

REVIEW OF *MEDIA, MULTIMEDIA, OMNIMEDIA: SELECTED PAPERS FROM THE CETaLL SYMPOSIUM ON THE OCCASION OF THE 11th AILA WORLD CONGRESS IN JYVASKYLÄ; (FINLAND) AND THE Vth MAN AND THE MEDIA SYMPOSIUM IN NANCY (FRANCE)*

Media, Multimedia, Omnimedia: Selected Papers From the CETaLL Symposium on the Occasion of the 11th AILA World Congress in Jyväskylä (Finland) and the Vth Man and the Media Symposium in Nancy (France)

Bayreuth Contributions to Glottodidactics Series
Gabrielle Hogan-Brun & Udo Jung (Eds.)

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Reviewed by Gerhard Wazel, IIK - Institut für Interkulturelle Kommunikation e.V.

This book focuses on the use of modern technologies in education, business, and the home. It contains chapters based on symposia at two international conferences: the Commission on Educational Technology and Language Learning (CETaLL) Symposium on "Educational Technologies at the Crossroads," held at the 11th World Congress of the *Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée* (AILA) in 1996, and the Vth CETaLL "Man and the Media" Symposium held as part of the XIXth Congress of the *Association des Professeurs de Langues des Instituts Universitaires de Technologie* (APLIUT) in 1997.

One attractive aspect of this book is the breadth of topics addressed. The articles explore theoretical and practical questions about how to incorporate modern technologies in various domains, particularly the teaching of modern languages, and issues related to the use of specific interactive media, including CD ROMs, e-mail and the Internet. In addition, the volume includes an international bibliography (compiled by Jung) of scientific and practical research. This valuable resource, which contains 4060 entries on computer assisted language learning, is sorted by author and is followed by a 681 keyword index.

The first section emphasizes the need to combine well-established pedagogical methods with innovations, to make sensible and efficient use of interactive media in language teaching, and to integrate new media into the overall instructional design. The question of whether computer-enhanced language teaching methodologies are more efficient than "traditional" ones, which would require a comparison between the two and consequently a legitimization of one or the other, is shown to be unanswerable, as it ignores the interdependability of variables. This issue is discussed in the first article by M. Kenning, "Effective

Language Learning and the Media: A Study of Current Theories for the Exploitation of Media Technology," which notes that although at present new technologies are often utilized in a teacher-guided environment such as classrooms and computer labs, this may not be the case in the near future, when learners may make greater use of technology available outside of educational institutions.

The potential of interactive media is explored in this text by most of the 15 articles which also contain discussion of potential problems and drawbacks, tempering current fascination with new technologies with caution. The chapters are also well-balanced in terms of theory and practice. For example, the more general, theoretically orientated contributions in section I ("The Overall Picture") such as Kenning's chapter (see above), Wolff's "Computers as Cognitive Tools in the Language Classroom," and Jung's historically reflective "Will the Real Ed Tech Please Stand Up?" also address practical aspects. By the same token, more practically focused sections II ("At the Creating End") and III ("At the User End") also discuss theoretical implications.

The second section begins with first-hand accounts of pilot projects sponsored by the European Union. The inclusion of these chapters is especially valuable given that these projects are usually discussed only by relatively small teams of experts. In contrast to much professionally produced but often conceptually weaker software, these projects rarely receive international attention, due to limited finances and/or unprofessional marketing. Readers may be interested to learn that the European Commission now offers special workshops on marketing and distribution of theoretical findings and learning materials which have been gathered through EU sponsored pilot projects, and even awards grants for the evaluation of language programs (such as [SOCRATES](#) or [LEONARDO DA VINCI](#)).

In their paper "TELOS Language Learning: User Needs and Telemedia Answers," Kohn and Rieder report on a telematics project noteworthy in part because it is based on a solid needs analysis of target entities. In addition, they discuss some of the potential problems associated with the current trend towards flexible self-study. Esch and Cleary discuss video conferencing for oral skills as well as social and intercultural L2 competence in their the chapter entitled "Learner Interaction and Broadband Network". Wittig and Davis' "The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser: A Multimedia Approach" and Boyle's "Language Comprehension and Staged Increase of Audio Visual Support" focus on regional interests (literature and geography) in language learning and explore the use of the multisensoric and dynamically self-determined potential of the new media. Both authors discuss the value of learner-oriented, high quality multimedia materials, which can be enhanced by instructor contributions in the form of texts, exercises, and so on. Davies' chapter "Integrating the Internet" reports on Swedish university teachers who were asked how they viewed the use of computers in language learning.

Although the articles in the third section focus on the user/learner, they also reflect on the changing role of the teacher. The introduction of (often self-developed) interactive materials based on the real life tasks students will have to perform in their future careers places new demands on instructors. This issue is discussed by Hogan-Brun and Whittle in "Foreign Language Learning for Specific Purposes with Multimedia: New Teaching and Learning Dynamics," which concentrates on the increasing role of the service sector and the purpose-specific use of foreign languages in this area. In "The Contribution of the Web to Foreign Language Learning" by Piper and Wright, the authors discuss the dedicated use of Web resources and suggest that most learners use the Web only as an up-to-date library and thus require additional training from their instructors in order to take advantage of the Internet as a language learning tool. Roe shows in "Authority and the ESP Teacher in a Technological Age" the complex and complicated demands which foreign language teachers will have to meet in the future, in order to be recognized as authorities and called on as advisors by their students. In contrast to Roe's more philosophically driven thoughts, in "Who is in the Learning Zone," Vanderplank and Dyson analyze the results of a broad experiment within the LINGUA project, involving BBC broadcasts (mainly language learning programs).

The final two articles of the anthology, "New Technologies: The Quest for Appropriateness" by Namenwirth and "Language Lab Multimedia Lab Future Lab" by Froehlich, critique current practice and offer predictions for the future. This seems appropriate in view of the polarized views held by many in relation to technology (blind belief on the one hand, and rejection and hostility towards technology on the other, especially in the education sector). Both authors claim that individual reports about successes and failures should be carefully analyzed in order to formulate more general and practice-relevant pedagogical theory. Clearly, the rapid pace of change in hardware and software, as well as in society, will affect theory development, in that it is exceedingly difficult to make specific recommendations based on technologies which are constantly in a state of flux. In fact, one drawback of the text is that many of the predictions and claims made at the symposia on which this book is based (1996 and 1997) have recently changed or been updated due to the fast pace of change in the technology area. Publication of new results and resources on the Internet (for example, this text's bibliography) is essential if we are to keep up with the changes.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Gerhard Wazel is the director for research, education and vocational training at [IIK](#) Institut für Interkulturelle Kommunikation e.V. His research interests include didactics, applied linguistics and intercultural/crosscultural communication.

E Mail: iik.ansbach@t-online.de

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