Reviews

Exploring EFL Fluency in Asia. Theron Muller, John Adamson,
Phillip Shigeo Brown, and Steven Herder (Eds.). Basingstoke,
UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. xxii + 331 pp.

Reviewed by
Michael Carroll
Momoyama Gakuin University, Osaka

Fluency as a goal of English language teaching is the perennial hot potato in almost every country in Asia (perhaps excluding those countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines where English is to a greater or lesser extent a lingua franca). As the editors of *Exploring EFL Fluency in Asia* point out in the introduction, despite repeated calls over the years for communication-focused teaching, English language learning in the region is largely characterised by "low confidence, low motivation, and low ability" (p. 1). This book is an attempt to explore the problem and to suggest means of resolving it.

The major part of the problem, of course, is that in most of the countries represented here—Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, and Egypt—students receive the greater part of their English language schooling not only through the written form, but also in a highly decontextualized way. As Michael Rost points out in Chapter 16, these students are thus ill prepared to use the language for communication of any kind, and their first encounters with natural instances of spoken-English use may be overwhelming (p. 285). Rost's point applies equally to speaking, of course, and to reading and writing. Writing is often understood by students in the region as *constructing sentences* rather than as communicating meaning through connected texts, and reading is too often limited to laboriously decoding and translating texts with lexical and grammatical demands far above the students' current levels.

The editors of this volume, therefore, considered fluency from a broad perspective, not confining it to speaking, as has been common. They took a multidimensional approach, and the results are sections on each of the four

skills (speaking, writing, reading, and listening) and an introductory section on fluency in the curriculum. They also declined to restrict contributors to any one definition, preferring instead to allow the contributions to "investigate the concept . . . as it applies in their context" (p. 4). Nevertheless, some broad themes emerge as important across the board. For all of the contributors, fluency involves processing speed, although they are divided regarding the weight they give to quality of processing. Automaticity—being able to process surface features of language without much conscious thought, thus freeing up cognitive resources for higher level comprehension—also seems common to most definitions.

In the opening section on fluency in the curriculum, Paul Nation gives an overview of the role of fluency work in the classroom, together with a wealth of suggestions for activities that foster fluency. For Nation, tasks to which the learners bring their own experience are at the heart of all fluency pedagogy (p. 20). Similar overviews, with plenty of practical suggestions for classroom activities, are provided by Rob Waring, discussing the importance of extensive reading for fluency development, and Michael Rost, discussing listening fluency.

The bulk of the book is given over to small-scale local research reports, which give rich insights into (a) what is going on in classrooms, (b) how teachers are grappling with the need to draw students away from the overly mechanistic model they have been used to and towards the realisation that language is for communication, and (c) the various ways teachers are developing ideas about what fluency is and how it can best be nurtured. The range of contributions is too wide to do justice here to every chapter. In particular, Jason Peppard on corpus-driven learning through a lexicogrammatical approach, Steven Kirk on the sometimes neglected importance of repetition and memorization, Theron Muller's action research into the usefulness of free writing, Steven Herder and Gregory Scholdt on the all-round benefits of a fluency building program within a TOEFL preparation course, and Muhammed Abdel Latin on the use of think-aloud protocols in developing a means of measuring writing fluency all gave me food for thought.

One satisfying aspect of this volume and its breadth of contents is that unlike some collections of this kind, it hangs together as a coherent whole. The frequency of references to co-contributors in the book makes it clear that the papers, though very different, are part of a single project. To what extent these references were added at the editorial stage and to what extent contributors collaborated with each other from the beginning of the writing process is not clear, but the result is impressive. The editors are to be

commended for having engineered this interplay, and the evidence is plain to see that it was a worthwhile strategy. It is not that the papers here reveal aspects of language learning that we did not know before, but rather that they do an excellent job of revealing the range of perspectives on fluency and put these perspectives into a coherent framework within the wider field of language learning in general. The volume is more than the sum of its parts and constitutes essential reading for anyone involved with teaching in Asia.

Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning. Zoltán Dörnyei, Peter MacIntyre, and Alastair Henry (Eds.). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2015. xix + 429 pp.

Reviewed by
Roderick E. Mitcham
Kyoto Sangyo University

Targeting new and established researchers, *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning* encourages both groups to recognise the deficiencies of conventional research approaches and instead to adopt approaches, originating in the natural sciences and pure mathematics, associated with the "dynamic turn" (p. 1). The book is part and parcel of a more general push to promote what the editors term Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) across applied linguistics. It is intended to provide a clear example of how CDST can be successfully applied to a specific, tightly defined area of research—motivation in language learning (MLL). The authors also seek to encourage take up of the perspective not only within MLL but also in applied linguistics more generally. Its *raison d'etre*, in other words, is similar to that of books like *Complex Systems and Applied Linguistics* (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) and *A Dynamic Approach to Second Language Development* (Verspoor, de Bot, & Lowie, 2011). *Motivational Dynamics in Language Learning* is the outcome of a 3-year project led by Dörnyei, who investigated whether convincing empirical work in MLL informed by CDST was achievable and sought to redress the dearth of empirical work meaningfully employing it. At the project's inception, Dörnyei observed that researchers were only paying lip service to CDST, resorting to it, more often than not, to account for anomalies in research results. That the book exists at all is testament to the editors' belief that robust empirical work in a CDST vein is possible. From

their informed point of view, they present empirical work that is not only adequately engaged with CDST but also worthy of publication.

The book is divided into two main parts. The first, representing one quarter of the whole, consists of nine short chapters. Conceptual in focus, the first five outline the topography of the CDST terrain. Diane Larsen-Freeman, in her chapter, provides a general overview of CDST; Kees de Bot discusses timescales; Marjolin Verspoor, initial conditions; Phil Hiver, attractor states; and Ema Ushioda, context. Succinct and clearly expressed, these chapters together provide a valuable introduction to CDST for the uninitiated. Later chapters in the first section go beyond simple explication. Henry provides a dynamic interpretation of the often reified L2 motivational construct of possible selves; Ali H. Al-Hoorie asks whether humans, from a CDST perspective, have the capacity to exercise free will; and Sarah Mercer considers how Social Network Theory could make CDST "more amenable for research" (p. 73). In the final chapter, Dörnyei, Zana Ibrahim, and Christine Muir introduce the concept of Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs) and argue convincingly that DMCs offer fertile ground for empirical research.

The second part of the book—the remaining three-quarters—comprises 12 full-length empirical chapters. Each follows the conventional four-part structure of a traditional empirical study—literature review, methodology, results, and discussion—and the authors take key concepts from the MLL literature and examine them through the lens of CDST. Why the chapters are arranged in the order that they appear is not stated. However, rather like in conference proceedings, they do not need to be read in sequence. Examining motivation from a variety of angles—geographical settings, timescales, research subjects, and methods—the chapters are both fascinating and unique. For instance, MacIntyre and Alice Serroul consider second-by-second fluctuations in motivation, employing an idiodynamic mixed-methods approach. Mercer seeks a better understanding of the self as a CDS, conceptualising it as a multilevel nested system. Letty Chan, Dörnyei, and Henry evaluate Retrodictive Qualitative Modelling (RQM) in action, engaging it to help identify learner archetypes and motivation patterns. Tammy Gregerson and MacIntyre use CDST to interpret the motivational processes at work in a group of ESL teachers who are also learning English. Henry examines the motivational dynamics of Swedish students learning French as a third language. Finally, Ryo Nitto and Kyoko Baba consider the evolution of learners' Ideal L2 selves over the course of a year of engaging in language-learning tasks. Together the chapters represent the first tentative steps into CDST-informed empirical territory. The hope expressed by the editors (in

the conclusion and supported by practical advice on how to get a piece of CDST research off the ground) is that this research will encourage the book's target audience to "take the plunge" themselves (p. 420).

This volume provides a compelling case for adopting CDST within MLL specifically and in applied linguistics more widely. Offering sufficient conceptual background for the CDST novice and examples of actual empirical work applying the perspective, the book will very likely succeed in inspiring more empirical research along CDST lines. Yet, with conventional, non-CDST-informed research approaches so deeply entrenched within MLL and applied linguistics, how far CDST will replace these approaches is less clear. The editors make the point that in child development studies, the systems theory perspective is long established. One reason that they do this, perhaps, is to make adopting this not-as-it-turns-out-so-new approach a less daunting prospect. However, the fact that engagement within the field has been disappointing does not bode particularly well for widespread take-up within MLL and applied linguistics. The book's many admirable points notwithstanding, one criticism is that it does not include an index. In its current form, finding information about a specific topic quickly is not possible and could turn some less persistent, more circumspect readers off the book entirely. It is hoped that this will be rectified in a future edition. However, besides this relatively minor quibble, the book is, without doubt, an important contribution not only to MLL directly but as an example of how CDST can be successfully applied to a particular area of research, also to applied linguistics, not to mention to other social science disciplines it has yet to touch. The book deserves to be read widely and with an open mind.

*I would like to thank Ellen Head for her comments on an earlier version of this review.

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Experimental Research Methods in Language Learning. Aek Phakiti. London: Bloomsbury, 2014. x + 370.

Reviewed by
W. L. Quint Oga-Baldwin
Fukuoka University of Education

Research methods are a complex subject, and applied linguistics as a field has long needed a clear approach. It is quite easy to find examples of poor research design, even (and sometimes especially) in some of the top journals. Although no single volume can adequately cover all aspects of this complicated subject matter, Aek Phakiti's work does an admirable job.

Examples of instances where researchers have not done due diligence in their experimental design abound. More difficult is to find models of how to carry out successful studies. Phakiti offers a clear explanation not only of the research methods, but also summarizes example studies that arrive at empirically sound results through careful design of experiments. These are recent examples taken from top-level journals and thus may help graduate students to better grasp both substantive and methodological aspects of experimental design for applied linguistics research, as well as the scope of the field in general. Indeed, these published studies, along with the companion website from Bloomsbury, offer suggestions to teachers of research methods of additional course readings, thus providing a syllabus outline.

The 16 chapters in the book include a range of topics in simple, clear, and concise language. The early part of the book primarily contains the basics of research, from epistemological paradigms to construct validity to ethics. These considerations are easy to overlook, but are nonetheless crucial to conducting effective high-quality research. Phakiti then discusses experimental research designs, with special focus on the types of interventions, their various levels of desirability in presenting valid and reliable research, and issues of instrumentation for appropriately measuring constructs. Later chapters are focused on statistical methods common to experimental research, including an introduction to inferential statistics, correlation, reliability, and parametric and non-parametric mean comparison tests (t test and ANOVA). The author makes special use of SPSS (originally Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), using step-by-step examples of data preparation and analysis. In the final chapter, Phakiti addresses issues in writing

research proposals, an important step in many doctoral programs as well as for researchers looking to secure outside funding, including Japan Society for the Promotion of Science KAKEN grants (Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research).

The emphasis on SPSS in teaching different statistical methods is helpful for graduate courses that rely on this software. At the same time, though SPSS is indeed the standard software for statistical analysis in ours and other related fields, it is by no means the only one. Although the book provides a hands-on how-to, including screenshot walkthroughs for specific tasks in SPSS, other books provide greater detail in this account (e.g., Larson-Hall, 2010). Indeed, for teachers of research methods who prefer (and are able to use) other software for their courses, this may represent more of a hindrance. However, due to the prevalence of SPSS, as well as the similarity in operation to other packages, this limitation is unlikely to greatly interfere with the other instructional benefits of this text.

Caution should be used if considering this text for a statistical manual: it is not one, as should be obvious from the title. Rather, the statistics demonstrated in the book are applied examples of how to use statistics for research. Readers and teachers searching for a statistical methods book would be wise to look elsewhere. Although explanations of how to appropriately interpret statistical tables and prepare data are given with a minimal number of formulas and are appropriate to beginners, a working knowledge of statistical theory and practice will likely be necessary.

As a main text for a research methods course, this book would indeed be useful, as it not only outlines much of the *what* but also the *why* and *how* of research. At a relatively slim 339 pages of text, it seems feasible to be read and taught in a single semester. This, along with Phakiti's clear and direct writing, make it an appropriate graduate-level text for beginners and second language speakers. At the same time, both teachers and potential readers interested in the subject matter would benefit from supplementing the text with readings from other statistical and methodological texts to achieve greater coverage. Most notably, Kline (2009) discussed some of the more abstract but no less important aspects of research and statistical reform in order to provide insights into the broader field of the social sciences. Teachers of research methods in applied linguistics and SLA would certainly benefit from Phakiti's work as a main coursebook, and those learning the field on their own will find it a useful reference manual.

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Language Teaching Insights From Other Fields: Sports, Arts, Design and More. **Christopher Stillwell (Ed.). Alexandria, VA: TESOL International, 2013. iv + 189 pp.**

Reviewed by
Jacob Schnickel
Jissen Women's University

In his book *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*, Steve Johnson upheld the coffeehouse as the epitome of an environment conducive to the generation of new thought and creativity. He wrote, "*Collisions* do [lead to creativity]—the collisions that happen when different fields of expertise converge in some shared physical or intellectual space. That's where the true sparks fly" (p. 163). *Language Teaching Insights From Other Fields* is just such a shared intellectual space. Indeed, editor Christopher Stillwell likens the work to a dinner party. Coffeehouse or dinner party, the sparks certainly fly.

Language Teaching Insights From Other Fields asks how language education can benefit by coming into contact with other fields. Put differently, the book explores what those with knowledge of or experience in other professions—bartender, architect, or ski instructor, to name three—can teach language educators. This sharing is not, however, limited to professionals; people from other walks of life are represented, too. White water canoeing is an exciting pastime for one author, Karen Blinder. Zen Buddhism is an area of philosophical inquiry for John Spiri. These walks of life are all mined for gems, which are set into the book so that they shimmer clearly into the field of language education. Stillwell writes, "At heart, this is a book about exploration, about seeking inspiration from beyond our routine contexts" (p. 8).

The book succeeds on three levels. First, the invitation extended in each chapter title quickens insight in the reader. Second, each chapter is rich in useful tips that language educators can bring into their teaching practice.

And third, the underlying concept of the book encourages the reader to continue exploring other fields even after setting the book down.

Considering a few of the chapter titles suggests the breadth covered by Stillwell and the other 16 authors. Andy Boone wrote "How Would a Bartender Create a Safe, Social, and Supportive Classroom Environment?," Sylvia Whitman authored "How Would a Basketball Coach Get a Team to Talk the Talk?," and Cynthia Quinn and Gregory Sholdt contributed "How Would a Researcher Conduct a Language Course Evaluation?" Note that the title of each chapter poses a question that activates the reader's background knowledge and curiosity.

In fact, the chapter titles might themselves serve in the manner of *Oblique Strategies* (1978), a collection of cards developed by Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt aimed at helping artists move through creative blocks. Each card displays a pithy directive or a provocative question, such as

"Call your mother. Ask her what to do."

"Pay attention to distractions."

"Is there something missing?"

"What would your closest friend do?"

This last question resembles the formulation of the chapter titles in this volume. Chapter 10, for instance, by Tim Stewart, is titled "How Would an Architect Such as Frank Gehry Design Language Learning Tasks?" and presents a question that provokes thought and curiosity. As did the *Oblique Strategies* cards, the question about Gehry propels the reader away from the familiar, away from herself, and, possibly, out of a rut or over a blockage. Asking and answering questions like this comprise the essence of *Language Teaching Insights From Other Fields*. Appropriately, space is provided on page 5 for the reader to jot down—prior to reading the chapters—possible insights from each of the fields represented in the book.

Far from being only a collection of thought-provoking titles, the book also has substance. It is divided into four major sections: "Recontextualizing the Language Classroom," "Dealing With Challenges," "Teaching the Four Skills," and "Developing as a Professional." Each chapter adheres to a unified format. In the introduction, authors lead the reader into the new field under consideration, be it document design, acting, or activism. These set the tone and pique the interest. This is also where each author explains his or her relationship to the field. Following the introduction is a series of actionable tips. These are varied and valuable, with space here only for a sampling.

In Chapter 3 "What Can We Learn From Martial Arts Masters About Practice Techniques and Learning Environments?" author Anne Paonessa explains,

"Martial arts' use of belts for rankings help [sic] students concentrate on their own progress and mastery of the skills as opposed to comparing themselves with others" (p. 23). In Chapter 5 "What Does It Mean to Be a Whitewater Language Teacher?" Karen Blinder advises, "Lean downstream, into the rock you are afraid to hit. . . . some of the best teaching comes when we take a few judicious chances" (p. 56). And in Chapter 8 "What Can We Learn From Certified Ski Instructors About Teaching Academic Speaking Skills?" Li-Shih Huang writes, "Supported by empirical research in social and educational psychology, the act of visualizing both relevant obstacles of present realities and the desired future can trigger strategic or creative solutions, leading to positive changes in a wide range of professional, academic, and life pursuits" (p. 81).

Although these tips might be common knowledge within the fields in which they originated, they feel fresh—even radical—in language education. They comprise the quantifiable takeaway for the reader, and it is quite a hefty haul. However, there is another payoff that is unquantifiable: The reader receives training in asking the *how would* questions that begin nearly all of the chapters in the book.

When planning a lesson or designing a curriculum, the focus often falls on the teacher: "What should *I* do?" or "How should *I* conduct my class?" Even when making students more central, questions might take a form like this: "What should *I* ask the students to do?" When things are going smoothly, these questions drive the planning process well. When one encounters roadblocks, however, these questions continue to return focus to the same seemingly dry well.

For Johnson, this was the image of the lone inventor, working in isolation until finally emerging with the miraculous discovery. In spite of the commonness of such characters in the collective imagination, they are actually quite rare—more of a caricature. In reality, the free flowing of ideas and perspectives catalyzed by the coffeehouse is far more likely to lead to breakthroughs. "The trick," wrote Johnson, "is not to sit around in glorious isolation and try to think big thoughts. The trick is to get more parts on the table" (p. 26). For editor Stillwell, this is a dinner table, and it is laden with all manner of fascinating, useful parts waiting to be assembled into something new.

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Using Statistics in Small-Scale Language Education Research: Focus on Non-Parametric Data. Jean L. Turner. New York: Routledge, 2014. xi + 344.

Reviewed by
Aaron C. Sponseller
Hiroshima University

Jean L. Turner's book is a highly accessible text written for graduate students or in-service teachers interested in conducting research in their own classrooms. Many educators may have a desire to conduct quantitative research in their own classes; however, individual classes often only provide access to rather small sample sizes. Consequently, the data generated in those classes are often nonparametric in nature and, therefore, violate one of the underlying assumptions required by most standard parametric statistical procedures. In the simplest sense, nonparametric data are those which are not nicely distributed in a normal, bell-shaped curve. This kind of data is common when sample sizes are small and nonrandomized. Although the text does cover descriptive and parametric statistics, emphasis is placed on the nonparametric. Perhaps the biggest selling point of this text is that it introduces readers to the free statistical software *R*. *R* is a very powerful statistical freeware program; however, it is commonly described as having a very steep learning curve. Turner follows a common-sense pattern of introducing a statistical measure, describing the logic and appropriate use of that measure, and then finally providing step-by-step instructions for performing those measures in *R*. With this text in hand, even novice researchers and readers will be amazed how quickly and easily they can execute statistical procedures and generate tables or charts.

Early in the text (Chapter 2), Turner introduces *R* and immediately sets the reader to the task of importing datasets. In short order, the author leads the reader through the commands needed to produce the simple yet most fundamental descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendency, standard deviation, range, and normality. In order to run skewness and kurtosis statistics, a special package must be downloaded. This process is simple and requires no more than typing two short commands into the *R* console. Turner's instructions throughout could scarcely be easier to follow. Within 15 minutes of creating my first dataset in *R*, I had successfully produced all the aforementioned descriptive statistics, learned how to download a pack-

age via the *R* console, and produced tables, histograms, and pie charts in
a variety of colors of my choosing. Having absolutely zero background in
computer science and intimidated at the prospect of having to crunch the
numbers or learn to write computer code, I found it immensely satisfying to
see results so quickly. The results were accurate, too, as the book provides
readers with the appropriate outcomes in the same tables that include the
command instructions.

I suspect the majority of readers will find this text most useful as a refer-
ence for how to conduct specific parametric and nonparametric calculations
in *R*. Many statistical textbooks cover nonparametric procedures; however,
it is quite common to see such procedures lumped together in a single chap-
ter. Turner's text takes a different approach by sequencing chapters so that
the parametric procedure is explained first but followed immediately by
a chapter introducing the nonparametric equivalent(s). In fact, only three
parametric procedures (*t* tests, ANOVAs, and Pearson's Correlation Coef-
ficient) are introduced in this volume. In Section II, Chapter 6 covers para-
metric *t*-test statistics, and Chapter 7 covers the nonparametric equivalent,
the Wilcoxon Rank-Sum statistics. These two chapters complement one an-
other nicely. Were a teacher, student, or researcher conducting studies that
produced data that required analysis between two groups or sets of data,
these two chapters would provide everything needed to run the appropri-
ate parametric or nonparametric statistical procedures in *R*. The following
sections follow this same pattern, in which a parametric procedure and its
nonparametric counterpart are introduced one after the other. Section III
"Analyzing Differences Among More Than Two Sets of Data" contains the
parametric ANOVA family in Chapter 8 and the nonparametric corollaries
the Kruskal-Wallis and Friedman's Test statistics in Chapter 9. Section IV
"Analysing Patterns Within a Variable and Between Two Variables" covers
the parametric Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistic
in Chapter 10. Pearson's nonparametric counterparts Spearman's rho and
Kendall's tau are tackled in Chapter 11. The volume closes with nonpara-
metric chi-squared statistics in Chapter 12.

Learning which statistical measures are appropriate for a given set of
data is one issue. Another is actually running those measures using suitable
statistical tools. It has been my personal experience, however, that knowing
and running the appropriate test(s) are often the easy part; interpreting and
reporting the results of those tests pose whole new challenges to those who
have little or no experience presenting statistical results in written form.
Turner provides something most would-be quantitative researchers would

therefore find invaluable: sample statements summarizing the statistical results produced by the software. Other valuable elements of this text are the substantial number of practice questions designed to further reinforce the content and techniques, as well as a summary of all the *R* commands introduced in the chapter.

One small criticism of the text is that after introducing *R* and leading the reader through the process of generating descriptive statistics, tables, and charts in Chapter 2, Turner leaves *R* alone in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. As described earlier, Chapter 2 should have most readers feeling pretty good about using *R* and getting good results. After Chapter 2, most readers will probably be looking forward to continuing to work with the software package. Unfortunately, they must either wait another three chapters before building on those skills or skip ahead. By no means does this mean that Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are in any way superfluous. They cover vitally important issues concerning research design, research question formation, and understanding statistical logic. Giving *R* some attention in these chapters, however small, may have helped keep the nice momentum built up in Chapter 2.

Overall, I have to thank Turner's book for giving me the confidence that I could successfully learn to use *R*. Though the author may have written this book with learning to use the software as a tangential rather than primary goal for her readers, it was my main takeaway. As testimony to this, it was after completing her book that I subsequently explored two other texts dedicated to learning *R*. For readers who are interested solely in becoming proficient in *R*, the offerings of Field, Miles, and Field (2012) or Cotton (2013) may be worth looking into. This single focus is, however, not the goal of this text. The strength of Turner's book is that it never loses sight of the target audience: language teachers or novice researchers who want to conduct research in their individual contexts with nonrandom and small or unequal samples sizes, which are likely to require the application of nonparametric statistical procedures. In addition, those without access to expensive software like SPSS or with limited knowledge of how to get started using the free software *R* will find this book an invaluable addition to their personal library. As a sample survey of one, I highly recommend this book.

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Teaching Young Learners English: From Theory to Practice.
Joan Kang Shin and JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall. Boston: National Geographic Learning/Cengage Learning, 2014. xii + 403 pp.

Reviewed by
Aye Mar Thet
Myat Thinzar Tun
Freelance Teacher Trainers, Myanmar

Teaching English to young learners (YLs) can be a significant, new challenge for both preservice and in-service teacher education programs in many countries, especially those programs that train teachers in more traditional teaching methods or are designed for teachers of other foreign languages to pre-primary students. This book can be used as a professional development tool for teachers and administrators who need to develop specialized knowledge and skills to teach English to YLs.

Teaching Young Learners English: From Theory to Practice is divided into 10 chapters. Chapters 1 to 3 provide the introduction, the basic principles of teaching English to YLs, and the background of teaching theory and lesson planning. Chapters 4 and 5 consider teaching receptive and productive skills. Chapters 6 to 8 consist of storytelling, assessment, and classroom management. Chapter 9 and 10 introduce 21st century skills for YLs and professional development. Every chapter has theory, planning, and application sections, along with different ideas and experiences of teachers from different countries, together with a chapter summary and information about publications, websites, and references.

In Chapter 1, the authors focus the readers' attention on the introduction of teaching English to YLs. Moreover, they also discuss how to apply new knowledge, how to respond to written journal prompts, and how to complete hands-on activities. The readers can hear the voices of teachers in the field who share their experiences teaching English to young learners (TEYL).

Chapter 2 contains a summary of 12 considerations for teaching young learners, such as the characteristics of YLs and how children learn language. In addition, the authors provide six recommendations for effective language teaching practices for young learners. Teachers can use a TEYL chart to analyze their lesson plans in order to make their instruction more effective and dynamic for young learners. This chapter also includes sample lesson plans and instructions on how to design a lesson plan.

In Chapter 3, the authors stress the importance of contextualizing instruction, thematic instruction, planning thematic units, and long-term and daily lesson planning—both of which need to have clear and measurable language and content-related or learning-strategy objectives. The notion of a progression of activities that help learners move from the warm-up to presentation, practice, and application stages is also addressed. Readers are advised that these activities should be interesting, varied, and provide for active learning, interaction, and students' different learning styles.

Chapter 4 covers teaching listening and speaking to YLs as basic principles for effective language teaching. This chapter also includes how to design fun activities, considerations for teaching listening and speaking, and seven principles for teaching listening.

Other skills such as reading and writing are mentioned in Chapter 5. These complementary input and output skills are highlighted, as are the need for both controlled and guided practice. Keeping with the practical focus, this chapter suggests a number of activities to motivate YLs, approaches to teaching reading and writing, and effective reading activities.

In Chapter 6, the focus is on how to tell a story, even if as teachers of a foreign language, we may think we are not good storytellers. Storytelling is not only an entertaining and authentic form of communication, but it also introduces new cultures to children and can develop critical reasoning and thinking skills. The authors feature hints about choosing the right story and preparing to tell the story with theatrics, props, rehearsals, and scripts. Teachers are reminded that they should make lesson plans for before, during, and after storytelling, in order for the activity to be more effective and to capitalize more broadly on the input.

In Chapter 7, the authors explore which methods are most suitable for the assessment of young learners as well as different types of assessment such as informal and formal, formative and summative, criterion- and norm-referenced tests, and integrative and discrete point tests. This chapter also includes basic assessment guidelines such as reliability, validity, practicality, authenticity, and washback as well as various categories of formal tests that involve diagnostic tests, placement tests, achievement tests, and proficiency tests. The effective assessment of oral language, written language, vocabulary, and grammar are also mentioned in this chapter.

Managing a classroom can be challenging for teachers in regard to the pace of the class, learners following routines, behavior within the rules, the classroom climate, and classroom language. Effective approaches for class-

room management and the design of a classroom management plan that can be useful for every teacher are presented in Chapter 8.

The basic concepts of teaching 21st century skills in the YL classroom are introduced in Chapter 9. These 21st century skills are listed with the *7 Cs skills* and are organized around 10 priorities that can be helpful for teachers when integrating skills into their curriculum. Although not all teachers nor their institutions may agree, suggested skills that English teachers should develop in YLs are IT skills, problem-solving skills, critical-thinking skills, creativity skills, identifying-own-self skills, communication skills, listening skills, living-in-peace skills, and cooperation skills, all of which can be developed through activity-based learning in which students get involved willingly.

In the last chapter, Shin and Crandall summarize the importance of continuing professional development for lifelong learning. Moreover, most of the techniques can be grouped under one of three approaches: theory-to-practice, coaching and mentoring, or reflection. Professional development also consists of planning, focusing on the classroom, and student learning. In effective professional development, teachers can have opportunities to share their knowledge and experience. A number of activities are outlined, including (a) reflection in the form of teaching journals and portfolios and participating in a reflective teaching group or developing a teaching portfolio; (b) coaching and mentoring; (c) observing classes, including one's own; (d) engaging in teacher research; (e) participating in continued formal and informal learning through online and face-to-face workshops, podcasts, seminars, webinars, online discussion lists, and graduate classes; (f) participating in professional associations and conferences; (g) networking through social media and blogs; (h) learning from your students; (i) developing instructional materials and curricula; and (j) writing for publication. Through this range of professional development possibilities, teachers can extend their knowledge and skills in dealing with the challenges of managing classes, motivating students, assessing student work, organizing work, meeting the needs of different students, and obtaining needed resources.

In conclusion, this book is distinctive because it is a collection of knowledge and ideas from teachers from different backgrounds and cultures. In short, it is a most useful reference for teachers who are trying to meet the needs of their learners, address the responsibilities of their position in teaching YLs, and fulfill their goals for professional development.

Editor's note: Aye Mar Thet and Myat Thinzar Tun were selected as reviewers for this title owing to their excellent presentation at the 10th CamTESOL

Conference in 2014. Book reviewers typically include a mix of experts expanding on or synthesizing the content across an area in the field, individuals with a particular area of interest, and novice authors developing their experience in writing for publication.

The Strategy Factor in Successful Language Learning. Carol Griffiths. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2013. xiv + pp. 220.

Reviewed by
Natsumi Wakamoto
Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts

Language learning strategies (learner strategy) research has occupied a unique space in applied linguistics, while also offering a practical approach to language teaching and learning. Although a considerable number of studies have been conducted on learner strategies and their role in the process of learning English over the past four decades, there has been a lot of criticism of this approach. The criticism has centered on the failure to give clear definitions of the term *strategies* and to supply solid theoretical underpinnings. Under such circumstances, a proposal to replace strategies with "self-regulation" was made by Dörnyei and Skehan (2003). Subsequently, many strategy researchers, who had inspired applied linguists, teachers, and learners and attracted many young graduate students to learner-strategy research, seemed to shift their interest from traditional strategy research to research into self-regulation.

However, contrary to this trend, in *The Strategy Factor in Successful Language Learning* Griffiths attempts to solve the problems that undermine strategy research by reconstructing the strategy research paradigm without giving up what has been achieved to date. Her approach is unique. Instead of totally integrating strategy into self-regulation or Self-Regulation Theory (SRT), she argues that the advantages offered by SRT compensate for the vulnerabilities of strategy research and even consolidate the strategy research framework. She writes that "the slippery strategy concept hangs on tenaciously and refuses to be so easily dismissed" (p. 6). In fact, she systematically tackles long-standing problems one by one. In particular, her attempt to elaborate the definition of strategies is a highlight of this book. With a thorough review of the elements that added confusion to the defini-

tion, she cuts through the ambiguity. For example, *consciousness* is an important issue in shaping strategies, which previously drew much attention and support from researchers. However, the term *subconsciousness*, which is supposed to indicate the state of strategy use as a result of adept use of strategies, has been a problem. What is the state of being subconscious, and what is the difference between subconsciousness and unconsciousness? By abandoning the problematic subconsciousness, she proposes a *deliberate* versus *automatic* distinction (p. 11) and assumes that there is a continuum of deliberate to automatic use of strategies. As learners get used to employing strategies, their choice and use of strategies will become automatic, but not unconscious. This continuum is comparable to the one of interlanguage and offers a clear image of strategies.

However, there still remains problem; that is, whether automatic use of strategies can still be counted as strategies or not. Griffiths implies that in the automatic use of strategies, they remain strategies because they can be recalled even when the choice might be made without full attention. Although some experts (e.g., Oxford, 2011) call automatic use of strategies *skills*, Griffiths refers to the example of writing to argue that there are not so many activities that are successfully transformed to *automatic use*. Thus, she suggests that although skills are related to how language is used as a tool, strategies are mental or behavioral actions used for achieving a learning goal, though as she admits, learning-goal versus use distinctions overlap in some situations. Nevertheless, recognizing skills as a collection of usable strategies seems to accurately reflect our actual language use. Through this examination, she successfully demonstrates the new working definition of language learning strategies. However, she does not forget its limitations, admitting its remaining ambiguousness, stating that "it has proved difficult to entirely eliminate fuzzy terminology, conflicting definitions. . ." (p. 49). By employing her new definition, readers will be able to distinguish strategies from other similar terms such as styles or skills and will be assisted in thinking about their learning or teaching through learner strategies.

Although Griffiths attempts to make a comprehensive review of language learning strategies, she has not completely dealt with some of the issues, for instance, the relationship between personality and strategy use. Even after reviewing several seminal studies and interview data (Chapter 3), her conclusion is obscure. A question remains why the connections between extroversion and social strategies or between introversion and strategies to concentrate on learning were not examined (see, e.g., Wakamoto, 2009).

In Chapter 2, Griffiths covers the research results to date. In particular, her description of quantitative data research is invaluable. With the maxim of triangulation, research has shifted from quantitative or qualitative data research alone into a combination of the two. Purely quantitative data research appears to be insufficient under the current research paradigm. Griffiths, however, illustrates what teachers could do just by using a questionnaire. There are many helpful insights for language teaching and learning that can be achieved by classroom-based questionnaire studies.

Griffiths's book reminds us of the aim of learner-strategy research. Many practitioners may feel frustrated when the results of SLA research seem remote from the realities of the classroom. One of the strengths of learner-strategy research should lie in the close relationship between research and practice. Shifting one's position to SRT theory for research elaboration seems to make the results of learner-strategy research more difficult to apply in the classroom. By sticking to the traditional position, Griffiths demonstrates new possibilities of learner strategies. In short, learner-strategy research started from learners and language classrooms, and its research results are supposed to be returned to people who are struggling to make their learning or teaching more effective.

The current assumption of learner-strategy research is that everyone has the potential to be a good language learner if they learn to use the appropriate strategies to tap their own strengths or to compensate for their weaknesses (Wakamoto, 2009). In this book, Griffiths clearly illustrates that learner-strategy research can assist in opening new avenues by exploring ways to find best-fit strategies for learners, finding ways for teachers to know what learners are actually doing in learning English, and for applied linguists, validating the rationale of researching learner strategies.

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