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Editor's Introduction

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This issue is my first edited volume of the *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* (*ARAL*). Each year *ARAL* focuses on a specific theme, but about every five years it covers a range of mostly unrelated topics in a survey issue. Volume 30 was scheduled to be a survey issue, and after some discussion with the editorial directors, I decided to keep this tradition. Thus, I had the daunting task of choosing four broad topics, and then within each broad topic, a few narrow topics on which to invite scholars to write review articles. I chose a wide range of areas as a statement that I see the field of applied linguistics as not only being broad but as also representing a range of perspectives on theory and research methods. For example, I have included sections both on language socialization and on linguistic theory (mostly formal) in second language acquisition. I felt that these two areas were quite far apart with regard to the view that researchers in those areas held, but in my mind, both social and cognitive approaches to language learning and use are valid and simply seek to answer different questions. In the section on research methods, the articles focus on using both cognitive and social approaches, as well as quantitative and qualitative methods. The articles on heritage language learning focus on acquisition, policy, pedagogy, and sociocultural issues.

Generally review articles in *ARAL* cover fairly recent research, and the authors have indeed tried to keep their coverage of their respective topics recent. Because the reviews need to be accessible to a range of readers, however, the authors usually had to include older research in order to contextualize the current research and to explain concepts and terms that might not be familiar to all readers. In addition, because of the range of topics, some variation exists in the level of detail reported about the reviewed research and the length of the articles. For example, it is difficult to summarize the results of some of the semantic research without carefully explaining the studies and terminology. Furthermore, in some areas, such as eye tracking in second language learning, much of the research is new, and the authors had to cite unpublished studies including conference papers and dissertations. You will also note that authors

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used different definitions of certain concepts, such as *heritage learner.* In this case, however, all four authors carefully addressed the problems of and issues related to defining the term.

Although the articles in this volume were invited, each was reviewed by a member of the board and/or outside reviewers. I was extremely pleased with the willingness of my colleagues to accept this important job. They responded cheerfully and promptly. In particular, I thank Christine Casanave, Debra Friedman, Debra Hardison, Kathy Howard, Shaofeng Li, Kim Potowski, Jason Rothman, Irina Sekerina, Paula Winke, Eve Zyzik, and two anonymous reviewers. All of their reviews improved the final versions of the articles.

In addition, I would like to thank Morrell Gillette and Robert Dreesen from Cambridge University Press for answering all my questions; my graduate student, Sally Behrenwald, for her help in editing; my colleague, Debra Friedman, for our lengthy discussions about editing dilemmas; the editorial directors for their careful reviewing and for their suggestions of topics and contributors; and most of all, Mary McGroarty, the past editor of *ARAL,* for all her help with this first issue.

I will end by mentioning one of the vexing challenges in editing this issue. Applied linguistics is a diverse field with researchers coming from areas such as linguistics, education, psychology, and anthropology. The contributors to this volume are no exception. I made the choice to follow the conventions of the American Psychological Association (APA) style guidelines, as a large majority of journals in applied linguistics do. What was difficult was forcing authors to change conventions that were not standard in their areas. For example, those working in the area of formal syntax tend to capitalize certain syntactic operations and the titles of theories. I chose not to do this because I felt it privileged certain concepts. Furthermore, most terms in applied linguistics are in a state of flux; capitalizing them makes them seem static. Another problem was the issue of scare quotes, that is, the use of quotation marks when not citing a specific source. APA guidelines suggest avoiding them except to show irony. I found that those researchers coming from a more qualitative or anthropological background tended to use them, while those from a more quantitative or psychological background did not. My personal opinion is that they cause confusion: Is the author quoting a source or making a comment on someone else's use of the term? I tried to keep them to a minimum, but again, it was difficult to force everyone to write "like a psychologist." Irony intended.

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