Book Reviews


“On 4 November 1995 Kasabe existed; on 5 November it did not.” This brief obituary in David Crystal’s book (p. 1) does not refer to a creature. It refers to an African language, known as Luo, that had been spoken in Cameroon; on the day in question, Bogon, the last speaker of Kasabe, died, taking his language with him. According to Crystal, half of the world’s current languages are in danger of dying, and the situation is so grave that an international and interdisciplinary effort must be mounted to rescue them. Crystal has written this book to alert us to the peril and to suggest ways in which our linguistic diversity might be maintained.

Crystal’s book was written subsequent to UNESCO’s establishment of the Endangered Languages Project, as linguists were beginning to understand the degree to which the future of the world’s 6000+ languages was imperiled. It is written in the clear, engaging style that characterizes David Crystal’s other work, while at the same time conveying a sense of urgency. The author makes the case that, although there is an ample historical record to show that some languages inevitably die out, global forces now pose threats on an unprecedented scale. This concise book contains five revelatory chapters, each of which addresses a central question: What is language death? Why should we care? Why do languages die? Where do we begin? What can be done?

Language death occurs when the last speaker of a language dies. In almost all cases, when a language dies there is no chance of resuscitation. Among the rare cases of language revivification that Crystal notes is that of Kaurna, an Aboriginal language of South Australia; in this instance, a highly motivated community was able to rely upon copious written records to bring back a limited form of a language that had been extinct for a hundred years. Another language that comes to mind is Modern Hebrew. But as the author points out, Hebrew was never really extinct: there has been a great deal of linguistic continuity in Hebrew from classical to modern times, both in its written form and in the speech of the European vernacular varieties (p. 127).

Building on previous attempts to create a taxonomy of language risk, Crystal introduces a classification system that allows the researcher to place languages on a language death continuum (p. 21). Languages that are spoken by a population that is socially and economically disadvantaged and under pressure to adopt a majority language may begin to have fewer new child speakers and become “potentially endangered.” When there are no child speakers of a language and the only speakers who know the language well are young adults, the language is “endangered.” If the youngest proficient speakers are over the age of 50 (it is
not clear why this cutoff point is chosen), the language is classified as “seriously endangered.” When only a few, mostly quite old, speakers remain, the language is “moribund.” Finally, when there are no remaining speakers, the language is “extinct.” Although the taxonomy sounds quite straightforward, Crystal explains that any classificatory system must take into account other variables, such as the number of speakers relative to the total population. If a language has only 1,000 speakers but the total population of the community is 1,500, the language is probably not endangered, assuming that the community itself is stable. However, if there were only 1,000 speakers of English in the United States, a country with a total population of 275 million, we would certainly have cause to worry. In arriving at a diagnosis, it is important to calculate such things as the number of native speakers relative to second language learners of the language (the index of ability) and the number of people who speak a language at home relative to those who speak it as a mother tongue (the index of continuity). These indices were derived by other researchers, notably Harrison (1997), and reflect an attempt to provide a statistical representation of what might otherwise remain largely impressionistic.

The topic of Crystal’s second chapter – why we should care about language death – makes clear that the author is very much concerned and that we should be too. He begins by citing, and quickly dismissing, common arguments in favor of letting languages die. For instance, some might claim that the world would be a better place if we all spoke the same language, since (the conventional wisdom goes) language differences contribute to ethnic strife, impede commerce, and prevent easy political negotiation. Others might argue that it is cost-effective to reduce language diversity, since programs designed to save dying languages are very expensive. Crystal counters that the worst civil wars have occurred in monolingual countries (e.g., Rwanda, Cambodia, the United States). He notes that proponents of a universal language usually come from a monolingual culture and have their own language in mind. The author concedes that there are expenses to preventing language death, but makes clear why we should undertake them.

Primary among the reasons for maintaining a language is our need to maintain diversity. Crystal’s argument is that we should regard language diversity in the same way that we regard biological diversity. Language exists as part of a knowledge ecosystem, and disturbing one part of the system has repercussions throughout the system. Moreover, variation is an important component of adaptability in a species and hence a survival characteristic: “If diversity is prerequisite for successful humanity, then the preservation of linguistic diversity is essential, for language lies at the heart of what it means to be human” (pp. 33–34). In making the argument for variation, he carefully walks the line between metaphorical argument and literal exposition, and at times the reader is left to ponder whether variation among languages is actually the same as biological diversity or whether it is something different altogether.

Why languages die is illuminated in Crystal’s third chapter as a highly complex, dynamic phenomenon. Without thoughtful analysis of individual cultural forces, ethnic histories, and the physical environment, it cannot be fully comprehended or generalized. He begins with the most visible and catastrophic forces
that bring about the demise of a language: physical, environmental disasters. These include plagues, earthquakes, droughts, and other disasters that have the potential to kill or displace fragile communities that exist in delicate balance with their environment. Although environmental disasters often conjure up a sense of inevitability, Crystal is quick to point out that the most destructive environmental changes have been caused by the actions of people who could have behaved otherwise. Large-scale industrial logging, irresponsible cash-crop farming, and poor irrigation practices have caused land erosion and even desertification in some parts of the world that already had marginal indigenous populations. For instance, many young speakers were lost in Somalia during the drought of the early 1990s, when one-quarter of the children under age 5 died of starvation after the crops failed. AIDS is a disease that is deadly in individuals and threatens entire populations left without proper education, preventive care, and drug therapies. Crystal points out that in Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe one-quarter of the total population between the ages of 15 and 50 is in imminent danger. In a country like Nigeria, where there are 470 languages (many of which are spoken by a very small population), AIDS is causing linguistic as well as human fatalities.

Far more difficult to analyze and classify are the sociopolitical factors that contribute to language loss when minority communities are forced into assimilation with a dominant, often foreign culture. History is littered with these events: for instance, the devastation of the native North American nations by Anglo-Europeans or the Spanish conquest of the indigenous populations in Peru, Colombia, and other Central and South American countries. Although the military conquest of one culture by another is catastrophic for an endangered language, what is more common and insidious are the social and economic factors that are part of modern (19th and 20th century) industrial expansion. The pressure on many small cultures to adopt a lingua franca or a dominant language for purposes of profitable trade forces members of those cultures into a destructive dilemma. On the one hand, if they resist they may lose their way of life as economic forces overwhelm them. On the other hand, they risk losing their way of life by abandoning their native language. This no-win situation may be further exacerbated by the speakers of the threatened language themselves. This comes about, as Crystal argues, through the erosion of respect for traditional language forms. Through a subtle and gradual process, an economically driven lingua franca creates an emergent bilingual class, forcing the indigenous language slowly underground into closed, family settings where it is used less and less until ultimately it may not be used at all.

David Crystal accepts the inevitable spread of dominant languages, English being the most apparent; but he strongly supports multilingualism. He calls for a grassroots support of indigenous languages, which should exist in harmony with dominant languages. In this way speakers preserve their positive self-identity, and we maintain access to the invaluable body of knowledge that is part of the fabric of a linguistic system.

Languages also die, according to Crystal, because of governmental actions on the part of the dominant society. The reasons that make languages important – a sense of culture, identity, and solidarity – are the very same reasons that groups
seeking domination want to stamp out indigenous languages. This may be done by making it illegal to speak the indigenous language or by depriving speakers of their political rights, as was the case of Ainu in Japan, Welsh in Wales, and local languages in many other countries. However, more often an indigenous language is undermined through shame, condescension, and “folklorization.” The language loses its prestige among the speakers themselves, especially in the younger generations.

In the concluding chapters of the book, Crystal outlines projected multidisciplinary and grassroots intervention programs designed to prevent language death. Success depends on reeducating the populations of multilingual nations and reorienting researchers themselves. Crystal adopts a medical model to describe the approach needed to save the 3000+ endangered languages around the world. There must be researchers in linguistics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and education who are willing to take on the tasks of diagnosis (i.e., identifying and assessing potential language loss). Monitoring involves following the language situation over time through careful, scholarly, descriptive work. Finally, intervention is required. This can take the form of consciousness-raising, generating local support, mediating between conflicting cultures and governments, and implementing specific school- and community-based language programs.

Crystal calls for a revision of the traditional attitudes and practices of linguists themselves, who historically have taken a hands-off approach to the languages and cultures they study. In the past, nonintervention was often well-intentioned and considered most responsible, but Crystal argues that linguists now have an urgent responsibility to “get in there” and do something. Direct involvement may entail professional risks: these could include theoretical controversy or loss of intellectual property rights when research material becomes part of a community’s resources. There are physical risks as well: languages under threat are often in unstable, dangerous parts of the world. Linguists are in a unique position to mediate between indigenous communities and governments or corporations that seek to appropriate the land and resources of indigenous peoples, who often have no deeds or titles to their lands or even any written record of their history. The linguist can often identify place names, genealogies, and even colloquial expressions that provide critical evidence of land rights and ownership deriving from traditional practices.

Saving a language calls for a “revitalization team” (p. 157) to galvanize and activate people at all levels within an endangered speech community. The task is immense: to survey, describe, document the language, and establish standard forms of transcription. The team must recruit native speaker consultants, collect data, and set up systems to raise public awareness. There is the task of renewing pride and interest among the native speakers, who ultimately must be responsible for the survival of their language. In making this last point, Crystal cites Grinevald (1998), who asserted that work on a language must be conducted not just for and with its speakers but also “by its speakers” (p. 157).

Inevitably, a book such as this appeals most of all to those who share the author’s linguistic and philosophical views. Those whose interest in language is primarily in universals (or what unites us as humans) probably will not be much bothered by the death of Kasabe or any other language, so long as it is...
not their own. On the other hand, those who value diversity and believe that linguistic variation, like biological variation, is tied to our survival will find the book compelling.

REFERENCES

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This stimulating volume is the outcome of a 1996 conference, the first in the laboratory phonology series to incorporate psycholinguistic topics, including six chapters addressing acquisition. Here, as in the earlier conferences, the primary focus is on the relationship between phonetics and phonology. For example, in the first section, “Articulation and Mental Representation,” Munhall, Kawato, and Vatikiotis-Bateson provide a lucid account of the state of the art in physical models of articulation; they conclude with a discussion of the difficulty of identifying the interface between phonology and speech production. In a related study, the relevance of overarching prosodic structure (“phrasal signatures”) to low-level articulatory effects is illustrated in some detail by Byrd, Kaun, Narayan, and Saltzman, who find that “prosodic structure is manifest in the details of articulation... The abstract symbolic representation useful to linguistics [must be integrated] with a dynamical model of human movement useful to speech scientists” (p. 85).

As the term “laboratory phonology” implies, empirical work dominates here, but there is a strong theoretical orientation. Most striking is the approach to language acquisition and use embodied in many of these studies, which give a central, but not exclusive, role to frequency, sensitivity to distributional properties of language from early in life, and production experience and use. In several papers, phonological structure is seen as gradient and emergent, with reference to exemplar learning and storage as the source of structure. In keeping with the focus of this journal and my own area of competence, I will restrict this review largely to the third and longest section (11 out of 23 chapters, including two commentaries), which also provides the volume’s title. I will discuss the chapters in the order in which they appear.
Werker and Stager present the experimental findings they reported earlier in *Nature* (Stager & Werker, 1997). They provide a thoughtful discussion of the possible reasons why 8-month-old infants showed longer looks in “switch trials” after habituation to a novel object and its associated nonsense label (/bê/ or /dê/), whereas 14-month-olds failed to distinguish the pair except in a condition that involved no word learning. The evidence leads to the conclusion that infants are more likely to focus on phonetic detail in discriminating word forms (speech perception task) than in learning form–referent associations (word learning task). The authors raise the question as to whether separate or common representations underlie these distinct tasks or whether representation ought to be assumed at all in the case of form discrimination. The question brings to mind the long and still unresolved debate in the phonological development field regarding the “dual lexicon.” Do infants have separate or common word representations underlying comprehension and production? (cf. Jaeger, 1997; Menn & Matthei, 1992).

Taking their inspiration from the pioneering work of Macken and Barton (1980), Scobbie, Gibbon, Hardcastle, and Fletcher present a detailed acoustic study of a “covert contrast” between voiced and voiceless stops produced by a child with a phonological disorder. The child was found to produce a consistent voice contrast (though one not detectible by ear), not by timing voice onset differentially but by making differential use of glottal modes. Interestingly, the idea that a distinction may obtain and function contrastively below the conscious auditory threshold is also the focus of one of the chapters in the second section, “Tone and Intonation.” In that chapter, Peng uses production experiments in Mandarin to show that homophony resulting from tonal sandhi is not complete, and that by manipulating attention and memory listeners can be trained to categorize the intended tones correctly. Both of these studies remind us that the “all-or-nothing” model of phonemic categories is an oversimplification.

In an innovative experimental study, Beckman and Edwards ask whether “pattern frequency in the lexicon figure[s]...in the acquisition of ‘lower-level’ phonological patterns” (p. 208). These authors test the role of (productive) lexical experience on the imitation of nonwords, incorporating familiar versus novel CV, CC, and VC sequences by 3- to 4-year-olds (based on a corpus of first graders’ spontaneous speech). An analysis of the accuracy of the children’s imitations as transcribed revealed significant differences in favor of the lexically familiar sequences for CV (/gut/áľ vs. /gaut/áľ/) and, to a lesser extent, the consonant clusters (/mo/ftinl vs. /mo/fk/’n/); rimes did not differ significantly. In a replication with six children with phonological disorders, all three two-segment structures showed the effect of lexical familiarity. The finding of a larger effect of lexical experience on the children with a phonological disorder supports the hypothesis that the production of a novel motor score is particularly challenging in the earlier stages of word-form learning (see Vihman & Velleman, 2000, for a demonstration of production experience on the acquisition of the geminate contrast in Finnish first-word production).

In a critical assessment of the “perceptual magnet” model, Lotto, Kluender, and Holt raise doubts about the stimuli and the methodology used in the studies on which Kuhl’s theory is based. They argue that general learning processes are
sufficient to explain perceptual category formation and the dispersion of vowels to extreme positions in linguistic systems; as they remind us, even starlings can be trained to peck differentially for [i] versus [ɛ].

Goodman and Jusczyk extend to older infants (14 and 18 months) the experimental study of Jusczyk, Goodman, and Baumann (1999), in which infants looked longer at a list of nonwords that shared a common onset C or CV than at an otherwise comparable list that did not, but failed to look longer at common rimes. Interestingly, the extent of the infants’ differential attention to the alliterating lists drops with age, although there is no concomitant increase in attention to rimes. Goodman and Jusczyk suggest that infants may begin to attend to the ends of words only with the discovery of morphological structure. However, there is evidence from production studies of individual children to suggest that a sensitivity to word-final consonants may precede an understanding of morphological function (Peters & Menn, 1993; Vihman, 1996, ch. 9). In cross-linguistic studies of final consonant production, only one or two out of five children were found to produce final consonants in the single-word period, even when exposed to languages like English, Swedish, or Welsh, which have high final-consonant occurrence (Vihman & Boysson-Bardies, 1994). This suggests that the absence of a group effect in perception may be related to a lack of production experience; such experience may be a prerequisite for the discovery of morphological structure.

In her commentary on the acquisition studies, Edwards highlights the multidimensionality of representations, as demonstrated by the studies of Stager and Werker (1997) and Jusczyk et al. (1999), both of which found a difference in “attentional mode” for younger versus older infants. Drawing on the notion of word templates, which have been shown to underlie “minispurts” in lexical acquisition in the single-word period, Edwards suggests that the role of lexical familiarity in a contextual nonword repetition in older children can simulate first-word learning, although here again a difference in attentional mode might be relevant.

Like Beckman and Edwards, Bybee believes that “use impacts representation” (p. 268). Drawing on evidence from sound changes in progress, Bybee develops an elaborate, but persuasive argument to support her view that should change, far from reflecting the addition of rules to the grammar, results from incremental changes in word production with each use. Thus, sound change is highly sensitive to the effects of discourse (first uses are longer; later uses are more reduced) and lexical and grammatical frequency (each experience of a word is stored in memory). See Goldinger (1998) and other references to work supporting lexical access based on phonetic rather than phonological input in Coleman’s commentary in the first section of this volume.

In a study somewhat similar to that of Beckman and Edwards, Treiman, Kessler, Knewasser, Tincoff, and Bowman examine the idea that phonotactic constraints may be probabilistic. They developed quadruplets of monosyllabic nonwords differing in frequency or wordlikeness of their rimes: for example, high-frequency /up/ (coop, loop, soup) versus low-frequency /uk/ (ook, Luke, souk). In one experiment adults and school-age children were asked to categorize pairs of nonwords differing only in their rimes as more or less like English words. Although less than half the children were able to perform this metalin-
guistic task, those who succeeded gave roughly the same (above chance) level of correct responses as the adults, showing a small, but reliable effect of sensitivity to rime frequency. Sensitivity to onset frequency was also observed in some of the experiments, but it was not systematically manipulated.

By demonstrating that “the beginning-to-end temporal order in which the segments in a word are processed as a functional influence on the phonology” (p. 283), Frisch supports his view that lexical processing cannot be excluded from competence. He provides two types of data analysis involving consonant dissimilarity constraints: Arabic triliteral roots and speech errors in the production of English tongue-twisters. In both cases, the constraints are gradient and affect word-initial position to a greater extent than they do consonants occurring later in the word. The findings point to a blurring of the performance/competence distinction, although Frisch sees a role for existing phonological formalism, as implemented in the framework of a connectionist-type model.

Starting from an earlier study in which the /t/–/d/ continuum proved to be immune to the effect of neighborhood density on listener identification of ambiguous phonemes, Newman, Sawush, and Luce tackle the status of /t/, which has been considered to be phonologically “underspecified.” Creating a continuum from a nonword with a high-density lexical neighborhood (e.g., /Sœv/: shave, have, sham) to a nonword with a low-density lexical neighborhood (/ı`œs/: chase, pass, chassy), they tested the hypothesis that all coronals might be immune to lexical effects (but /S/, /ı/, /l/, and /ɾ/ all showed those effects), that all alveolars might be immune (but both /d/ and /ɾ/ showed the effects), and that /t/ might show immunity to the effect only when paired with /d/ (but nonword identification on the /t/–/s/ continuum was shown not to be affected by neighborhood density). Finally, since the most frequent English consonants are /t/ and /s/, the authors tested /s/–/S/ and found immunity to the neighborhood density effect. Like Frisch, then, these authors were able to show a gradient effect of phoneme frequency on perception, such that for the most commonly occurring English consonants “frequency effects can overwhelm the relatively small effects of lexical neighborhood” (p. 310). Replication of the effect in another language would further strengthen the argument.

The last empirical study is that of Steriade, who argues strongly against the need for any distinction between phonetic and phonological features. In order to show that morphological invariance relates not only to phonological (contrastive) features, but also to phonetic variation, she identifies paradigm uniformity effects at the level of phonetic detail, both in American English, where poststress tapping proves sensitive to paradigm membership, and in French, where the physical detail of consonant assimilation effects after optional schwa omission depend on “constraints requiring the invariance of morpheme edges” (p. 328). Steriade concludes that “the realization of phonetic detail properties is governed by some of the same principles that must be invoked in studying phonological or potentially contrastive features” (p. 331).

In the final chapter, Dell organizes his comments around three terms that received particular emphasis in the session on lexical representation (a subset of the papers reviewed here): (a) frequency, (b) similarity, and (c) sequence. The role of frequency demonstrated in several of the chapters – whether in ex-
experiments with nonwords, in precise accounts of sound change, or in the ob-
servation of morphological leveling – constitutes evidence that phonological
knowledge cannot be purely abstract and categorical. If that were the case, quan-
titative effects would not be found. Dell also points out that gradience – or
tendencies for dissimilarity or neighborhood effects to obtain – is incompatible
with the all-or-nothing structure of optimality constraints, as well as with the
generative phonological rules of the past.

To Dell’s assertion that lexical retrieval errors that are both semantically
and phonologically similar are especially common, I would like to add a cross-
linguistic illustration, taken from a child’s bilingual production. When searching
for the Estonian word *neerud* ‘kidneys’, my daughter (age 6) inserted the En-

*lish word *mushroom* into an otherwise all-Estonian discourse context. Her lexi-
cal search must have erroneously resulted in the English word through the joint
activation of the phonologically similar *neerud* and *seened* ‘mushrooms’ and the
semantically related translation equivalents *seened* and *mushroom(-s)* (Vihman,

In his discussion of sequence effects, Dell provides reasons why beginnings
of words might be better attended to than endings, but the effect – supported by
the findings of several of the chapters here, though not all – remains surprising.
Short-term memory supports endings as well as beginnings; the production of
some sounds is learned word-finally before it is mastered in onsets (e.g., frica-
tives); suffixes are far more common in the world’s languages than prefixes,
suggesting some kind of processing advantage for word endings. Furthermore,
it seems clear that positional effects cannot be usefully considered without in-
cluding the accentual frame. For example, the failure of Spanish speakers to
make word-onset errors as often as English speakers do might reasonably be
thought to relate to the characteristics of Spanish prosody.

Dell concludes his very useful commentary by outlining a “dream [connec-
tionist] model,” which would deal with both perception and production and with
both segmental sequences and prosodic frameworks. One might add to this list
of desiderata a suggestion that visual articulatory effects – the role of lip-reading
in learning to speak, in particular – be incorporated as well. Fortunately, re-
searchers in the related area of speech robotics have already begun work on
such a model (Schwartz, Abry, Boë, & Cathiard, in press). Clearly this is an
exciting time to be working on acquisition and the phonetics/phonology inter-
face.

NOTE

1. The book is marred by a number of typographical errors, large and small. The most
   serious error affects this chapter. The legend to Figure 10.3 has the labels *Tone 2*
   and *Tone 3* reversed.

REFERENCES


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Judith Rosenthal has brought together a wide variety of articles on second-language (L2) teaching and learning that will surely interest foreign language (FL) educators in U.S. universities who are struggling to increase or maintain enrollment in their courses or who are seeking new ideas to meet the needs and demands of an increasingly diverse student population. Rather than encourage individual language departments to continue their separate battles for survival, Rosenthal hopes to enhance the “integration” of FL programs in order “to better promote proficiency in more than one language” (p. 353). This volume clearly illustrates how teachers of various languages can collaborate and share experiences in order to find solutions to what are often very similar problems.

At first glance, Handbook would seem to have much in common with the edited volume by Tucker and Corson (1997). Like Tucker and Corson, Rosenthal has included separate sections on L2 learning (Part 1), instructional models (Parts 2 and 3), teacher training (Part 4), and FL programs around the world (Part 5). Although the latter does so more systematically, both books also include information on the history, contributions, and current and future directions of various approaches and programs. Rather than revisit territory covered so well by Tucker and Corson, Rosenthal explores new ground by using a broad definition of “foreign language” and by focusing on university education in the United States.

All 16 chapters were written by university professors and researchers, primar-
ily from education, applied linguistics, and language departments. One aspect that makes this 400-page book pragmatic and reader-friendly is the use of cross-referencing between many of the chapters. This serves to emphasize the commonality between the different programs discussed as well as to facilitate research on particular topics. Nearly every chapter concludes with several “case studies.” These provide concrete examples of specific, often inspiring, FL programs, and a number of studies include names and addresses of people to contact for further information. The complete subject and author indexes, as well as the chapter by Smoke and Rosenthal of recommended information sources for university L2 educators (associations, books, journals, Internet resources), are also useful.

The first section begins with a chapter by Ignash on the demographics of foreign-born and immigrant populations in the United States. While not typical of books on university L2 education, the inclusion of such information is, in fact, extremely relevant for the future of many FL and, especially, ESL programs. Part 1 also includes a summary of research in L2 acquisition by Gass. Nonspecialists will appreciate her clear presentation of major aspects of the field, which includes quite a few useful examples. It is unfortunate, however, that more attention was not given to aptitude and motivation. It would have been helpful to mention, for example, the extensive work of Robert Gardner or the fine volume on motivation research edited by Oxford (1996).

The section on international perspectives (Part 4) contains four chapters: Wesche’s clear presentation of university L2 instruction in Canada, a rather complex discussion by Hufeisen on the teaching of German as a third language in Europe, an interesting article by Baldauf and Djité on language programs in Australia, and Reagan’s well-written summary of the L2 situation in South Africa. This is followed by a somewhat limited (one chapter) section (Part 5) on teacher training by Crandall, which focuses on the increasing number of learners with limited English proficiency in the United States and what teachers must know to meet their needs. Although much of what the author writes concerns training for K–12 instruction and adult education, it is also applicable to university teaching, as the very interesting case study of a California state university program for university professors demonstrates.

Part 6, “Resources,” contains a chapter on technology and L2 teaching that is far more than a simple list of multimedia materials. Warschauer and Meskill present the important, and sometimes neglected, cognitive and sociocognitive perspectives on integrating technology into the classroom. They also include an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of new technologies, which is a good starting point for those who are not technology savvy and who are considering expanding their use of new multimedia materials. Also worth reading are the three concrete studies of how new technologies have been implemented in the classroom. Each includes information on the target audience, a description of the L2 program concerned, details on implementation, and a Web site for further information.

Perhaps the most impressive part of the volume are the seven chapters that make up the two sections on instructional programs: “Major Models” (Part 2) and “Language Revival” (Part 3). It is rare, but very refreshing, to read a book
about L2 programs that is truly inclusive of all types of languages. A case in point is the chapter by Wilcox and Wilcox on American Sign Language (ASL). The authors discuss issues that are familiar to teachers of any language: curriculum, teacher training, dealing with cross-cultural encounters (between hearing and deaf communities), linguistic diversity (ASL vs. signed English), and the use of technology.

The chapter by Reyhner, Lockard, and Rosenthal provides a succinct history and description of the current state of the 50+ Native American languages that are taught in the United States and Canada. The information concerning language revival efforts should be of interest to any educator who is considering implementing or expanding a Native American or other “less commonly taught” language program. Given the encouraging findings of Robinson-Stuart and Noccon (1996) on the effectiveness of ethnographic interviews in Spanish as a L2 courses, teachers of any language might consider looking into the field experience requirement of the Cherokee language program described in the first case study.

It would seem natural that L2 university educators would be familiar with university programs in the United States that involve extensive use of foreign languages to teach content-based courses, yet these bilingual programs are relatively unknown, despite the fact, as Rosenthal points out in Chapter 5, that some are over 30 years old. This chapter is undoubtedly one of the most comprehensive surveys of such programs in the United States. The author, who teaches university biology courses in both English and Spanish, gives a brief explanation of the theories behind postsecondary bilingual programs, which reiterates much of what has been written about K–12 programs, and then discusses issues such as the goals and organization of a number of these programs. The three case studies provide important details about course offerings, enrollment, and administrative issues for three very different Spanish–English bilingual university programs.

In response to the changing make-up and demands of the U.S. university student population, greater attention is being paid to heritage language (HL) instruction, though the field is still in its infancy. Not surprisingly, heritage languages are mentioned in seven different chapters in this volume and are the focus of Chapter 8. HL students have generally grown up and been schooled (in English) in the United States, but have had substantial contact with a non–English-speaking community. Fluent in English, they tend to speak their heritage language well and to be familiar with the sociolinguistic and cultural elements associated with the language, although they generally have fairly poor reading and writing skills. As they reach the university level, increasing numbers of HL students are choosing to maintain and improve their HL skills by enrolling in FL courses. Campbell and Rosenthal explain, however, that the needs of HL students are not always met since such courses are usually designed for students with relatively different, and certainly more academic, experiences in the target language. The chapter provides useful information to address these issues. The case studies concern Persian, Chinese, and Hindi programs, two of which follow a two-track system (with separate FL and HL courses); the third describes a self-instructional program sponsored by a national organization and available to
U.S. universities. While details are not given as to the long-term benefits of this approach, such a program may be worthy of consideration as a temporary solution for teaching a “less commonly taught language” until full-time faculty can be hired.

The chapter by Klee serves as a general introduction to FL teaching in the United States, covering enrollment statistics, a brief history of instructional methods, and administrative issues. The author focuses on the new content-based approaches, such as Languages Across the Curriculum (LAC), that are in keeping with the recent U.S. standards for FL learning. She includes two case studies, one successful and one unsuccessful, of the implementation of LAC programs. A third study, which relates to the cultural emphasis of the standards, is a fine and detailed example of how one major university department revised its first-year German program to promote language skills and cultural literacy.

The chapter on ESL by Reppy and Adames includes an excellent summary of major past and current pedagogical approaches. Readers should not miss the pages devoted to misunderstandings about ESL. They are an important reminder of why university-level ESL programs, mistakenly viewed by some to be a sort of remedial instruction, deserve equal attention in any postsecondary FL department.

Teachers have often told their students that learning a different language helps one see the world through a different lens. Thanks to Judith Rosenthal’s volume, instructors and administrators of university FL programs have a new opportunity to look through a number of different lenses for a clearer view of what can be done to promote FL learning.

REFERENCES

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