *Cultura* and utilizing *Lingua* as a reference text for specific grammar reviews. If the program is used over two semesters, the focus may shift from *Lingua* to *Cultura* as the students' language skills develop in the second semester.

The wealth and the quality of the material make *A vicenda* a truly user-friendly and up-to-date language program that, thanks to its flexibility, can respond to the various and varying needs of students and instructor throughout the second year of Italian instruction.

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OLIVER–FEDERICI, THERESA. *Developing Writing Skills in Italian*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Pp. xiv, 129. $44.95, paper. ISBN 0–415–43261–8.

A welcome addition to the Developing Writing Skills series, which includes volumes devoted to Chinese, French, and German, this edition guides the Italian student through the writing process using authentic texts from a wide variety of sources (literary, popular, technical, scholarly) to illustrate diverse registers, structures, styles, and formats of writing and to encourage learners to analyze, imitate, and expand upon the models they have studied. The text is composed of four units, each devoted to a specific—and progressively more complex—writing technique: narrative, journalistic, workplace-oriented, and academic. Each unit contains five chapters of increasing difficulty, and each chapter includes an initial preparatory activity aimed at placing the writing skill in context through a short reading, puzzle, or vocabulary-building exercise, followed by three short, guided activities that together form the basis for the final free-writing activity that allows the learner to put all the newly developed skills into practice. The text has been designed for upper–intermediate students wishing to write Italian for personal, business, or academic purposes, and it is structured for maximum flexibility of usage. Suitable for classroom or guided independent study, the author suggests that it can be used over the course of several semesters of a degree program or as an intensive program over one academic year. The accompanying Web site provides assessment guides, answer keys, a teachers' guide, and supplementary activities.

For a variety of reasons—from time constraints, to emphasis on oral expression, to the difficulty of persuading students of the need to do it well—writing is the skill least practiced in the Italian language classroom, despite recognition on the part of teachers and administrators that an emphasis on writing skills should be an integral part of the college curriculum. Unfortunately, foreign language instructors are often so bogged down in the correction of spelling and grammar that style, organization, technique, and even content become lost in the shuffle. What makes *Developing Writing Skills in Italian* such an appealing option for the upper level, and perhaps strong intermediate, classroom is its careful focus on leading students through the entire writing process—from the planning and drafting stages to the revision and editing of a final work—rather than allowing the learner to succumb to the temptation to jump to the end product without advance planning. The step-by-step breakdown of the writing process encourages students to understand not only what they are doing but why they are doing it; goals and outcomes are clearly explained and, as the process evolves, students work their way to the final creative stage, having received the tools and vocabulary necessary to achieve the stated chapter goal as well as learning good writing habits in the process.

The writing assignments are varied and engaging, ranging from practical to creative and functional to thought-provoking. Whether students

will be more committed to accuracy and attention to detail as a result of the self-assessment forms intended to accompany each first draft and final copy remains to be seen. It is clear, however, that the skills they learn will serve them beyond the realm of the foreign language curriculum.

Language skills are not learned in a vacuum, and *Developing Writing Skills in Italian* also lends itself to strengthening reading, comprehension, and conversational skills; it could easily find a niche as a component in culture, film, and business Italian or more general advanced language courses. Much of the text will be beyond the abilities of the intermediate student interested only in completing a General Education requirement; some material will be challenging even for upper level students.

In short, this is a welcome addition to the upper level Italian shelf, and the immediacy with which material can be supplemented and updated when necessary on the accompanying Web site is an attractive feature. One area in which clarification would be welcome is in chapter 4, devoted to the exploration of poetry and poetic language. Students are asked to count the syllables in lines of verse, but they are given no instruction on how to do so or even any indication that counting syllables in poetry is not the same as counting prose syllables. Ungaretti's *Soldati*, in fact, consists of four lines that can be read as a couplet of seven-syllable lines; the syllable count should read 4, 3, 4, 3 (p. 25). Montale's *Meriggiare pallido e assorto* is made up of lines of 9, 10, and 11 syllables; the online key is incorrect.

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RIGA, CARLA LARESE. *Salve!* Boston: Heinle, 2009. Pp. xii, 356. $110.49, cloth. ISBN 1–4130–1516–6. *Quia access card*, $73.49. *Workbook/Lab Manual*. $47.49, paper. *Workbook Answer Key/Lab Audio Script*. $9.95. *Sulla strada DVD*. $15.95. *Lab Audio CDs*. $32.49.

Salve! consists of 16 chapters. Two preliminary chapters introduce pronunciation, essential vocabulary, the days of the week, and numbers from 1 to 49, followed by 14 main chapters that integrate grammar and vocabulary sections with readings on urban life, personality, the Italian university system, food, family, transportation, business, media and communication, fashion, home life, vacations, work, sport, and art and the performing arts. Each chapter begins with a *Parole da ricordare* section that introduces vocabulary relevant to the chapter's cultural theme. Next, a brief reading (*Informazioni*) gives an overview of the theme (in English for chapters 1–3), followed by vocabulary exercises (*Applicazione*). The grammar points of the chapter are then introduced (*La grammatica*), often paired with a photograph, cartoon, or image of realia that relates to the grammatical structure, followed by pair or group exercises (*Pratica*). The concluding section of each chapter (*Per finire*) includes readings and listening exercises with related written and oral exercises (*Ascoltiamo!*, *Adesso scriviamo!*, *Parliamo insieme!*, *Attualità*). Each chapter ends with a list of the new vocabulary introduced in the chapter (*Vocabolario*).

The primary strength of *Salve!* is its genuine commitment to a communicative approach to learning. Almost all of the exercises in the text are for pair or group work, the readings tend to be dialogic rather than descriptive, and the readings that describe Italian life do so in a way that eschews superficial touristic knowledge, thereby forcing students to confront the reality of contemporary Italy rather than reaffirm stereotypes. Two of many examples of the text's emphasis on contemporary culture are the readings on the architect Renzo Piano in chapter 10 and the excellent presentation of second-generation immigrants to Italy in chapter 12. Unfortunately, these immigrants are absent from the photographs and images throughout the text, an oversight that should be corrected in the next edition. The language in all of the readings has a rich diversity of lexical and grammatical structures that accurately reflects linguistic usage in Italy today. This linguistic authenticity is, however, carefully controlled to emphasize the new grammar structures of each chapter.

The only weakness of *Salve!* for some programs will be the text's tendency to simplify Italian grammar. Grammar throughout *Salve!* is presented in a concise way that students will find easy to understand, but this skeletal form sometimes fails to present the full complexity of the Italian language and often ignores exceptions to the rule. A few grammatical structures are not presented at all in the text (the future perfect, the *passato remoto* and *trapassato remoto*, passive constructions, and the construction *fare* + infinitive are included in a four-page appendix). Some institutions expect students to master all of the grammatical structures of the language in the first year, and for these programs, *Salve!* is not a good fit. Many colleges and universities, however, do not cover all Italian

grammar in the first-year sequence of courses, and for these programs, *Salve!* is a good choice.

The ancillary components are generally of high quality, and adopters have a wide range of possible text/tech configurations. The text can be purchased in hardcover or paper versions or it can be rented electronically. Companion texts include a *Workbook/Lab Manual* and a separate workbook answer key. Technology options include *Quia* (a Web-based version of the *Workbook/Lab Manual* that gives students immediate feedback), a DVD (recycled from *Ciao!*), an iTunes playlist, a lab audio program, two CDs (included with the text), and a *Salve!* companion Web site. Unfortunately, students must purchase most of these ancillary components separately, which is a pity because if they were all included in one Web-based program, both students and instructors would find this rich diversity of supporting materials infinitely easier to use.

Salve! bills itself as essential Italian, intended for Italian courses with limited contact hours. For these programs, *Salve!* is an excellent introduction to Italian that students and teachers alike will find both rewarding and enjoyable.

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JAPANESE

BENATI, ALESSANDRO T. *Japanese Language Teaching: A Communicative Approach*. New York: Continuum, 2009. Pp. ix, 214. $44.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–8264–9882–3.

Japanese Language Teaching (*JLT*) is intended as a textbook for preservice and in-service teachers and students with little or no knowledge of second language acquisition (SLA). *JLT* is divided into three parts. Part A reviews the theoretical underpinnings of different teaching methods (e.g., the audiolingual method and communicative language teaching) and some of the key issues in SLA such as the acquisition processes (input to output) and the roles of interaction and instruction. Among these issues, Benati contends that learners need to focus on form when processing information in input, which is concerned with the process of intake in contrast with near-exclusive exposure to input.

Part B presents an overview of communicative language teaching (CLT), covering key theoretical notions such as communicative competence and input theory. Although input theory gives formal instruction of grammar only a peripheral role, Benati reiterates the claim by SLA researchers that consciousness raising in input processing is important, and he argues that grammar can and should be taught in alignment with the communicative approach.

Part C offers an introductory description of experimental research aimed at students in the fields of SLA, English as a second language, and foreign language education, as well as preservice and in-service teachers. It provides a thorough overview of how to design and conduct a research study involving an experimental approach in a classroom setting, encouraging classroom teachers to conduct action research.

The subtitle, "A Communicative Approach," may give readers the impression that the book is a comprehensive guide on how to apply CLT to Japanese. Indeed, the second part starts with a discussion of key concepts and notions such as communicative competence and negotiation of meaning, but it soon turns to a discussion of focus on form and grammar instruction without much elaboration of how a communicative approach can be implemented in Japanese classrooms, covering topics such as lesson planning, implementation of a lesson, and assessment. Most of the examples in *JLT* concentrate on how to draw learners' attention to grammatical items. One activity, for example, includes a worksheet that lists 12 sentences in either past or present tense, for which learners are asked to indicate whether each sentence is possible or impossible with regard to a partner's past activities (p. 75). Concrete examples are limited, as they cover affirmative/negative, present/past, and sentence-final particle *ne*. Readers may wonder how to approach instruction of other grammatical items such as *–te iru*, dictionary form versus polite form versus honorifics, modality, and phrasal particles.

Chapter 5 is devoted to giving sample activities in the four skill areas within the communicative approach, but, again, it is not sufficient. Moreover, the samples often contain typographical errors and ambiguous instructions with little or no consideration for level appropriateness or scaffolding strategies for teachers. Japanese sentences in the sample activities tend to be discrete sentences that do not give much thought to discourse authenticity or pragmatic and sociolinguistic appropriateness. It would have been more effective had the focus been on how to

teach grammar in a communicative and functional way, covering Japanese grammatical elements that are challenging for English-speaking learners.

Benati frequently mentions that Japanese language teaching in the United Kingdom practices traditional instruction (e.g., grammar translation method). This writer believes that Japanese language educators in the United States have been sensitized to proficiency- and standards-based education and that communication is typically the main goal in the curriculum of most Japanese programs, so CLT may not be new to many teachers. However, as foreign language teachers in the United States often receive training within the field of education rather than the field of applied linguistics, Benati's review of focus on form, the role of instruction, and input–intake–output processes may be useful. Benati incorporates quite a few research studies that involve Japanese learners, but the explanations of the SLA theories are not necessarily tailored for teachers and students of Japanese. The lack of connection between the SLA theories, which tend to be English or European languages based, and the Japanese teaching that is found in *JLT* is probably due to a lack of attention to pragmatic and sociocultural aspects of Japanese language and communication.

To its credit, the introduction to experimental research in part C is useful and beneficial for both preservice and in-service teachers. Foreign language teachers may not be familiar with the field of applied linguistics, in which theories are constantly verified or revised by empirical research, and this last part offers digestible explanations of the basic practices in designing and conducting experimental research. Benati provides classroom teachers, both preservice and in-service, with rationales and basic guidelines for conducting action research. This part can be used in a foreign language teacher education program or assigned to in-service teachers as part of their professional development.

JLT's title is somewhat misleading, as it gives the impression that it will present a comprehensive review of the communicative approach for Japanese language teaching, when in fact the main focus is the teaching of Japanese grammar in a communicative way. However, the overview of the key notions in SLA and the description of basics about how to conduct experimental research should prove beneficial.

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HEISIG, JAMES W. *Remembering the Kanji 2: A Systematic Guide to Reading the Japanese Characters*. 3rd ed. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. Pp. v, 397. $ 25.00, paper. ISBN 978–0–8248–3166–0.

HEISIG, JAMES W., & TANYA SIENKO. *Remembering the Kanji 3: Writing and Reading Japanese Characters for Upper-Level Proficiency*. 2nd ed. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. Pp. vi, 430. $ 30.00, paper. ISBN 978–0–8248–3167–7.

These books provide second language (L2) learners of Japanese with systematic methods for remembering the ways of reading and writing Japanese *kanji* characters. Originally adapted from Chinese characters, *kanji* are a significant challenge for many L2 learners of Japanese, especially for those whose native languages do not have logographic orthographies. Building knowledge of *kanji*, however, is crucial because *kanji* are used to read and write most Japanese words. Adult L2 learners are often interested in finding strategies to facilitate character learning.

Three informational processes are involved in processing *kanji*: orthography (graphemes), phonology, and semantics. In his three-volume series (of which the present volumes are the second and third), Heisig offers various methods for remembering *kanji* systematically to replace the traditional memorization using repeated writing, copying, and drilling. Heisig's methods seek to intellectually motivate adult L2 learners. His strategies include the use of mnemonic devices, keyword association, morphological analysis, and metacognitive strategies. By organizing *kanji* in a manner that systematizes what learners already know, Heisig reduces the complexities of *kanji* to their basic elements and then suggests ways of reconstructing meaning from those elements.

Remembering the Kanji 2 provides learners with useful strategies to remember the more than 1,945 *kanji* that are used in Japanese newspapers and magazines. This volume is designed as a self-study guide to help individual learners improve their knowledge of *kanji* at their own pace (p. 2). In addition to the content, which is reviewed below, the volume includes a series of useful indexes to graphemes, pronunciations, and stroke counts. In chapters 1, 2, 5, and 7, Heisig collects and classifies a large number of characters into groups of *kanji* that share common *on* readings (those derived from Chinese readings). He demonstrates an association between the mental image of a grapheme and what he calls the primitive element—a

common element that can provide phonological information. Although *kanji* cannot be broken down into phonemes in exactly the same way as an alphabetic word, Heisig makes an excellent point by presenting numerous groups of *kanji* that share a grapheme or radical that can be indicative of the phonological reading of the character.

Chapter 3 presents the small groups of *kanji* whose readings are not homonyms but that may be learned in conjunction with a particular character grouping. Chapter 4 lists *kanji* for which there is no *on* reading. These include *kokuji* that were not borrowed from China but which were instead created in Japan. Interestingly, Heisig does not provide a guide to the pronunciation of these characters, which would have been helpful from the learner perspective. Although these readings can be found in an index, it might be more effective to expose learners to *kanji* in a more visually and phonologically concurrent and meaningful way.

Chapters 6, 8, and 9 present individual *kanji* drawn from everyday words that are familiar to even beginning L2 learners of Japanese. Building on existing knowledge of these characters, Heisig enables learners to identify the *on* reading of these characters in *kanji* compounds. Chapter 10 focuses on rare *kanji*, or those generally restricted to use in proper names.

Chapter 11 discusses mnemonic strategies for remembering the *kun* readings (Japanese readings) of *kanji*. Unlike the *on* reading, the *kun* reading is based on the pronunciation of a native Japanese word that closely approximated the meaning of the Chinese character when it was introduced. The *kun* reading of a *kanji* therefore exists in isolation, having no relationship with the visual component of the character and making it difficult to use mnemonic strategies.

Remembering the Kanji 3 is a supplementary volume for learners seeking a systematic procedure for remembering how to read and write *kanji* associated with an academic Japanese vocabulary. This includes about 1,000 *kanji* beyond the 2,042 *kanji* previously introduced in volumes 1 and 2 of the series. To select these 1,000 characters, Heisig cross-checked several *kanji* dictionaries to compile an accurate frequency list of character usage.

This volume is useful for advanced learners who desire a higher level of *kanji* proficiency. The book consists of two parts: The first focuses on writing and visual representation of some 734 *kanji*, and the second focuses on the readings and the components associated with the visual representations of these *kanji*.

In the early chapters of part 1, the focus is on the meaning and orthography of the *kanji* along with keywords that can be used to associate a character's meaning with its orthography. This approach is known as an effective means of facilitating both immediate and long-term retention in L2 learners. A number of the characters in these chapters are also classified into groups that share common a grapheme or radical. Chapter 6 introduces old and alternate forms, which are helpful for reading historical books and novels.

Part 2 further expands the complexities of the written Japanese language. Heisig introduces a group of readings that were originally presented in *Remembering the Kanji 2*. Each *kanji* in this group belongs to a group of characters that consist of a single grapheme associated with a given *on* reading. Now the *kun* readings are provided, as well, which is helpful as a means to enhance knowledge, given that L2 learners often encounter difficulty in reading due to the idiosyncratic nature of *on* readings.

Chapter 11 lists a group of *kanji* that have a variety of pronunciations even though they share a common grapheme. Learners are shown how they can infer some pronunciations using clues from shared graphemes. The book's final chapters present *kanji* that carry only Japanese readings, old and alternative forms of *kanji,* and a group of supplementary *kanji* for advanced learners.

These two books are well organized and systematic. Both volumes are excellent from a cognitive perspective, as they allow learners to improve their knowledge of *kanji* based on information-processing strategies. A large number of *kanji* can be organized in a step-by-step manner beginning with a simple process of decoding/encoding and then advancing to the more complex process of remembering characters systematically. Heisig effectively analyzes the structure of single seemingly complex *kanji*, and he then introduces coherent patterns by which the characters can be grouped. This information is then organized into a step-by-step strategy to help learners remember the reading and writing of numerous *kanji*. This systematic approach also helps learners to be aware of their own learning process, which, in turn, facilitates the development of metacognitive strategies through which learners can monitor and evaluate their own learning. Previous knowledge is effectively used to acquire new knowledge.

Most *kanji* have multiple readings in Japanese, and the reading of a character is context dependent. Therefore, these books would be nearly perfect if context-based strategies had been added.

In summary, these two volumes provide a significant contribution to the field of learning *kanji*. They are useful not only for L2 learners of Japanese who struggle with *kanji* but also for native speakers who may have been unaware of the extent to which *kanji* can be systematically organized in a manner that facilitates reading and writing.

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KANNO, YASUKO. *Language and Education in Japan: Unequal Access to Bilingualism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Pp. xii, 206. $80, cloth. ISBN 978–0–230–50694–7.

Despite some recent difficulties, Japan is still often perceived as a country with a dynamic economy, a rich cultural history, and a highly effective educational system with an illiteracy rate that is close to zero. However, in the area of bilingual education, Japan continues to lag behind despite the country's rapid globalization since the end of World War II.

The author of this book presents the first ethnographic research that extensively examines bilingual education in Japan. Kanno carried out 2 years of fieldwork at an immersion school, an ethnic Chinese school, an international school, and two public schools, analyzing the various types of bilingual programs using a theoretical framework referred to as *imagined community*. In this framework, children of various socioeconomic backgrounds are socialized into bilingual programs that are shaped by the differing visions encompassed in the schools' policies and practices.

Chapter 1 offers an introduction to the study. In chapter 2, Kanno gives a historical overview of the cultural and linguistic diversity present in Japan and discusses previous studies about Japanese bilingual education. This section is followed by the theoretical framework of the imagined community, Bourdieu's concept of cultural reproduction, and, finally, the methodology of her study.

Chapters 3–7 involve descriptions of the schools in which the research was conducted. Chapter 3 deals with the Nichiei Immersion School. Nichiei is a private school that offers a K–12 education, the curriculum of which includes a partial immersion program in English for Japanese mainstream children. Parents send their children to this school in the hope that their children will become both competent in English and receive the necessary preparation for entrance into the Japanese university system. Chapter 4 covers Zhonghua Chinese Ethnic School. This school specializes in ethnic Chinese students at the K–9 level. Serving mainly language-minority students from working-class families, it provides a bilingual education in both Japanese as a second language and English as a foreign language, although the school also emphasizes the study of Chinese culture and civilization. Chapter 5 examines the Hal International School, which draws its students from upper class or upper middle-class families. It offers a rich multicultural curriculum with high academic standards, in which Japanese first language (L1) students become proficient in English. After graduation, most of the students attend elite colleges in the United States or the United Kingdom. Chapter 6 deals with the Sugino Public Elementary School. This school is unique in that more than 40% of the students are of foreign origin (i.e., children of immigrants and refugees from China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos). This school attempts to integrate the students into the Japanese school system. As a result, the school does not support the maintenance of the children's L1, leading to attrition of the students' home languages. The fifth school, Midori Elementary, is covered in chapter 7. About 7% of the students at Midori are children of migrant workers from Brazil and Peru who often expect to return to their country after a few years. The school, therefore, favors the maintenance of the children's L1 and does not emphasize the learning of Japanese.

In chapter 8, Kanno provides comparative and in-depth analyses of the bilingual education of the five schools in terms of the imagined communities framework, school pedagogy, and students' identities. In chapter 9, the conclusion of the study, Kanno argues that there is unequal access to bilingualism and educational opportunities among children of different socioeconomic classes.

The author's application of the notion of imagined community brings a new perspective to the examination and comparison of the policies and practices of the five different bilingual education programs; the curricula, experiences of teachers, and the backgrounds of children and parents differ significantly among the five schools. However, from the single theoretical framework of Kanno's analysis, we can begin to understand why the curriculum is the way it is at each institution, with Kanno arguing that the key aspects of practice and policy of the bilingual schools shape students' bilingualism and identities.

Kanno's study focuses on school procedural matters, discussing the success and challenges of the bilingual programs. It would have been beneficial had the research been analyzed from a linguistic and acquisitional point of view—how the children acquire the second language (L2) based on linguistic as well as nonlinguistic factors, such as the age of first exposure. It should, however, be noted that not only are the socioeconomic backgrounds of the children different, but also the children's L1 and L2 are different among the bilingual programs studied in this book. The success of the bilingual programs depends largely on the students' acquisition of and competency in the target language. Thus, if some of these linguistic factors and nonlinguistic factors are held constant, we can see the effectiveness of the key aspects of the schools' processes and policies more clearly as well as how the level of acquisition by the children may be affected by nonlinguistic factors.

This book outlines a new approach to examining different types of bilingual education, its access to children, and factors of socialization through the theoretical framework—imagined community—and raises an important issue of the relationship between accessibility to educational opportunities and socioeconomic class.

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LINGUISTICS

ISAC, DANIELA, & CHARLES REISS. *I–Language: An Introduction to Linguistics as Cognitive Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xii, 318. $39.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–19–953420–3.

This volume offers an introduction to modern linguistic theory from a biolinguistic perspective. The text includes 14 chapters organized into four parts: "The Object of Inquiry," "Linguistic Representation and Computation," "Universal Grammar," and "Implications and Conclusions." In part 1 the authors contextualize linguistics within the domain of cognitive science, offering comparisons with data from other areas of cognition such as vision, audition, and ethology. They differentiate language as an object of scientific inquiry from other, commonsense notions of language to make the mentalist argument that language is a computational system encoded in each individual's mind. In part 2 the authors provide support for this I-language conception of the human language faculty with evidence from phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Pointing to facts from a variety of languages about such phenomena as vowel harmony, ergativity, and c-command, the authors substantiate the claim that there exist innate representational primitives (i.e., Universal Grammar [UG]) that must be available for language learning to proceed. In part 3 the authors go beyond the characterization of UG as a mere hypothesis, arguing instead that it is a logical necessity. In part 4 they discuss the implications of findings from linguistic analysis for perennial philosophical issues like the nature/nurture debate, the mind–body problem, and the nature of knowledge and its acquisition.

The authors meet their goals of demonstrating to the (relatively) uninitiated reader "how to think like a linguist" (p. ix) and increasing the reader's understanding of and appreciation for the human language faculty. The authors' passion for the topic is abundantly clear and even infectious. Nevertheless, they seem to struggle a bit in the first chapter to find an even voice, and it is not always clear who the authors are taking their intended audience to be despite their note in the preface that they envision the volume as an introductory text for students of linguistics or other fields related to cognitive science. Whereas in chapter 1 the writing style vacillates noticeably between attempts at popular appeal and a more serious, academic tone appropriate for an audience with some knowledge of linguistics, by the second chapter the authors settle into a pleasant, approachable academic tone with only occasional snarky remarks, likely intended to liven up the prose for incipient linguists.

By and large, presentation of content is clear, convincing, and engaging. The book covers an impressive amount of linguistic terrain, but the authors frequently tie the discussion back in with their central arguments, resulting in a highly coherent and readable text. Moreover, chapters conclude with recommendations for further reading as well as exercises that reinforce and expand on several of the topics presented, with answers available from the authors by request through the textbook's companion Web site. That said, it would have been helpful had the authors provided additional background for or practice with several key concepts (e.g., finite state grammars, tree structure, ergativity) before integrating them into broader discussions, whose thorough understanding at times seems to require more information than what readers can glean from the text alone. The incorporation of a glossary and a more

effective index in future editions would help to rectify this limitation; in the meantime, instructors may find ancillary teaching materials that are available on the companion Web site useful in providing classes with more detail and reinforcement of those concepts that are given less complete treatment in the text.

In sum, this volume would be valuable as recommended reading for a graduate-level introductory linguistics or morphosyntax course. Adoption as a primary course text could also work well if students already have basic knowledge of descriptive linguistics. In addition, given the fresh, approachable style of this book, instructors of undergraduate linguistics courses are likely to find inspiration in its pages as well.

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HONDA, MAYA, & WAYNE O'NEIL. *Thinking Linguistically: A Scientific Approach to Language*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008. Pp. ix, 253. $35.00, paper. ISBN 978–1–4051–0832–4.

An inquiry-oriented view of teaching and understanding science holds that central to scientific practice are the processes of generating questions, designing investigations to answer those questions, making predictions, gathering data, using evidence to propose scientific explanations, and communicating those explanations. *Thinking Linguistically* is a comprehensive textbook, the ongoing efforts of the co-authors' 30-year collaboration in teaching linguistics to students across a spectrum of learning contexts. The volume showcases the inquiry-based approach, which proves to be an effective vehicle for examining the structure of human language and its acquisition within a generative framework.

The book's content is anchored by two basic linguistic phenomena: pluralization and question formation. An extensive array of topics is seamlessly integrated into the discussion concerning how modules of mental grammar interact to derive questions and plural structures across a variety of languages. The introduction provides a concise and informative summary of tenets advanced by Chomsky regarding the knowledge of language, and this is implemented in the textbook's remaining 18 chapters. It is telling that the three objectives elucidated for the book are realistically, if not cautiously, framed, bespeaking the authors' understanding of the complex process of scientific inquiry, particularly in the face of messy linguistic data. The first two goals are stated as "to introduce a partial answer to the question: What is the knowledge of language?" and "to introduce some parts of an answer to the question: On what basis does knowledge of language develop in infants, and in children and adults acquiring an L2?" (p. 8). The current volume might be considered to fall short of these objectives, regardless of the reader's theoretical leanings. Given the book's mission of scientific enterprise, it is difficult not to take the authors to task for invoking innate predisposition (e.g., Universal Grammar [UG] and, by extension, universal parameters) as true explanation for the acquisition of linguistic knowledge. Problematically, this assumption hinges on a loose conceptualization of UG that to date has been neither sufficiently articulated nor empirically grounded to merit such strong claims. It seems unlikely that other scientific disciplines would accept without argument such an a priori pronouncement as foundational precept, but it is perhaps symptomatic of the relative youth of a field like linguistics that such occurrences are so frequent. The third goal, "to promote and engage . . . critical, scientific thinking through the close examination of language" (p. 8), generally succeeds, although it loses some momentum in the final section of the volume, primarily in chapter 15, in which the primary topic is meaning. It is in this chapter that one finds a decidedly more traditional presentation of information with fewer inquiry-oriented points and a predominance of English-based examples.

Following the introduction, the textbook is organized into four sections that guide the various steps of inquiry. Each section is headed with a good-natured yet thought-provoking title such as "Constraints: Why You Can't Say *Wanna* Whenever You Wanna." The chapters themselves are reader centered rather than author centered, with clear-cut diagrams and graphics and accessible text. Whenever data from a new language are introduced into a chapter, a demographic description of that variety is excerpted from *Ethnologue, Languages of the World*. Some of the languages examined include Nicaraguan English, Mandarin Chinese, Kiowa, and Brazilian Portuguese. The authors carefully limit the information flow to just one or two key concepts per chapter, and few chapters exceed 10 pages. Every chapter concludes with (a) a synopsis that reviews the materials presented and looks ahead to how notions emerging from that chapter will be expanded on in subsequent chapters, (b) all relevant terms and

linguistic conventions introduced in a given chapter, and (c) an annotated list of suggested readings. Because the chapters not only make frequent reference to one another, but crucially, also build on each other, it is best to follow the sequence presented by the authors rather than pick and choose specific chapters.

When true to the spirit of the inquiry-based approach, the book is at its best. This is often the case when the discussions of pluralization or question formation reinforce multiple modules or knowledge areas in different facets of the same phenomena. The sections focusing on syntactic structure are straightforward and offer the most current Minimalist Program formulations. However, the authors would do well to consult more closely with phonologists and semanticists who are up to date in their respective subfields. For instance, chapter 2 examines the role of phonology in NP plural structures. Some phonologists and teachers of phonology will be willing to overlook the adoption of the lesser employed North American phonetic symbols instead of the conventional International Phonetic Alphabet, but they will be hard pressed to see the value of an analysis categorizing /h/ in Spanish as a glide on par with the labiovelar and palatal glides, such that /h/ possesses the feature [+ sonorant]. The most riveting and nuanced discussions found in this volume pertain to first and second language acquisition, specifically the comparisons between the two states.

Although this textbook presents certain overarching principles, familiarity with other aspects is simply assumed and, therefore, this volume is best suited for the student who has already received a basic introduction to linguistic theory. If you are a veteran linguist or linguistics teacher, this book will propel you back to what first captivated you about linguistic inquiry. If you are new to the field, this textbook is a delightful laboratory manual for thinking linguistically.

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MCCARTHY, JOHN J. *Doing Optimality Theory: Applying Theory to Data*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008. Pp. xii, 310. $44.95, paper. ISBN 978–1–4051–5136–8.

Since its inception in the early 1990s, Optimality Theory (OT) has revolutionized generative linguistics by dispensing with rules and derivations in favor of constraint interaction to explain linguistic phenomena. Despite its rapid ascension and continuous growth, OT remains impenetrable to the vast majority of nonphonologists and applied linguists due to its intricate modus operandi. A number of books aimed at reducing the steep learning curve involved in mastering OT have appeared, each with its own limitations. Although some have become outdated (a natural consequence of a living framework still under development), others are sketchy introductions to OT or were written without the novice or the faint of heart in mind. This volume (henceforth *DOT*) attempts to fill this gap, targeting an audience that includes beginners and more experienced researchers. Does the book accomplish its goal? How does it compare to other similar books in the field? These questions are addressed in this review.

The book consists of a short preface and six chapters that gradually walk the reader through the different steps involved in doing an OT analysis, ranging from learning about OT and its history through constructing an analysis and subsequently writing a paper for publication. Chapter 1 provides a summary of OT, including its history, the nature of constraints, the architecture of OT, and its analytic techniques via the examination of simple language phenomena. This section prepares the reader for chapter 2, by far the longest and most elaborate section of the book. In this chapter, the author introduces the fundamentals of constructing an OT analysis and, via real language data, presents a variety of OT-related topics such as choosing a suitable linguistic problem to investigate, selecting potential inputs and candidates for evaluation, ranking constraints to arrive at the optimal surface form, and, finally, testing a proposed analysis. Chapter 3 is unique in its endeavor to introduce the inexperienced researcher to the task of writing a clear and persuasive OT analysis. Although this chapter focuses on the types of texts commonly seen in OT papers, the recommendations are easily applicable to other areas of inquiry, as they cover general topics such as how to organize a paper and write it clearly and the responsibilities of good scholarship. The chapter ends with some suggestions for selecting research topics. Chapter 4 deals with the Achilles' heel of the OT enterprise: the development of new universal constraints. Because OT offers only minimal guidance about the nature of these OT constituents, many studies have adopted ad hoc and often language-specific constraints, thus undermining the premise that constraints are universal. The author attempts to address this weakness by proposing a set of principles to restrain

CON, an OT component that regulates the nature of constraints. Chapter 5 addresses one of the consequences of adding new constraints to Universal Grammar: an increase in typological predictions, because a higher number of constraints lead to a higher number of constraint permutations and, in OT terms, to a higher number of possible grammars. Finally, chapter 6 introduces a selection of current research in OT (e.g., language acquisition), and some of the problematic areas that question the adequacy of OT (e.g., a need for derivation).

As is the case with any venture of this magnitude, *DOT* contains some shortcomings. First and foremost, the topics and data covered in the book will give the inaccurate impression that OT is a model for phonological inquiry, contrary to its original ambition of being a linguistic model. Even though there is an attempt to illustrate how OT accounts for syntax-related phenomena (pp. 95–103), other grammar components are simply ignored. Another problem regards the inclusion—in the chapter dedicated to the discussion of current research questions in OT—of questions that can no longer be considered current. For instance, topics such as how to incorporate intralinguistic (sociolinguistic) variation into an optimality-theoretic grammar and how to explain language acquisition have permeated discussions and numerous publications since OT's emergence and, accordingly, are as current as OT itself. Finally, a minor limitation due to its narrow scope, *DOT* does not directly address one of the interests of the general *The Modern Language Journal* readership: foreign or second language acquisition. Language acquisition is an area that has been successfully analyzed in OT and has been influential in the development of the theory. Yet, the subject is allocated a mere two-page subsection in the book.

Despite some of the shortcomings discussed earlier, there is much to admire in this book that clearly accomplishes its main goal: to explain in a step-by-step manner how to do analysis and research in Optimality Theory. By the end of the book, readers will have been exposed to a judicious sampling of the key ideas of the theory and will be well prepared to read papers and possibly write OT analyses on their own. In general, *DOT* is superbly written and organized and, as the first book to provide a systematic and updated how-to guide for novices, it should be a starting point for undergraduate and graduate students or researchers interested in adopting OT as a tool to analyze linguistic phenomena. As such, this is an outstanding, state-of-the-art book written by one of the most prominent names in the conceptualization and dissemination of OT, and it will possibly encourage some of the *The Modern Language Journal* readers to discover what those tableaux and pointing hands are all about. Using OT parlance and assuming its inherently comparative nature, in contrast with existing books in the field, *DOT* satisfies the set of highly ranked constraints (i.e., it is updated, comprehensive, and easy to read), despite incurring less important violations (i.e., absence of language acquisition content and discussion of other grammar components). As the best alternative among other competing candidates, *DOT* is the selected optimal candidate and therefore deserving of a resounding pointing hand.

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MULTILINGUALISM

PAVLENKO, ANETA. (Ed.). *Multilingualism in Post-Soviet Countries*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2008. Pp. 234. $99.95, cloth. ISBN 978–1–84769–087–6.

The first impression of this book is made by a pleasing typeface, nice white paper, and quality binding. The contents provide confirmation: The volume is up to date, well written, skillfully edited, and free of typographical errors. Fourteen authors from 10 countries have combined to give a many-sided view of language use in 8 of the 14 newly independent countries (other than Russia) of the former Soviet Union. These include Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania, Estonia, and three of the five Central Asian republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

The only significant gap in the coverage is Transcaucasia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Pavlenko touches on those three countries, as well as Latvia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, in her excellent introductory essay, which is supplemented by two maps of the area, informative statistical tables, and an extensive bibliography. Unfortunately, the second area map (p. 3) leaves off all of Kyrgyzstan, most of Tajikistan, much of Kazakhstan, and part of Uzbekistan. This failing is only partially redeemed by the country map of Kyrgyzstan (p. 203). One notable omission from the bibliography is Isayev, *National Languages in the USSR: Problems and Solutions* (Moscow: Progress

Publishers, 1977). Although Isayev's point of view is a tendentious, party-line Soviet one, the book is useful—first, because it supplies a great deal of background information and statistics on the languages and, second, because it states the official Soviet ideology for analysis and comparison.

The chapters about the individual languages and countries are well thought out and sensibly structured, with informative photographs and tables. Each begins with a map from the Central Intelligence Agency map library and an introduction that contains a brief history of the titular nationality, the language, and the country. Each ends with a substantial bibliography of both printed and electronic sources. Considerable attention is paid to theoretical issues in sociolinguistics and language management, but always on the basis of facts adduced in the chapter.

Starting in the 18th century, the language policy of the Russian Empire in the areas that it controlled was very simple: Russification. This policy not only prevented the emergence of new standard languages, but it seriously retarded the development of existing languages such as Ukrainian and Lithuanian. For various periods of time in the 19th and early 20th centuries, printing anything in those languages other than folklore and some *belles lettres* was prohibited. The policy of the Soviet Union was considerably more complex and less confrontational. The Soviet powers created new written languages for those nations that did not already have them, and it tolerated the continuance of well-developed standard languages such as Georgian and Armenian. There was, however, great pressure to attain fluency in Russian, which was necessary for political, economic, and social advancement. Russian was made almost the only proper source of new words, and the Cyrillic alphabet was forced on a number of languages that previously had been written in some other script. Moldavian (alias Romanian) and Uzbek are two examples.

Although serious direct resistance to the onslaught of Russian during the Soviet period was not possible (and some people paid with their lives for trying), some nations did manage to keep their language reasonably healthy. The results of this struggle are reflected in the contemporary situation of the various languages. Some, such as Lithuanian, Georgian, and Armenian, have become the language of national discourse for their respective states. A second group, among which is Ukrainian, has greatly expanded its role. Belarusian is at the other end of the continuum, and it is steadily losing ground to Russian in most spheres of life. For example, laws are almost exclusively issued in Russian. Between 1997 and 2000, only 9 out of 450 laws were approved in Belarusian (p. 50). In the 1999 census, 73.7% of the population claimed Belarusian as their native language, with only 24.1% claiming Russian, but when asked which language was usually spoken at home, 62.8% named Russian compared to only 36.7% for Belarusian (p. 45). A 1999 survey concerning the "language predominately used in everyday communication" found more than eight times as many citing Russian (57% to 7%; p. 45). These facts do not bode well for the future of Belarusian.

The presence of large numbers of people for whom the native or everyday language is Russian clearly makes the consolidation of the titular language as the truly national language much more difficult. This is true for Ukrainian (as well as Belarusian), for which 30% of the population (most densely clustered in the east of the country) claimed Russian as their native language, but Ukrainian has nevertheless made great progress in expanding its use in most spheres, including government, education, business, the media, and many more.

The relative closeness of Belarusian and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Ukrainian to Russian produces a third competitor to the language choice: a mixed variety that combines Belarusian and Russian (called Trasianka) or Ukrainian and Russian (Surzhyk). These mixes are looked down on by almost everybody, but they are widespread.

Each of the new states has rich material for persons interested in sociolinguistics, language management, language conflict, mixed languages, language codification, and numerous other topics. This book is highly recommended.

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SIMPSON, JANE, & GILLIAN WIGGLESWORTH. (Eds.). *Children's Language and Multilingualism: Indigenous Language Use at Home and School*. New York: Continuum, 2008. Pp. xxi, 311. $49.95, paper. ISBN 978–08264–9517–4.

In local and global terms, this book illustrates the complexity, diversity, and variability of how human beings use language. It focuses on language use inside and outside school by Aboriginal children in northern Australia, and it addresses the larger contexts of multilingualism that

can be found in "indigenous communities in countries which have been colonized" throughout the world (back cover notes). In her cogent foreword, Shirley Brice Heath suggests that this edited volume is "a seminal work that pulls together case studies that advance our understanding of theories of language-learning and research methods for language socialisation research" (p. ix).

The editors divide the 13 chapters of the book into four parts to "tread a path" through the "complex linguistic environment" that "children in many Indigenous communities encounter on a daily basis and must negotiate" (p. 6). Each chapter is designed to present a case study, grounded in a broader international framework that deals with a particular aspect of children learning to talk and communicate in their home language, or languages, and their experiences of entering the school system with its standardized practices of Australian English. Drawing on an impressive body of data from the Aboriginal Child Language Acquisition Project in northern Australia, the four chapters in the first section focus on the early development of language and language-related activities at home. Wigglesworth and Simpson open with a crucial point: the need to extend our understanding of how children grow up in multilingual societies. Readers familiar with research on classroom interaction among Native American children will find much of interest in Moses and Yallop's chapter on Aboriginal practices of using questions. Disbray's chapter on storytelling styles examines the rich language practices of Aboriginal adults and children as they interact in narrating a picture book using a local English-based Creole. For readers interested in methodological considerations, Disbray provides a practical discussion of her coding system and other facets of data analysis. The chapter by Eickelkamp extends the scope of narrative to offer a fascinating account of the social meaning of traditional sand storytelling among Aboriginal children.

The second section focuses on language and learning in the classroom context. Reeders gives a thought-provoking look at how members of the Yolngu group of the Northern Territory collaboratively construct knowledge through traditional teaching interaction. Occupying a deservedly central place in the book, chapter 6 by Moses and Wigglesworth masterfully critiques the dysfunctional discourse of an ideologically English-only classroom in the Northern Territory. Poignantly capturing the inability of many mainstream teachers to recognize and appreciate the linguistic and cognitive abilities of their indigenous students, this chapter would be an excellent addition to the reading list of teacher preparation courses dealing with indigenous and heritage language education. Kral and Ellis's chapter validates local literacies, showing the complex ways in which literacy has entered the everyday social and cultural practices of a remote Aboriginal community in Australia's Western Desert.

The third section is devoted to assessment. Researchers and teachers working with indigenous children and heritage languages will find stimulating presentations of practical tools and strategies with clear explanations of technical terms as well as theoretical considerations (e.g., test bias) in the chapters on assessing the receptive language skills (Jones and Nangari), discourse sampling in speech pathology assessments (Gould), and the interface of assessment with health issues such as hearing loss (Galloway). The final section deals with language landscapes, language shift, and multilingualism. McConvell's ambitious chapter on language mixing and language shift in indigenous Australia covers much ground in its rapid-fire discussions of language ecology, hybridization, and ideology. This chapter is notably the only sustained attempt in the book to give a postcolonial historical context for current language practices, policies, and ideologies. The final two chapters provide interesting case studies (albeit relying on conventional sociolinguistic approaches) demonstrating the complexity and vibrancy of language use across generations in the Northern Territory, despite pressure toward language loss. O'Shannessy examines children's use of their traditional heritage language, Warlpiri, and an emerging mixed language, referred to by speakers as Light Warlpiri. Illustrating the complexities surrounding multilingualism and language contact in the intergenerational interaction in another Aboriginal community, Meakins concludes by reiterating the sobering fact that most of Australia's original 250 Aboriginal languages are no longer spoken or highly endangered. However, she also offers a validation of language use in the multilingual contexts of the Northern Territory as "a systematic and highly skilled enterprise" (p. 300) that is at the center of emergent postcolonial practices of identity and language in local contexts as well as a part of larger pan-Aboriginal formations.

It may be, as Heath states, that this "provocative volume will inspire not only new research but also the refinement of current theories of language, learning and culture across a range of human sciences" (p. xiii). However, the

understanding of colonization in these multilingual contexts remains largely undertheorized and underexplained. This book could have benefited from a more developed articulation of the traces and consequences of colonization as well as the ongoing coloniality that shapes practices of language and education in Northern Australia. What has been the role of missionary linguists, a key force in other colonial and postcolonial situations throughout the world? This volume largely neglects an important linguistic and educational dimension of complexity surrounding the representation of indigenous language practices. In reading the examples of Aboriginal discourse, I found no extended discussion of the orthographic conventions in linguists' representations of nonstandard language practices, only several scattered comments and footnotes (see pp. 76 and 285). One is left wondering about complex issues of language invention and identity attached to the naming and codification of unwritten indigenous language practices into supposedly discrete varieties. Western schooling and language education, insofar as they assume literacy, always involve some degree of codification and standardization with the attendant decisions, exclusions, and conflicts surrounding which forms, or whose forms, will become the "x language" of "x community." Language ideology, a useful concept in anthropological research, is only mentioned in passing (McConvell). How has the linguistic landscape been divided up differently by indigenous peoples and by the European colonizers according to the complex interplay between language ideologies and the performance of context-contingent identities? This volume's genuinely inspiring celebration of multilingual complexity, diversity, and variability seems to always implicitly and but only occasionally explicitly contest the racism and devaluation directed personally and/or institutionally against indigenous peoples. The reader is left to piece together a picture of the devaluing of indigenous language practices in the larger Australian society. It would have been helpful to have a chapter to tackle head-on the complexities of language, education, and racism in northern Australia. In the fourth section, the current limitations of sociolinguistic analysis point to the need for more complex conceptual tools and more critical language ecological approaches to better understand the postcolonial complexity of life, language, and education in the indigenous communities and beyond.

The editors and publisher of this remarkable volume deserve much credit for providing readers with a model of organization and clarity. Each chapter begins with a well-chosen title, a reader-friendly chapter outline (section headings and corresponding page numbers), followed by a well-written chapter abstract. Each chapter offers focused sections with clearly defined terms that allow even a nonspecialist reader to understand, as well as a concise, up-to-date, and relevant list of references. The abundant qualitative and quantitative data and analysis are presented in easily accessible formats. Readers are guided through the rich complexity of discourse inside and outside the classroom by way of clearly numbered examples set apart from surrounding text by shaded boxes with standard English translations of Aboriginal speech and with grammatical glosses, where needed. Several illustrations effectively present visual data. Well-constructed tables and figures present and summarize quantitative data. Several maps provide readers, particularly those who may be unfamiliar with Australia and its Northern Territory, with the geographical location of the various Aboriginal communities discussed in the book. Multiple indexes (author, language, place, and general) further enhance the user-oriented feel. To complete the package, the editors' introduction and a foreword by a renowned figure in the field offer readers a stimulating and passionate overview of this volume's scope and importance. This book has got it all.

This volume makes valuable contributions to theory and practice in language socialization research and language education in indigenous communities. It also opens the way in future volumes for a multiplicity of critical, integrative, multilingual, and ecological perspectives that place complexity, diversity, and variability at the core of theory and practice concerning language education.

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PORTUGUESE

SIMÕES, ANTÔNIO ROBERTO MONTEIRO. *Pois não: Brazilian Portuguese Course for Spanish Speakers, with Basic Reference Grammar*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008. Pp. xxiv, 571. $39.95, paper. ISBN 978–0–292–71781–7. Audio-Video CD, free to adopters.

Since 2003, there have been three symposia in Brazil and the United States on teaching

Portuguese to Spanish speakers (PSS), yielding two edited collections of scholarly essays (edited by Simões, Carvalho, and Wiedemann and by Scaramucci and Wiedemann), with a third in preparation. This extent and complexity of interest in teaching PSS speaks to a common issue confronting teachers of Portuguese: Nearly all have increasing numbers of students with substantial Spanish proficiency. These Spanish speakers may be of three types, described by Johnson: native speakers, bilingual heritage Spanish speakers with varying degrees of proficiency, and native English speakers who are advanced Spanish language learners. A growing number of postsecondary Portuguese programs offer a separate course or course sequence for beginning students who speak Spanish. Thus, for some time there has been demand for a beginning Portuguese textbook, whether primary or supplemental, that targets these learners.

Simões's *Pois não* seeks to address this need. It is not the author's first PSS textbook, however. The University of Texas Press published Simões's *Com licença!: Brazilian Portuguese for Spanish Speakers* in 1992. The textbook reviewed here is a revision of this first effort, and the changes are extensive enough to warrant a new title, *Pois não* "of course," as if to answer the earlier title. After an introductory chapter, *Pois não* contains nine thematically oriented units: "University"; "Restaurants and Night Life"; "Family"; "Imagination"; "Body, Gesture, and Movement"; "Ethnic History and Sociology"; Geography"; "Child-Rearing"; and "Sports, Holidays, and Pastimes." Although the unit structure varies, each begins with an introductory dialogue or text, followed by extensive pronunciation and grammar presentation and practice, and winds up with readings, popular songs, and communicative exercises. Each unit has a vocabulary list at the end, the domain of which is guided by the unit's theme. The book has 12 appendixes, making up the "Basic Reference Grammar" of the subtitle. There are also a glossary and a general index. A CD accompanies the text, containing audio and video files with dialogues and pronunciation demonstrations and exercises from the text.

The first textbook was explicit about a philosophical dilemma in pedagogy: Whereas the trend since the 1980s has been to privilege meaning-based, communicative strategies in materials and in the classroom, structural instruction is always necessary. Indeed, many textbooks and teachers espouse a communicative approach and yet succumb to the demands of presenting and practicing verb forms and vocabulary. Simões asserts the need for structural and analytical approaches in "A Note to the Teacher" prefacing *Com licença!* In addition to linguistic presentation, the earlier textbook contained structural exercises, completed dialogues for practice, listening practice in the form of dictation and sound identification, and reading comprehension. The door was opened to communicative practice in the "Carry On" section near the end of each unit, made up usually of incomplete dialogues for personalized adaptation and "Situations" for role-plays. The structural exercises were primarily fill-in-the-blanks, transformations, and translations from Spanish. In *Pois não*, the structural/communicative tension is suppressed in the preface, yet the content shows no appreciable shift in the direction of providing meaning-based, communicative exercises. The amount of linguistic presentation is greater and there are more exercises, but little has changed in the conception of the text already present in *Com licença!*

Given that the structural approach treated with some ambivalence in the 1992 text is affirmed in the 2008 book, *Pois não* does meet one of the stated goals and its implicit consequence: "This book serves as a basic reference guide, for [PSS students]; it is an intensive course contrasting Portuguese and Spanish" (p. xix). *Pois não* begins with a lengthy (34-page) introduction, whose purpose is to lay out the common contrastive differences between Spanish and Portuguese. (The corresponding section in *Com licença!* was 14 pages.) Included are treatments of cognates and false cognates, other lexical interference in usage, morphosyntactic comparisons, and comparisons of the phonetic, phonological, and orthographic systems. Contrastive analysis of the sound system in technical terms is especially prevalent in this chapter. One wonders how to use all of this information in a beginning class without turning it into an extensive unit in contrastive Portuguese and Spanish linguistics. Yet it is a positive feature of this book that it can be used by teachers and learners in classes at all levels, depending on the selection of materials. *Pois não* can be used for different purposes as well: The user—"depending on his or her needs—can either focus on the drills . . . , concentrate on both the explanations and the drills, or use the book as a reference grammar, that is to say for consultation only" (p. xxi).

The units also contain a moderate amount of linguistic information—some of which is clearly set off for advanced learners—and they contain the practice elements listed earlier. Although there is an expansion and, in some cases, an improvement in the exercises over the 1992 textbook, there is still inconsistent correlation of the exercise content with the theme of the unit and its vocabulary. Moreover, the level of some of the

readings, dialogues, and popular songs is too complex for beginning students, even if they are PSS learners. *Pois não* has 105 pages of appendixes, which cover not only grammar but phonetics and alphabet, models for correspondence, rubrics, and a sample exam. The appendixes represent an enlargement of scope and content over the 44 corresponding pages in *Com licença!*, which were taken up largely with verb tables. This expansion is one of the major differences between *Pois não* and its predecessor, perhaps in recognition of its utility as both a supplemental text and reference work.

The question remains as to how well *Pois não* meets its other stated goal of teaching "the equivalent of one year of college Portuguese in one semester" to PSS learners (p. xix). The answer is that the textbook can be useful either as a primary text or as a supplementary text, but only with massive intervention on the part of the instructor in three ways: (a) structuring the existing and providing additional communicative exercises, for both inside and outside of the classroom; (b) excerpting material from the book that is appropriate to the level of the students; and (c) excerpting material that is appropriate to the three types of PSS learners. Still, *Pois não* has a wealth of linguistic information and structural practice for PSS that is available nowhere else, and, with care, it can be profitably used either for teaching or for reference. Finally, Simões and the University of Texas Press are to be complimented on keeping the price affordable.

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WASSERMAN, BONNIE S. *Cinema for Portuguese Conversation*. Newburyport, MA: Focus, 2009. Pp. xii, 236. $46.95, paper. ISBN 978–1–58510–346–1.

Currently, there are practically no foreign language or literature departments of medium to large size that do not include film courses as part of their regular curriculum. These courses may be about a national or a regional cinema, may be about specific directors (i.e., Luis Buñuel, Emilio Fernández, Pedro Almodóvar), or may be conceived along thematic lines; the fact is that they are no longer novel or anomalous. There are obvious academic reasons behind this development, mainly the impact of cultural studies on foreign language departments, at a time when a significant portion of the written culture occurs electronically worldwide. However, there is also an undeniable economic factor that may help to explain it. Film courses tend to be very popular among students. They consistently attract larger enrollments than their literary counterparts, displaying waiting lists that many instructors offering nonrequired courses with a more traditional approach to literature would wish for their own. Conversation courses are now taking advantage of the pedagogic potential of the audiovisual media and experimenting beyond the reading-based format. Films only offer a wide array of issues and themes available for in-class discussion and debate—not unlike the regular conversation classes—but they also add other elements: Students can communicate their critical views and opinions about themes as much as about the acting, the film's interplay with other arts, the quality of the script and the dialogues, the film adaptation of literary or historical works, and the use of photography, music, and the like. If anything, the use of films has enhanced the scope of conversation classes and, hence, the need to use stimulating textbooks that connect the viewing and analysis of films with the instruction of the target language.

Cinema for Portuguese Conversation is a good example of such a textbook. It is well written and well organized. The book is part of a series published by Focus that addresses the aforementioned need of linking film with foreign language learning to adapt it to the format of a conversation class. It builds on the example set by its successful predecessor, *Cinema for Spanish Conversation*, shifting the predominant geocultural focus of that volume toward a theme-based organization but without discarding completely a geographical coverage. *Cinema for Portuguese Conversation* does a splendid job in introducing students to the rich tradition of Brazilian and Portuguese cinema. Two of the thematic units explore specific tropes of Brazilian literature and culture: the *sertão*, with its rich connections to a local literary tradition, and film adaptations of the Orpheus myth, already present in the first international success of the Brazilian film *Orfeu negro*, directed by Marcel Camus in the late 1950s. Two other thematic units explore wide social issues, such as "Urban Violence," a phenomenon that plagues many cities in the region as a byproduct of social and economic inequalities, and "Political Transitions," which mostly refer to postdictatorial periods common to Brazil and Portugal as well as lusophone Africa. The third thematic unit, titled "Women," explores gender roles and women's issues. On this topic, it would have been relevant to have introduced more examples of films by female directors—the only one is a Portuguese film directed by the actress and director Maria de Medeiros. In any case, the

contextual clues for the films chosen to represent this category, *Dona Flor e seus dois maridos*, based on the novel by Jorge Amado, and *Eu, tu, eles* do not focus exclusively on gender or women's issues but they also draw attention to the significant presence of regional culture, which serves as a rich background to both films.

Small informative capsules about history, society, and culture throughout the lusophone world further help to contextualize the films. This is a helpful feature of the book, which also comes with drills and exercises that relate language learning with the linguistic comprehension of dialogues and narrations. The book includes a carefully selected list of terms and expressions to improve the knowledge of colloquial language and other common expressions of the different dialects of Portuguese. Just as in the case of *Cinema for Spanish Conversation*, the student who will benefit the most from this book should already have an intermediate to advanced level of proficiency in the Portuguese language. The book will become the standard of Portuguese conversation classes interested in using film as a learning tool.

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SIGN LANGUAGE

BAKER, ANNE, & BENCIE WOLL. (Eds.). *Sign Language Acquisition*. Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2008. Pp. xi, 167. $120.00, cloth. ISBN 978–90–272–2244–2.

Research on natural sign languages is an area of linguistics that has grown exponentially in the years since the publication of William Stokoe's landmark work *Sign Language Structures* (Stokoe, 1993 [1960]). In the past half century, a field that was virtually nonexistent has expanded to include outstanding research not only in the theoretical linguistics of natural sign languages but also in the psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, politics, and policy studies related to sign languages, the pedagogy of sign languages, and a plethora of other areas. One area that has been of considerable concern to many applied linguists has been the acquisition of sign language and how such acquisition in both deaf and hearing infants is similar to and different from that of spoken language. The volume under review is among the more recent works addressing this important topic.

For those readers not familiar with the study of sign languages, a clarification may be useful here. Natural sign languages of the sort addressed in this volume and in linguistics research generally are those that have emerged in Deaf communities and that function as the vernacular languages of those communities. They are not based on or related to the surrounding spoken language(s) in any way but constitute fully functional and distinct languages in their own right. Sign languages are also often related to other sign languages, typically as a result of educational efforts in which missionaries or others have transplanted a sign language from one context to another. Thus, for instance, American Sign Language and British Sign Language, although both used in English-speaking countries, are unrelated, whereas American Sign Language and French Sign Language are closely related. Natural sign languages are thus different from both the contact sign languages typically used in communication between Deaf and hearing people and from the artificially created manual sign codes designed to represent specific spoken languages in a manual and gestural format.

A product of the Intersign Network, financed by the European Science Foundation, *Sign Language Acquisition* contains a total of six papers drawn from a considerably larger set that were presented in four different workshops in 1998 and 1999. As the editors note, these workshops dealt with "sign language research dealing with lexical databases, phonology, morphosyntax (text corpora and tagging) and acquisition" (p. viii). The chapters in the present volume were published in the journal *Sign Language & Linguistics* in 2005. As the editors themselves note, the chapters in the present volume "have been nominally edited for re-publication in this volume" (p. vii). This was a somewhat strange decision, given that the field of sign language linguistics is not large and one might suspect that scholars interested in the topic would already be familiar with the chapters in this new volume.

Although the rationale for the republication of the 2005 papers eludes me, the papers themselves are an interesting and worthwhile collection. The papers address issues in a number of different sign languages—including American Sign Language, Australian Sign Language, British Sign Language, Dutch Sign Language, Finnish Sign Language, and German Sign Language—but their real, shared concern is methodology, specifically on methodological issues and challenges related to collecting, transcribing, and analyzing child language data.

The first chapter, "Methods and Procedures in Sign Language Acquisition Studies," co-authored by Baker, van den Bogaerde, and Woll, provides an outstanding and extremely detailed overview of issues of research design broadly understood in the field. Haug's chapter, "Review of Sign Language Assessment Instruments," provides a solid and competent analysis of existing sign language assessment instruments. Takkinen's chapter discusses the use of the Hamburg Notation System for Sign Languages (HamNoSys), a system for sign language notation created at the Zentrum für Deutsche Gebärdensprache und Kommunikation Gehörloser at the University of Hamburg, for transcribing children's signing. Morgan's chapter, "Transcription of Child Sign Language: A Focus on Narrative," which follows Takkinen's chapter, further explores the challenges and difficulties in analyzing child sign language, especially with respect to the process of transcription. The next chapter, co-authored by Smith and Sutton-Spence, entitled "Adult–Child Interaction in a BSL Nursery: Getting Their Attention!," reports on a study of the attention-getting strategies of Deaf adults and deaf children in a nursery school setting run by the School of Education at Leeds University. (There is a common practice in writing about deafness of distinguishing between *Deaf*, which refers to membership in the Deaf cultural community [in American Sign Language, indicated by the sign DEAF–WORLD] and *deaf*, which refers only to the condition of audiological deafness. The intent here is to indicate, as is done in the chapter under discussion, that the deaf children have not yet been socialized into the DEAF–WORLD, whereas the Deaf adults have been.) This study moves us beyond a focus merely on child behavior, to one that addresses issues of interaction. It is a fascinating study, and one that also moves us past the articulated goal of the book (i.e., methodology) to the actual outcomes of a well-designed and well-conducted study. Finally, the book ends with a chapter by van den Bogaerde and Baker on "Code-Mixing in Mother–Child Interaction in Deaf Families." As was the case with the previous chapter, this chapter addresses interaction rather than simply child behavior.

As I have already indicated, although I am puzzled by the need for the republication of these papers, I nevertheless believe the collection to be a valuable and worthwhile one.

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SPANISH

ALONSO REYES, ROSARIO, ALEJANDRO CASTAÑEDA CASTRO, PABLO MARTÍNEZ GILA, LOURDES MIQUEL LÓPEZ, JENARO ORTEGA OLIVARES, & JOSÉ PLÁCIDO RUIZ CAMPILLO. *Gramática básica del estudiante de español*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2008. Pp. 302. $59.00, paper. ISBN 978–0131–59870–6.

Written entirely in Spanish, this impressive textbook (henceforth *GBEE*) is the North American edition of an original 2005 version published in Barcelona by Difusión, as a collaboration by six practicing teachers of Spanish for foreigners in Granada, Barcelona, and Istanbul. *GBEE* announces itself as intended for "beginning- and intermediate-level students" (p. 10, reviewer's translation), although the U.S. publisher promotes it (back cover) as for second- or third-year grammar students, a supplementary class resource, or as a reference for advanced learners.

GBEE's attractive presentation includes a large-page format, clever drawings and balloon dialogues, supporting realia, and use of color to enhance pedagogy. It focuses exclusively on grammar, always grounded in meaningful context, with real-world content and examples, imaginatively and effectively presented in compact, well-crafted portions, supported by varied exercises. Its seven chapters are meticulously subdivided into topical units, so that the table of contents is five small-print pages long, rivaling in useful detail the eight-page ending index. There is also an appendix on verb conjugation and an answer key.

GBEE is a pleasure to look at and to work through, thanks to its coherent, effective presentation of information and clever examples and exercises, which alternate among matching/multiple-choice, correct/revise, and completion/fill-in-blank types. The fact that answers to all exercises are provided in the key makes this text suitable for independent study (or for individual grammar supplementation in a literature, culture, or conversation course), but some classroom teachers will regret the absence of nonkeyed exercises suitable for graded homework.

GBEE's concise grammar explanations employ technical terminology where it clarifies useful distinctions (e.g., *complemento directo/indirecto, sílaba tónica/átona, determinante vs. adjetivo*), but the authors keep it to a minimum. They are linguistically informed in recognizing conjugational subregu-

larities (in which many verbs follow a marked subregular pattern; e.g., diphthongization, velar augmentation), alongside a few irregular cases, and in their discussion of the implicit (abstract) subjects of infinitives. *GBEE* avoids many simplistic distortions typical of similar texts (such as setting up a subjunctive-taking class of verbs of emotion that turns out to include such nonemotive expressions as *ser lógico/natural/normal*, in favor of a more adequate category of evaluative expressions), and it often goes the extra mile, as in reminding the reader that "*los números cardinales* (dos, tres . . .) *se ponen después de* otros, otras*, no antes: Tengo otros dos trabajos para ti*" (p. 54).

Inevitably, *GBEE* also has weaknesses, the largest one (for many in its current North American target audience) being its strong Peninsular bias—for example, frequent use of *vosotros* examples, the complication of the past-tense aspectual distinction by the inclusion of a third option, creating a three-way distinction between present perfect (recent relevant past) versus preterite (remote past) versus imperfect (unfinished past) (p. 134). Furthermore, although *GBEE* preaches standard *lo(s)* usage for third-person masculine personal direct object pronouns (*a Carlos lo vi ayer*; *a tus padres no los conozco*; p. 76ff.), in some cases it falls confusingly into a northern peninsular *leísta* practice: *Voy a ir a verles* (p. 169). Regrettably, there is no teacher- or student-directed supplementation on the publisher's Web site (http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/product/Gramtica-bsica-del-estudiante-de-espaol/9780131598706.page). Additionally, just as *GBEE* takes the trouble to include an explicit recognition of Spanish American pronunciation of [θ] as [s] in *ce*, *ci* (p. 244), the next North American edition would do well to make additional adaptations to American practice and preferences.

Other drawbacks of this textbook are its lack of creative, open-ended exercises and the omission of some topics often included in such a review—for example, temporal expressions with (*desde*) *hace/hacía* (*Toco el piano desde hace diez años*); clausal comparison of inequality (*más del que ven, menos de lo que piensas*); and neuter *lo* constructions (adverbial: *Les sorprende lo moderna que es tu casa* and pronominal: *Lamentamos lo de anoche*). *GBEE* perpetuates an insufficient differentiation of the uses of the *se* clitic, which it uniformly sees as a case of *el sujeto realiza la acción sobre sí mismo* "the subject acts upon itself," even in scenarios such as *Me desperté a las seis,* where the subject is unconscious, or where it is more experiencer than actor, as in *Nos sentíamos mal después de comer tantos mariscos*, failing to recognize a detransitivizing function of *se* that allows an otherwise transitive verb (*Luego desperté a mi hermana*; *Sentíamos un aire frío.*) to be used without a direct object. Additionally, perhaps because *GBEE* was not prepared specifically for an English-speaking audience, there is insufficient attention paid to how the ubiquitous English passive gets rendered in Spanish as a *ser–* or *se–* passive or as (active) impersonal *se*.

In general, *GBEE* succeeds because it treats typical review grammar topics concisely and accurately, with an attractive, even entertaining, presentation, and because its many exercises help carry principle into practice. Against such real advantages, the potential adaptor must balance the possible negatives (depending on one's objectives and methods) of Peninsular bias and the lack of unkeyed exercises.

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DE PRADA, MARISA, MONTSERRAT BOVET, & PILAR MARCÉ. *Entorno empresarial: Curso de español para extranjeros. Nivel B2*. Madrid, Spain: Edelsa, 2008. Pp. 152. $33.59, paper. ISBN 978–84–7711–468–0. *Textos complementarios y claves*. $4.68, paper. ISBN 978–84–7711–469–7.

This Business Spanish textbook from Spain is intended for students at the European Union's B2 or high-intermediate level. Composed of eight full units plus four shorter ones, the program addresses topics of company structure, human resources, marketing and advertising, sales, import–export, banking, stock market, and taxes. Each unit is divided into eight sections, consisting of (a) concept presentation, (b) vocabulary with taped and transcribed dialogue, (c) locutions, (d) grammar, (e) topical workshop, (f) company profile and Web site analysis, (g) research project and presentation, and (h) taped interview. Four how-to mini-units focus on managing meetings, presentations, negotiations, and cultural differences. An accompanying booklet (separate purchase) includes transcripts of oral texts, answer keys, and eight supplementary cloze readings of authentic-text adaptations.

Whether *Entorno empresarial* is intended as an ancillary or standalone program is unclear, given that it contains no user preface or pedagogical introduction; however, for the reasons highlighted here, its use in the U.S. Business Spanish

classroom would clearly be as supplementary material to a more comprehensive textbook program. The publisher's Web site describes the book's target user as one seeking "to learn the language of companies and the commercial, investment and economic operations of the Spanish-speaking world" and "to become acquainted with the world of negotiations" and "keys to success in Spain and Latin America." It should be noted, however, that aside from occasional references to Argentina and a curious one-line mention of Mexico in a language exercise (one sure to perpetuate a common stereotype), the focus of this program is exclusively Peninsular.

As a resource in the Business Spanish classroom, *Entorno empresarial* boasts some strengths, such as the inclusion of sections on discourse features and idiomatic expressions, artifact and realia study, and some excellent research scaffolding and group interaction tasks. Of particular note is the *Acción oral* section, which guides students to conduct simple task-based research in preparation for a group project and final presentation, such as creating advertising or revamping a product. The featured company profiles and Web site analysis in the section *Hoy es noticia* are captivating and relevant, and the end-of-unit oral *Entrevistas*, excerpted from news media, avail users of the voices of corporate leaders.

The authentic texts of the above sections are especially rich in possibilities for excavation of language and business content while engaging learners in critical, creative thought. Unfortunately, however, *Entorno empresarial* does not tend to foster either, as its interactive component is far outweighed by a frustrating preponderance of mechanical exercises. Indeed, the major weakness of the book is a striking lack of learner-centeredness in task design. Apart from a few superb exceptions, the program's pedagogical apparatus generally abandons students at the edge of a learning experience. An example is a task in which students are directed to devise an employee motivation program for a competitive distribution company. Rather than foster critical thought and creative group interaction, the task is thwarted by forcing choice from a fixed set of employee motivation strategies.

Entorno empresarial's business concept presentation, albeit spotty in quality, is overall quite adequate as a cursory treatment of the targeted business themes. In terms of language development, however, it never seems to find its rhythm, combining authentic texts and realia with scripted dialogue and noncontextualized drills that essentially throw a glance without seeking to embed. With the exception of some of the tasks in the sections outlined earlier, practice is rigidly controlled and is gridded in a one-right-answer design (fortunately, there is an answer key for separate purchase), consisting primarily of fill-in-blanks, matching, true–false, multiple choice, and categorizing/classifying. Oddly, the book does not seem to find its intermediate-level user, either: Densely worded task instructions juxtapose sharply and constantly with easy task items, such as choosing between *hasta luego* and *desde luego* in discourse.

In terms of language development, it is difficult to identify the authors' goals for grammar and vocabulary. From the chapter opener that throws students into concept definition to the *Vocabulario* that presents 15–20 isolated terms for classification or insertion into blanks, students may have difficulty discerning exactly what constitutes unit vocabulary and, moreover, how it might be transferred and personalized in different contexts. One finds only sporadic reentry of vocabulary across units and must conclude that such reappearances are accidental. Indeed, had the authors chosen to embed discrete business terms into a more flexible corpus of high-use business vocabulary, lexical recycling might have been facilitated. In contrast, *Gramática: Recuerde* sections are quite aptly named: Grammar points are so briefly explicated that students will have to trust their memory to perform even the mechanical exercises provided. The treatment of past tenses, for example, merely reminds that these tenses exist via one-liners and fill-in-blank drills—probably not enough to satisfy most U.S. teachers and intermediate-level students seeking to develop past-time narration skills in a business context. Yet, the authors have made excellent decisions in the selection of grammar points to address, including but going beyond the pat *ser–estar* and subjunctive–indicative dichotomies, for example, to tackle prepositions and the grammar of indirect discourse. Another welcome feature is the focus on locutions and discourse gambits even though, again, the absence of good pedagogical structure and opportunity for student engagement in sustained discourse tends to lessen the impact of these presentations.

Four mini-units that end the book display a more project-based structure. The last of these, a six-page treatment of *Diferencias culturales*, may promote more stereotypes than it seeks to eliminate, and its appearance as a capsule end piece strikes one as an odd way to approach culture as the essential context and content of a business language course. The other three mini-units, however, are quite adept at dealing with

the how-to skills that are not only indispensable for the business world but for the classroom and for success in general. Indeed, these three lessons are perhaps the highlight of the book.

Although *Entorno empresarial* lacks the breadth and depth of language and culture engagement that most U.S. educators would desire in a Business Spanish textbook, its assets make it a desirable companion resource for enhancing understanding of business in Spain.

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CALL FOR 2012 MONOGRAPH PROPOSALS: NEW, EXTENDED DEADLINE

The Modern Language Journal
Monograph/Focus Volume Series
Guidelines for Prospective Monograph Authors

The following guidelines should be used by authors submitting proposals for the 2012 *MLJ* monograph. The *Monograph* (to be under 400 manuscript pages in length) may treat any topic related to second language learning and teaching, that is, within the scope of the *MLJ*. Both theoretical topics and extended research studies are welcome. Preference will be given to topics concerning languages other than English, although work in ESL and EFL will be considered if it has implications for teaching other languages as well.

Monograph proposals should include the following:

1. In a detailed statement of purpose (5–7 pages double spaced, 12 pt. font), include the following:
   - The objective of the proposed monograph and an explanation of the unique and significant contribution it makes to the field of second language acquisition or foreign language pedagogy.
   - The language(s) addressed or illustrated and, if applicable, additional languages to which the work would offer insights.
   - A comparison/contrast with monographs that have covered the same or similar topics, and an explanation of what sets your monograph apart from them.
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