EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Mary McGroarty

Overview of Volume 24

Has language pedagogy advanced since the topics included here were last addressed in the *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* in 1998 (Vol. 18)? Yes, in many directions, as a survey of these contributions reveals. Even with respect to the traditional "four skills," discussed in the first section, professional understanding of best practices is now more differentiated with respect to both purposes and means of language instruction, in part because of advances based on recent related research. Vandergrift's review gives some sense of the interrelationships and the differences between learning to listen and listening to learn in a second language and explores the directions pedagogy may take. Regarding instruction in speaking skills, McCarthy and O'Keeffe provide insights into the impact of corpus-based language research on materials available and related pedagogical options. Grabe uses current research in reading to derive 10 propositions with good potential for instructional improvement and further research as a basis for practice. Silva and Brice document the explosion of interest in and research attention to second language writing and identify many potential areas for future investigation.

Research on the long-established "four skills" is now complemented by related research on the systems of language that contribute to fluent and effective language use. Chapters in the second section reveal something of the breadth of recent applied research into the structural systems of language, whether phonological, grammatical, or lexical, that has provided insights of considerable potential for language pedagogy. Jenkins's distinction between core and non-core elements of pronunciation and intonation opens an avenue for empirically based pedagogy that can move beyond the debates regarding the relevance of native speaker models to better illuminate aspects of intelligibility. Nassaji and Fotos show that recent research on grammar teaching, long a staple activity in language classes, helps us to better grasp critical and variable roles of exposure to models, types of practice, and roles and types of feedback in influencing learner mastery. By identifying the directions taken by recent research in vocabulary teaching and learning, Read helps us appreciate once more how greatly setting and purpose for language study affect the relevance of lexical knowledge, now much more clearly illuminated through corpus-based research, and points out that vocabulary research is

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000182 Published online by Cambridge University Press

just beginning to grapple with issues of teaching word combinations as opposed to individual lexical items.

Setting of language study and purpose for language instruction determine many pedagogical practices, but formal and informal pedagogies invariably also reflect aspects of social relations as well as linguistic preoccupations in the larger social context. Chapters in the third section show how thoroughly many questions related to language pedagogy have also come to incorporate and reflect attention to additional educational and social issues, to a greater or lesser degree. Even in the design of language instruction developed for specific student groups, Belcher shows persuasively that the social and critical turn observed in many other settings has informed recent discussions of English for specific purposes. Simmons-McDonald illustrates key issues related to the teaching of standard varieties for creole and vernacular speakers and shows that there is a role for innovative methodologies that draw on traditional local genres (and even incorporate aspects of contrastive analysis) in supporting learner growth, particularly mastery of literacy in standard varieties. Seidlhofer's exploration of the question appropriate model(s) for language pedagogy draws on the growing awareness that English as a lingua franca brings with it consequential decisions about how a language used for communication among many groups of people, none of whom are native speakers, should be learned and taught.

Chapters in the final section also address matters of pedagogy through a variety of lenses, including classroom processes, program design, and the preparation of language educators. Kern, Ware, and Warschauer show that the questions related to the roles of technology in supporting language instruction are no longer *if* but *how* and *why* particular uses of technology may suit a particular instructional context. In reviewing the literature on content-based instruction, Stoller provides a sense of the breadth of models available and the wealth of research questions ripe for investigation. Classroom processes related to collaboration are the focus of Donato's paper, which offers insight into both varying definitions and results of collaborative work across several types of language classrooms and illustrates some of the many questions deserving further investigation. Many discussions of educational reform highlight the relevance of constructivism as a guiding philosophy for both classroom instruction and teacher preparation; Kaufman's discussion shows that this perspective, now common in academic considerations of general educational reform and of improvements in math and science instruction, also has relevance to language instruction that has yet been fully exploited. Finally, in considering issues related to the preparation of teachers for immersion language programs, Erben provides an account of the many innovative programs in which several of the trends mentioned by other scholars here, among them new uses of technology, optimal combinations of language and content teaching, increased attention to the nature and topic of collaboration, and questions related to overall instructional goals and philosophy converge as they shape programs to prepare immersion educators. Taken as a group, all the papers in this volume attest to the genuine advances in language pedagogy achieved in recent years, growing awareness of the many important applications of technology that can be integrated into language teaching, increased sophistication

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000182 Published online by Cambridge University Press

with respect to interrelationships between language instruction and social setting, and the continued centrality of issues of teacher preparation. In addition, each contribution outlines some of the many research directions needed to extend the relevant knowledge base and refine pedagogical practice. Future discussions of language pedagogy in *ARAL* will, it is hoped, build on some of the foundations set out here.

Procedural Notes

Although no single volume can capture the diversity of relevant research conducted worldwide, one of *ARAL's* continuing goals is to attest to the international nature of scholarship in applied linguistics. Hence, when inviting prospective authors, contributors from many geographic areas are regularly sought. In extending invitations to contribute, the Editorial Directors and members of the Editorial Advisory Board work with the editor to identify prospective authors, regardless of location, whose publication record demonstrates their command of current research on topics identified for review. With this volume, I am pleased to welcome Numa Markee, a renowned scholar who will serve as a representative of the American Association for Applied Linguistics, to the *ARAL* Editorial Directors. The collective wisdom of this group is largely responsible for the breadth of *ARAL* contributions.

Another purpose of *ARAL* is to serve as a research tool for specialist readers. Readers wishing to locate recent discussions of particular topics should consult the Contributor Index for Volumes 14–23, included at the end of this volume, to see which authors and topics have appeared in the last 10 years. Comprehensive indexes for author citations covering the last five years and for the subjects discussed in the last ten years can be consulted through the *ARAL* section of the Cambridge Journals Web site: http://journals.cambridge.org/jid_APL. These indexes should prove useful to *ARAL* readers in tracing some of the lines of influence in applied linguistics in recent years and in locating references related to particular topics.

Acknowledgments

Many individuals and institutions contribute to the successful publication of each volume of the *Annual Review.* The Editorial Directors and members of the Editorial Advisory Board offer wise counsel regarding appropriate topics and potential authors. Contributors to the volume, all active scholars, teachers (and often, also, administrators) have prepared insightful and comprehensive treatments of their topics and responded to queries quickly. Staff members of Cambridge University Press have also provided the full array of expertise required for production and distribution of *ARAL*. I am most grateful to Ed Barnas, Journals Manager; Ed Carey, Production Manager; Susan Soule, Journals Marketing Marketing Manager; Mark Zadrozny, Journals Editor; Rachel Adler, Editorial Assistant, and to the additional Cambridge staff members who assist these individuals for the prompt and professional support consistently provided.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000182 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Those more closely associated with the processes of turning a set of rather disparate manuscripts into a cohesive completed volume of *ARAL* have once again excelled. I am, as always, deeply grateful to Beth Yule, *ARAL* Editorial Assistant, for her tremendous efficiency, conscientious attention to all details of manuscript and index preparation, and ability to manage many different phases of work with aplomb. Julie McCormick, *ARAL* compositor, has, as usual, shown similar attention to presenting each chapter and the entire volume with the accuracy and clarity the discussion deserves; she has resolved the issues related to electronic modes of receiving, transmitting, and preparing final copy with technical ingenuity and insight. Our work has been greatly facilitated by Marc Lord, who maintains the server that enables electronic exchange of manuscripts during production, and by Patrick Deegan, who acts as courier when paper copies must be exchanged. On numerous occasions, members of the Reference staff at Cline Library, Northern Arizona University, have responded quickly and courteously to my sometimes-obscure questions and thus materially contributed to bibliographic accuracy. Teresa Barensfeld has provided meticulous copyediting; Paula Garcia and Camilla Vásquez have done repeated rounds of careful proofreading. (In working with authors, every effort to ensure bibliographic accuracy has been made. My sincere apologies in advance to contributors and to readers if any inaccuracies or discrepancies have remained.) Activities related to the planning and production of *ARAL* benefit from the continuing in-kind support received through the cooperation of Susan Fitzmaurice, Chair of the English Department, and Laura Huenneke, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, at Northern Arizona University. Many thanks to all who help to make each volume of *ARAL* a reality.

Mary McGroarty
Flagstaff, Arizona
March 2004

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000182 Published online by Cambridge University Press