Reviews

Researching and Analyzing Vocabulary. I.S.P. Nation and
Stuart Webb. Boston, MA: Heinle Cengage Learning, 2011.
xii + 355 pp.

Reviewed by
Dale Brown
Nanzan University

The last couple of years have seen the publication of several books for
those interested in conducting research into vocabulary. Milton's (2009)
Measuring Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition and Schmitt's (2010)
Researching Vocabulary (see a review of Schmitt in this volume) are now fol-
lowed by Paul Nation and Stuart Webb's *Researching and Analyzing Vocabu-
lary*. Like the former two, this volume provides an overview of major areas
of research in the field of vocabulary studies and gives guidance on carrying
out research, but is also distinguished by Nation's regular commitment to
the classroom. In the very first line of the preface, the authors assert that
"the topics covered have direct practical implications for teaching and learn-
ing" (p. vii), and this is indeed the case, in particular in the early chapters.

The first of the book's four sections is on deliberate vocabulary learning.
Chapter 1 looks at examining vocabulary teaching techniques, Chapter 2 at
the use of word cards, Chapter 3 at the keyword technique, and Chapter 4
at the design and use of learners' dictionaries. The second section examines
incidental vocabulary techniques. Chapter 5 is on guessing from context,
Chapter 6 discusses incidental vocabulary learning through reading, and
Chapter 7 deals with vocabulary learning through output. The third and
fourth sections then broaden the scope. The third is on corpus-based re-
search: Chapter 8 tells of word lists, Chapter 9 the analysis of vocabulary
load, and Chapter 10 multiword units. The fourth section covers the testing
of vocabulary knowledge, with Chapter 11 on measuring vocabulary size,

Chapter 12 on measuring depth, and Chapter 13 on measuring lexical richness. These chapters have fewer direct links with the classroom and seem to target the more experienced researcher, with excellent discussions of the issues and practical, concrete advice on research. Chapter 14 completes the book with discussions of a range of issues that cut across the topics discussed in the other chapters and that affect vocabulary research of any kind. These range from research design to the use of nonsense words, designing and selecting measures, ethical issues, and validity.

One feature of the book is a clear sense of progression through the chapters. The early chapters may help teachers investigate questions such as "What activities should I use to teach vocabulary?" or "How can I help my students remember words?" The later chapters are more geared towards researchers seeking to investigate questions such as "How can we measure different facets of vocabulary development?" or "How can we explore what vocabulary development actually is?" The early chapters also feature an introduction to basic concepts in research such as validity and experimental design, making the book accessible to those with limited experience of research. Two features make these explanations extremely helpful. First, the concepts are explained in the context of the particular study or type of research under discussion, making them very clear and concrete. Second, in some cases the explanation is built up bit by bit as different facets of it or examples of it are given through the chapters, which should allow a fuller understanding of the concept to gradually develop. In essence, the authors have applied the ideas of incremental learning and spaced repetition that are so central to current thinking on vocabulary acquisition to the explanations of these concepts.

A less positive feature, however, is the structure of the chapters. The 13 regular chapters all adhere more or less to a basic template, beginning with a discussion of the value of the type of research at hand, then looking at previous research, steps to follow, issues to be aware of, a critique of a previous study, and research needed in the area, before concluding with a research plan for an actual study. The intention is to look at the what, the why, and the how. However, while this template may seem logical on paper, in practice it leads to a degree of repetition which is at times frustrating. The sections on *previous research*, *steps to follow*, *issues to be aware of*, and *critique of a previous study* can all involve discussion of the same ground. In particular it seems to me that the *issues to be aware of* section could easily and more coherently have been covered in the *steps to follow* section.

One other criticism concerns the concluding part of each chapter: a design for a study in the area discussed. The intention here seems to be to provide concrete plans for research in order to show how the issues discussed earlier in the chapter apply in practice and to inspire readers to conduct their own research. In the early chapters these aims are met with descriptions of relatively simple research projects that would be suitable for almost anyone to follow. Later, however, some of the studies described would only be suitable for highly experienced researchers with considerable resources at their disposal. On the one hand, this could be seen as another example of the progression in the book noted earlier, but in this case, it seems to have gone too far, and I would question whether such research projects are within the means of the likely readers of the book.

These comments may sound critical, but any faults that the book has are clearly outweighed by the positives. The book most certainly does provide excellent coverage and advice on vocabulary research. The approach in the early chapters of focusing on issues close to the classroom while building up knowledge of basic concepts in research makes the book ideal for teachers who are perhaps undertaking research for the first time, while the later chapters in particular offer the more experienced researcher food for thought and ideas for tackling some difficult questions. There is clear value in reading the book from beginning to end, but, particularly for readers with more background in research, it is also possible to dip into individual chapters along with the relevant sections of Chapter 14. Either way, I highly recommend the book, hoping that it will both inspire readers and make it possible for more people to embark on vocabulary research.

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Narrative Identity in English Language Teaching: Exploring Teacher Interviews in Japanese and English. Patrick Kiernan. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010. xvii + 214 pp.

Reviewed by
Jonathan B. Fisher
Hiroshima Prefectural Board of Education

Patrick Kiernan opens his study of English language teaching in Japan with the claim that foreign language teachers are a group whose professional lives are deeply bound up in concerns with personal identity, and that "foreign language teaching ideally involves promoting the conditions under which students can nurture a foreign seed within themselves, a language" (p. 5). This claim is an elegant starting point for Kiernan's exhaustive analysis of a series of interviews he conducted with 21 nonnative and 21 native English speaking teachers at primary, secondary, and post-secondary schools in Japan between 2004 and 2006. Kiernan's approach is exciting in that his method of analyzing the material gathered during his interviews draws heavily on norms of qualitative research in applied linguistics, as well as in literary and cultural criticism, notably the work of Bakhtin (1981), and Valošinov (1986). Kiernan's approach to language teaching as a cultural practice shaped by professionals whose beliefs are, in turn, shaped by their experiences with ELT is novel and important. However, Kiernan struggles to make this study directly relevant to ELT pedagogical practice. This study will ultimately be much more useful to a cultural critic or linguistics researcher interested in conducting qualitative analysis of interviews than to individuals engaged in teaching English as a second language.

Kiernan's pool of interviewees—both native- and nonnative-speaking teachers—are a representative sample of the English teaching community in Japan, with the notable exception of a skew towards upper secondary and post-secondary teachers. And ultimately, all of the suggestions made by Kiernan for practical applications of the concept of *narrative identity* in his research would only be useful in advanced language classrooms, in which topics such as plagiarism and point of view are discussed in depth.

The subjects of Kiernan's interviews were all adults teaching English as a second language in Japan (with few exceptions, in the Kanto region in and around Tokyo). The author conducted half of the 42 interviews in English with native English speaker teachers, and half in Japanese with native Japa-

nese teachers of English. All but four of the interviews were conducted in person, and all of the interviews were audio-recorded in order that they could be analyzed at length afterwards. Another very important aspect of the interviews was that they were all conducted with a strictly qualitative approach. The fact that Kiernan has taken such an approach is probably the single most important underlying aspect of his research, allows his research to take a fresh perspective, and allows his readers much more leeway in interpreting his results. This should not detract from the conclusions Kiernan ultimately draws. Nevertheless, because of the more open format of his interviews, this study at times resembles something more akin to literary criticism than critical pedagogy.

At the core of Kiernan's research is the concept of narrative identity which he initially derives from pedagogical practices such as eliciting narrative for conversation practice and other narrative tasks, but also links to everyday speech. Narrative identity, according to Kiernan, is something we are in the process of creating and re-creating all the time. Through the topics that he raises in his interviews, Kiernan is able to clearly illustrate this point. Using analytical tools such as Bakhtin's concept of space-time, *chronotope*, he investigates some of the possibilities narrative interview holds as a method of understanding how English language teachers view themselves relative to their work.

One central theme of Kiernan's research is that the narrative means through which identity is communicated are culturally specific and depend upon time and place. Here Kiernan takes a cue from Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian philosopher and literary critic, who wrote in *Dialogic Imagination* that "in literature and art itself, temporal and spatial determinations are inseparable from one another, and [are] always colored by emotions and values" (as cited in Kiernan, p. 86). Kiernan takes the fascinating step of applying Bakhtin's concept of chronotope in art to his own sociolinguistic work on English language teaching.

Here Kiernan draws an example from an interview with a former JET Program Assistant Language Teacher, who at one point recounts his interview for that job. Kiernan shows how the specific details this teacher uses in recounting his interview, which the teacher refers to as "one of these old-fashioned interviews" which took place in "this enormous room in the embassy," work to set the focus for the most significant moment in the narrative of the interview (p. 111). These sorts of details are the kind associated with the recollection of vivid memories, and, according to Kiernan, are actively employed by narrators wishing to construct a sense of personal identity.

In addition to Bakhtinian chronotope, *evaluation* is another narrative structure which Kiernan uses to analyze the interviews he has conducted. Evaluation, in this sense, is the assigning of a positive or negative value to something. A major touchstone for Kiernan, in his discussion of value, is the semiotics work of another Russian, the linguist Valentin Valošinov, who argued that all words are vehicles for ideology, including positive and negative evaluations (as cited in Kiernan, p. 113). Using further examples from his interviews, Kiernan not only shows how his subjects' speech mediates emotional and aesthetic evaluation of concepts such as foreignness, race, and one's English ability, but goes on to illustrate how such evaluation is critical to the formulation of identity through personal narrative. By setting moral and aesthetic evaluative boundaries, Kiernan's subjects, and all speakers, Kiernan claims, establish boundaries of selfhood and otherness.

Thus Kiernan's qualitative method for the analysis of his English teacher interviews is two pronged, drawing on two distinct theoretical frameworks, both originally employed in the analysis of literature. Such an approach will make Kiernan's work a challenging read for teachers more comfortable or familiar with quantitative research in applied linguistics. To be sure, Kiernan does include several suggestions for direct applications of his theories of narrative identity to concrete methods in pedagogy. However, these suggestions, which all appear in the concluding chapter of his book, will likely seem like too little too late for the reader whose primary concern is designing classroom projects and activities. But while discussion of direct practical applications of narrative identity in English language pedagogy is lacking, a close reading of Kiernan will reward all English teachers with a broader understanding of the power of language to give definition to our lives and ultimately deepen our practice of English language pedagogy.

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Conversation Analysis and Second Language Pedagogy: A Guide for ESL/EFL Teachers. **Jean Wong and Hansun Zhang Waring. New York: Routledge, 2010. xiv + 304 pp.**

Reviewed by
Tim Greer
Kobe University

To those of us who have learnt how, driving a car becomes second nature. We do not need to know how an engine runs or be able tell a crankshaft from a carburetor as a professional mechanic does; we just do it. However, even though language teachers spend much of their time teaching others how to speak, it would be fair to say that many have never really studied the mechanics of interaction. We typically focus on those facets of conversation that we deem most teachable—vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation— but are all too often left with a feeling that our students still need to learn how to interact more naturally.

The approach known as Conversation Analysis (CA) places natural inter-action firmly at the center of its research agenda. CA grew out of the work of sociologist Harvey Sacks and his colleagues in the 1960s and 1970s (see Sacks, 1992) and has only received recognition in mainstream applied linguistics over the past decade or so. The vast CA literature often presents a formidable challenge to teachers who are searching for a straightforward overview of the findings as they relate to second language learning. That is why it was so great to discover Wong and Waring's new book, which is an extremely accessible introduction to CA in language teaching contexts.

While it is far more reader friendly than most other books on the topic, this is not "CA for Dummies." Wong and Waring's book represents a thorough coverage of CA, and the reader should be prepared for some heavy terminology, although always with a purpose and always from a language teacher's perspective. The book does not claim to be a "how to" of CA; plenty of fine introductory texts on CA research methodology already exist, including Hutchby and Woofit (2008) and Sidnell (2010). Yet Wong and Waring do implicitly teach the CA approach through their comprehensive coverage of observable interactional phenomena in both L1 and L2 talk. Their careful documentation also provides plenty of exposure to the CA aesthetic of seeing the social world from the interactants' perspective.

Chapter 1 begins with an overview of how people interact with each other and how these interactional practices relate to teaching language. I was initially surprised to see that the authors presented this as a "heuristic model" of interaction; CA researchers generally eschew the use of models as naïve oversimplifications that add little and gloss over much. In a simple diagram on page 8, Wong and Waring outline the practices of interaction, from the minute details of turn-taking, through sequences of turns and how they work together to perform various actions, to overall structuring practices like openings and closings that frame entire conversations, as well as the repair practices that help deal with trouble at each of these levels. However, this diagram is not so much a model as a device for pulling together a broad range of CA literature dating back to the 1960s and synthesizing it in a way that makes it applicable to language teachers. Wong and Waring proceed to use their model as the basis for the chapters that follow.

Chapter 2 looks at turn-taking practices and their relevance for language teaching. Beginning with how a turn at talk is constructed and the repercussions that this can have in different languages, the authors go on to describe how turns can be made up of multiple units and how they can sometimes be deliberately left unfinished. The authors then examine a variety of interactional practices, such as list-initiating markers and story prefaces that are used at the start of a turn and allow the user to speak for an extended period. The chapter also covers the allocational aspects of turn-taking—how to grab a turn or give it up. Despite the fact that this notion is rarely taught explicitly in language classrooms, it is of vital importance to students, particularly Japanese learners who tend to struggle to make themselves heard in L2 conversations.

The next two chapters turn to the notion of sequencing in conversation—the way that one speaker's turn is linked to another. Chapter 3 looks at basic sequences, summarizing many well-known CA concepts such as adjacency pairs, preference organization, and talk-as-action. The focus here is very much on pairs of turns: how one turn relates to the turn that comes after it, and how its sequential position makes it hearable as a particular action. Chapter 4, on the other hand, goes on to analyze sequencing practices from a broader perspective by dealing with issues of topic management and storytelling, which involve multiple pairs of turns. Here the authors discuss ways that speakers combine sequences of turns to initiate and terminate topics, and how they launch and respond to stories.

Chapters 5 and 6 look at overall structuring practices by investigating conversation openings and conversation closings, respectively. Chapter 7

shifts the focus to the repair system—the interactional practices that people use to address "problems in speaking, hearing and understanding in talk" (p. 212). Naturally, the issue of how to deal with mistakes is of particular relevance in second language learning contexts, although as Wong and Waring note, "in ordinary conversation, repair is not symptomatic of a disfluent or incompetent speaker but an important component of one's interactional competence" (p. 211). Even so-called native speakers make mistakes, and so they have a set of practices for correcting them. Learners, then, also should be taught how to handle the problems that are inevitable when speaking a second language, including correcting their own mistakes (self-repair) and dealing with trouble in other people's talk (other-repair), along with the issue of how to notice a problem (repair initiation) and how to overcome it (repair outcome). Despite the obsession with errors in much applied linguistics research, there is still an under-appreciation of the many and varied ways that repair work is accomplished in natural interaction. This chapter provides the reader with detailed observations on how people manage communication problems in real instances of unscripted conversation.

Finally, Chapter 8 considers the consequences of CA findings for instructional practices. A knowledge of the interactional practices outlined throughout the book will provide teachers with increased sensitivity to how conversation shapes what goes on in classrooms. In this chapter, Wong and Waring focus particularly on the way that teachers deal with misunderstandings in the classroom, the way that task design can influence the interaction that students come up with, and the way that learners and teachers use talk to take part in class.

I used this book as the basis for an introductory CA course for pre-service language teachers in a master's degree program in Japan and found it very appropriate for that group. Each chapter includes pre- and post-reading discussion questions, chapter summaries, and references for further reading. There were also several tasks in each chapter that encouraged the students to think reflectively and critically on their own classroom experiences of L2 interaction. The authors have put considerable thought into the layout of each chapter, which made it easier for my students to process the content. Key concepts are defined in highlighted boxes, and there is a glossary of terms at the end of each chapter, something that has been missing in other CA texts. In addition, the authors have included their own language stories throughout the text, which personalizes the concepts and helps relate them to the reader.

However, the most practical element for many language teachers will be the "practicing activities" and "awareness-raising activities" that come at the end of each chapter. These "My Share" style activities provide the readers with ways to work the CA findings on interaction into their classroom repertoires. By including these activities that bridge theory and practice, Wong and Waring have succeeded not only in making CA research accessible to a wider audience of language teachers but also in applying CA research to ESL/EFL teaching.

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Discursive Practices in Language Learning and Teaching. Richard F. Young. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. xii + 267 pp.

Reviewed by
Nicholas Marshall
Meiji University

Discursive Practices in Language Learning and Teaching provides a comprehensive account of the social context in which second and additional language learning and assessment occurs, using sources from a broad range of scholarly disciplines which inform and provide theoretical rigor for social approaches to applied linguistics, as opposed to cognitive or psycholinguistic approaches. The focus of the book is on learners' participation in social and institutional patterns of language use, from which perspective language learning is a fundamentally social phenomenon. The approach adopted in this book argues against the autonomy of linguistics (*pace* Chomsky) by focusing on the contexts of language *use*, rather than language itself. This kind of ontology is appropriate given the social turn in the humanities and

human sciences in general at the end of the last century and the start of the 21st.

The title of the book, using the term *practices*, is slightly misleading at first glance as this is definitely not a how-to guide for teaching and provides little concrete or direct advice for syllabus or curriculum design. The focus is mostly theoretical but deals with issues that are significant for practical concerns of teachers. The author achieves a synthesis of wide-ranging concepts from anthropology, philosophy, semiotics, linguistics, applied linguistics, and social theory by relating these to two key constructs. The first of these is *context*, which has been theorized in many different ways but here essentially means that instances of ordinary interaction are to a greater or lesser extent influenced and shaped by factors beyond the immediate and observable situation such as learner biographies, institutional roles, and physical location. The second key construct, *practice*, is derived from social theory and examines practices (what people do on a habitual basis), adopting a dual structure, including both agency and structural components; instead of focusing on either agency (voluntary behavior) or structure (e.g., behavior constrained by institutional roles), there is a focus on both components. In this way, practice is deeply embedded in context.

Although *Discursive Practices* is largely theoretical and concerns naturalistic learning as much as institutional learning, I feel that the book is significant for two kinds of language teacher. The first is one who is embarking on or planning to embark on postgraduate study or research in applied linguistics and is primarily interested in social approaches, which are theoretically underpinned by the various traditions summarized in the book. This kind of research includes genres of theses or dissertations with one or more of the following elements: educational ethnography, sociocultural approaches to institutional learning, case studies of language learning, narrative accounts of learning processes, and various kinds of discourse analysis. The second kind of teacher who would probably benefit from reading this book is the experienced teacher with less defined academic goals who wishes to expand and deepen an understanding of the social processes and interactions seen and experienced on a daily basis in classroom settings.

The book is divided into seven chapters, and the logical progression in the book as a whole, and each section, is very clear—moving from the general to the specific and from theoretical to practical application. Throughout, Young conducts a critical review of published research in the broad field that he identifies, providing an in-depth analysis of the relationships between the various research traditions that he reviews. The first three chapters paint a

broad theoretical base. Chapter 1 begins with a discussion of the meaning(s) of discursive practice and provides a signpost for the contents of later chapters. Chapter 2 sets out the theoretical foundations of Practice Theory across different disciplines such as semiotics, philosophy, and anthropology, while the relationship between context and discourse (generally spoken, not written) is the subject of Chapter 3.

The second half of the book leads into more familiar territory for most language teachers with a focus in Chapter 4 on the resources (verbal, interactional, and nonverbal) that people bring to spoken interaction, while a broad review of the literature on social-interactional aspects of language learning, socialization, and alternative language communities is the subject of Chapter 5. Chapter 6 continues the theme of learning, and to a lesser extent testing, but this time in the context of formal education and schools. This is probably the most valuable part, discussing how different ideologies of education construct different participation and interactional formats at the classroom level and how, in turn, these educational practices may well differ widely from community language use. For example, it is sometimes hard to reconcile choral repetition or the IRE (Initiate, Response, Evaluation) participation format in school classrooms with the functional demands of language use in communities outside schools. However, teachers cannot usually manage large classes of young learners without the high degree of surveillance and control that such interactional formats afford.

The author's great achievement lies in his very plausible synthesis of what are many distinct fields that inform the notion of discursive practice; in addition, the texts that he uses to exemplify his points are interesting and engaging. One quibble is that in some parts the reader has the feeling that there is little in the way of original insight into the works summarized beyond a reorganization around the notion of practice theory. The material seems rather derivative, and one may feel that similar ground has been covered elsewhere. Despite this reservation, the book succeeds very well in demonstrating the relevance and connections within a very wide range of scholarly work in social-interactional accounts of additional language learning. In his conclusion, Young claims to have traced connecting lines between language and the contexts in which it is used and to have mapped out a theoretical approach with applications for second language learning and testing. In this he has succeeded, and for this reason the book would be a valuable addition to the libraries of teachers interested in theoretical concerns that underlie teaching practice.

Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual. Norbert Schmitt. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. xvii + 386 pp.

Reviewed by
John P. Racine
Dokkyo University

Perhaps no one has made greater contributions to the field of vocabulary research for SLA than Paul Nation, Paul Meara, and Norbert Schmitt. So it is to great anticipation that two of them, Nation and Schmitt, have recently produced vocabulary research manuals designed for language teachers and researchers (see a review of Nation & Webb, 2011, in this volume). Neither experienced researchers nor newcomers to the vocabulary field will be disappointed by Schmitt's latest contribution.

This volume is divided into seven chapters spread over four broad parts. Part 1, "Overview of Vocabulary Issues," is precisely what the title implies. Consisting of only a single chapter, "Vocabulary Use and Acquisition," it serves as a reminder of the fundamental issues to consider when evaluating and designing vocabulary research studies. There is also a special focus on the relationship between reading and L2 vocabulary acquisition, exploring the importance of frequency of exposure, inferring, and glossing.

With these issues in mind, readers are prepared to delve into Part 2, "Foundations of Vocabulary Research." One is immediately struck by both the depth and breadth of the two chapters. Chapter 2, "Issues of Vocabulary Acquisition and Use," is an extremely thorough and far-reaching review of vocabulary research as a whole. Of course, studies of particular interest to teachers and researchers are reviewed here, and staple concepts and issues are reintroduced (e.g., lexemes, word association, content vs. function words, word frequency, and the effect of L1 on L2 acquisition). But Schmitt progresses beyond the basics of vocabulary research in this chapter, going on to review studies from psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and recent explorations into computer simulations of the mental lexicon. Chapter 3, "Formulaic Language," is another substantial review of relevant studies, just as one might expect from one of the leading researchers in this subfield (see Schmitt, 2004). Collocation is certainly one of the central foci in contemporary vocabulary research, and this chapter serves as an excellent guide to those interested in exploring this topic further. This chapter begins by

reminding readers of the prevalence of formulaic language (occurring as often as once in every five words of speech). Less experienced researchers are then given an orientation to relevant issues and background, including the difficulties involved in deciding how to define *collocation* for research purposes. Clear explanations of the statistical measures essential to discovering formulaic sequences through corpus work are also offered. Sections on acquisition and nonnative use of formulaic language are of particular interest to language teachers.

Part 3, "Researching Vocabulary," is where readers begin to see precisely what Schmitt means when he calls his book a "research manual." Complementing the first two parts, which provide a general literature review, this part reads somewhat like a how-to guide for researchers. Although Schmitt is writing for readers with a background in applied linguistics research, "Issues in Research Methodology" (Chapter 4) reviews some of the essentials, such as qualitative vs. quantitative research and the selection of participants, before moving on to the specifics of conducting vocabulary research. The chapter ends with advice on how to interpret and report results. "Measuring Vocabulary" (Chapter 5) parallels the previous chapter, starting with broad issues (e.g., test validity and reliability, and the importance of pretesting) and then gets into detailed explanations of some of the issues of vocabulary testing with which language teachers in particular need to be most familiar (e.g., vocabulary size vs. depth, and receptive vs. productive vocabulary tests).

The final two chapters of the book, "Example Research Projects" (Chapter 6), and "Vocabulary Resources" (the stand-alone chapter in Part 4), emphasize that Schmitt intends this volume to be both scholarly and of practical use to researchers. The former describes 10 projects designed to get one's feet wet in lexical research. Schmitt warns that even though these research designs are simple, a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and issues involved may be required to fully make sense of the results. These projects are probably aimed at graduate students taking their first steps into research, but teachers can certainly adapt them for higher level undergraduates and seminar classes. For those wishing to get started on their own vocabulary research, the final chapter is a toolbox. Everything from vocabulary tests, URLs of widely available corpora and concordancing resources, vocabulary lists, websites, and bibliographies can be found in this chapter. There is even a list of what might be called *human resources*—researchers past and present who have made contributions to the field.

Schmitt claims to have "mainly written with the more advanced researcher in mind" (p. 260), but it is abundantly clear that this book will be of interest to novice researchers and veterans alike. The research reviews are broad and thorough—useful resources for all—while the scholarly style of Part 2 will not be lost on literature-savvy veterans whose attention will be directed to prominent research gaps. For beginners, there are the how-to style chapters described above and many other features offering guidance. Scattered throughout the book are lists of research questions to explore, *concept boxes* explaining important ideas in the literature, and *quote boxes* in which quotations from research leaders help to illustrate key issues. The book even begins with a quick checklist of references to relevant subsections aimed at helping you assess your own studies. Schmitt's research manual deserves a place on your shelf next to other important vocabulary-related books. It should be regarded not only as an academic resource, but also as a practical research tool.

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Adult Learners: Context and Innovation. A. F. V. Smith and G. Strong (Eds.). Alexandria, VA: TESOL Press, 2009. x + 175 pp.

Reviewed by
Paul Rowan
Waseda University

Adult Learners: Context and Innovation, edited by Ann Smith and Gregory Strong, is a recent addition to the *TESOL Classroom Practice Series*, a series which addresses L2 education from a number of different perspectives. Each volume in this series has a particular focus including topics such as task-based learning and multilevel classes. Smith and Strong's book addresses issues facing adult learners and seeks to aid their instructors.

The book comprises 18 articles that discuss L2 educational issues from eight different geographical regions around the world: the United Kingdom, Japan, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, China, Vietnam, Iran, and Brazil. The authors discuss issues faced in their local environments and, not surprisingly, the articles offer diverse views based on respective course requirements, research experiences, lesson ideas, and cultural influences.

The book is divided into three distinct sections. The first section, "Teacher Development," addresses teaching practices. As this title suggests, teacher development is important in building the confidence and competence of teachers in order to create courses that meet clients' needs. In Chapter 2, Brandt discusses many issues surrounding teacher development, including how people become language educators and the numerous different training programs one can choose in order to be certified as a language teacher. Subsequent chapters cover topics ranging from pedagogical approaches to instructional technologies used in the classroom. This section is particularly useful for the novice language teacher as it provides an excellent overview of how to develop a career in language teaching as well as how to create effective L2 classes.

Section 2, "Extending Learner Autonomy," discusses how to enhance student participation and how to use it in building more effective curricula to meet students' needs. The issues raised include critical thinking, learner autonomy, learner-focused studies, and student participation in classroom activities, all of which have long been a part of TESOL education. In Chapter 8, Murray discusses his approach to enhancing student autonomy through self-directed learning. This chapter explains how "teachers become facilitators and language advisers" (p. 63) who guide students in developing their own learning objectives and study plans. Murray's approach illustrates a positive learning environment that promotes self-reliance and critical thinking skills in the acquired language. As students come to understand what they need for their success, they are empowered as learners. A system of instruction that can aid both the novice and the experienced TESOL educator is also presented in this chapter.

Section 2 ends with a powerful description of what an interested learner can do when individual language needs are supported. Chapter 13 (Ghahremani-Ghajar, Mirhosseini, & Fattahi) outlines the experiences of a medical student in Iran as he builds his language skills in order to meet his research needs. This chapter, like Murray's, demonstrates the importance of supporting student endeavors and building self-reliance skills in order to promote learner autonomy.

The final section of the book, "Innovations Within a Course," covers a number of different approaches to enhancing study experiences and increasing student interest in English communication. Strong (Chapter 14) discusses the value of field trips, often an unintentionally neglected aspect of L2 learning. Strong highlights the importance of building students' grasp of the different components that make up a particular culture to help them to better understand the "social and cultural values" (p. 119) surrounding a language. In Chapter 15, Stillwell discusses how instructors can bring real issues and real language into the EFL classroom by setting a clear context for discussion. His approach to current affairs is particularly useful, as many textbooks attempt to avoid controversy, leaving the learner with little or no experience in how to use their acquired language in challenging situations.

In the final chapter, Augusto-Navarro, de Abreu-e-Lima, and de Oliveira remind teachers of the need to continually reassess their students and their lessons to ensure that they are meeting the objectives and curricular goals that have been set. This chapter returns to the ideas that Brandt discusses in Chapter 2: a professional approach to English language education.

This book is well structured, with articles that support each other. Although some of the articles in this book may not be of interest to every reader, this is true for most compilations of this kind. One area that should have been given more attention is the use of technology in the classroom. Kim's article on podcasting (Chapter 4) describes recording student conversations followed by self-reflection, but I was left wanting to learn more about the effect that technology has on the language classroom and on student motivation.

By drawing on the experiences of professionals from around the world, *Adult Learners: Context and Innovation* addresses adult L2 education from a perspective which, while seeming to be local, is without question global in nature. The book gives insight into the teaching of second languages to adult learners and differing approaches that have been used successfully by teachers as they attempt to make their lessons relevant to student needs. This makes Smith and Strong's book a recommended addition to any TESOL professional's library.