previous three main sections. Chapters in this section include Bialystok's chapter on the consequences of bilingualism for cognitive development, Pavlenko's philosophical discussion of bilingualism and thought, and Christoffels and de Groot's description of the cognitive processes involved in simultaneous interpreting.

This volume is both an excellent reference book and a good collection of chapters of outstanding quality. The volume is logically organized and covers all of the relevant issues in the psycholinguistic study of bilingualism. The only aspect of the handbook that can be criticized is its reader-friendliness. Even for a researcher in the field, some parts of certain chapters were difficult to follow; therefore, certain chapters might not be accessible for a novice audience such as postgraduate students. Nevertheless, I would recommend that the handbook should be on the shelves of students and scholars seriously interested in the cognitive aspects of SLA.

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DISTANCE EDUCATION AND LANGUAGES: EVOLUTION AND CHANGE. *Börje Holmberg, Monica Shelley, and Cynthia White (Eds.).* Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2005. Pp. 360. $134.95 cloth, $54.95 paper.

Distance learning is the new reality for many subject matters, and language is no exception. This new approach to teaching invites educators to reconsider how to offer instruction that maintains the quality of face-to-face instruction and to explore the possibilities of taking advantage of technology to effect learning in new ways. This edited volume explores distance learning from six different vantage points: learner autonomy, learner perspectives and support, development of intercultural competence, methodology and course design, learning environments, and language teacher development.

One of the volume's editors, Holmberg, points out that distance learning is not new, as correspondence courses have offered language instruction through the mail since the 19th century. What is new about modern distance learning is that computer and network technology connects teachers to students and students to each other, instantly. The advent of modern telecommunications technology both overcomes many of the obstacles that the distance learning environment traditionally presented and provides opportunities that can actually surpass those of conventional classrooms.

Indeed, it seems clear from courses described in this volume that distance learning environments can be structured to match and even exceed conventional classroom learning, as exemplified by the chapter by Hansson and Wennö. They found that their students exceeded the performance of students in conventional classroom environments

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in summative assessments. Their findings suggest that distance learning does not have to be a second-rate means of achieving second-rate results.

Many authors describe ways that they were able to overcome the physical separation that presents difficulty for the development of interactive skills. Using technology as a medium for communication, students interact via chat systems, online role-play using avatars, and conferencing using meeting tools that allow real-time audio and audio-video communication.

The overarching theme that emerges throughout this volume is pedagogy. It is clear that the projects described were developed with an eye to ensure quality programs that, at the very least, did not sacrifice quality and that aimed at leveraging the environment to foster the learning strategies that produce high achievement. This volume is an inspiring overview of success stories in distance learning.

It is appropriate to point out one final theme. Beyond the *who*, *what*, and *how* questions of distance learning is the *why*. Many authors indicate that their purpose in providing distance education options for language courses was to provide access. The idea of using distance learning to save money was not a consideration, nor was the notion of replacing people with computers. This volume is welcome evidence against those two popular misconceptions. Distance learning is seen by many of its practitioners as an innovative way to reach more students effectively. This book is a welcome contribution to the field.

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