REVIEW OF NEW WAYS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING: FOCUS ON TECHNOLOGY AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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This volume contains eight papers which discuss the role of technology and foreign language education. Editor Judith A. Muyskens begins with a brief introduction in which she explains the choice of *change* as the underlying theme of the book. Authors were asked to reflect on questions about the future of language instruction in relation to the information age, the effectiveness of language instruction with new technologies, and issues related to training and teacher preparation.

New Ways Of Learning And Teaching: Focus On Technology And Foreign Language Education is divided into three sections. The first section includes two articles addressing issues related to the technological training of teaching assistants and faculty. The second section presents four case studies on the use of various technologies within language educational contexts, ranging from e-mail to electronic conferencing to distance education. The two articles found in the third and final section offer perspectives on the relationship between learning, foreign languages, and technology. Abstracts of the articles included in this volume are available at the Heinle & Heinle Web site.

In the first section, Virginia Scott, Winnifred Adolph, and Leona LeBlanc discuss change in relation to technology, teaching, training and teaching assistants (TAs). Scott suggests that "technology can provide an opportunity for reexamining teaching and learning" (p. 3). As part of their training, Scott suggests that TAs be encouraged to develop and use research skills to explore computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Specifically, TAs can (1) critically analyze CALL applications, (2) examine the supporting theories, and (3) frame questions about language instruction. While Scott focuses more on TA training and development, Adolph and LeBlanc address "dangers" related to language program design. Like Scott, they point to the importance of reevaluating instruction in technological contexts. Before getting too caught up in the "technological revolution," language educators should always keep motives and goals in focus.

The second section highlights four case studies, all of which provide examples of the emphasis placed on communication and interaction by today's CALL. For example, Bernhardt and Kamil show how newsgroups can be used for out-of-class discussion in order to foster the growth of cultural knowledge. In his article, Kern examines both synchronous and asynchronous communication systems. Particularly insightful is his comparison of conventional writing (i.e., pen and paper) with writing in various

computer-mediated media such as electronic conferencing, e-mail, and MOOs (virtual meeting places where users interact in a text-based environment). As Kern demonstrates, technology-enhanced interaction can foster virtual learning communities, promote interaction across linguistic and cultural boundaries, and provide a different set of classroom discourse conventions in which to communicate. Also of interest is the investigation carried out by Beauvois. Her pilot study tends to suggest that student participation in synchronous electronic discussion has positive consequences on their oral performance. Finally, Fant discusses the resurgence of interest in distance education and the possibilities for language education. He examines four models of L2 distance education applicable to the college context and then considers some crucial implications of integrating computer-driven communications technologies into the L2 curriculum.

Finally, in the third section, Meunier's article presents a provocative account of personality and motivational factors in computer-mediated foreign language communication (CMFLC). In her article, she provides a concise review of research on personality and motivational factors, as well as the results from a study that she conducted exploring student perspectives on motivational and affective factors in CMFLC. Data from her study suggest that CMFLC may lead to increased motivation among language learners. Whereas Meunier's article examined personality and motivational factors in CALL, Frommer looks at cognition, memory, and context to explore the relationship between computers and language learning. One highlight of her article is an insightful discussion of the different dimensions offered by computers and technology. Dimensions having the potential to supplement the CALL environment include the following: the multisensory and multidimensional nature of computers, the ability to allow learners to tailor information and tasks to their own level and interests, the possibility of authentic communication and access to authentic cultural resources, and the interactive learning experience afforded by contemporary computer technology.

New Ways Of Learning And Teaching: Focus On Technology And Foreign Language Education offers a variety of articles (both research-based and experience-based) which examine the implications of technology for change in language instruction. Muyskens' volume represents a needed contribution to the current field of literature available on technology and foreign language education. This contribution reflects the shift of emphasis that has taken place in recent years from behavioristic and communicative CALL to integrative CALL (see Warschauer & Healey, 1998). In contrast to Michael Bush's "collection of...essays discussing the role of multimedia and technology" (O'Leary, p. 20), Muyskens' book offers a fresh look at varied issues facing educators as they approach the millenium, from TA training to computer-mediated communication. As the discipline begins to focus less on stand-alone language learning software and more on innovative uses of the computer as a tool for communication, the articles in this volume offer valuable perspectives on this shift in technology-enhanced language learning.

REFERENCES

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