

BOOK NOTICES

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FOREIGN VOCABULARY IN SIGN LANGUAGES: A CROSS-LINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION OF WORD FORMATION. *Diane Brentari (Ed.)*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2001. Pp. xx + 186. \$49.95 cloth.

Lexical borrowing among languages is a commonplace in the study of linguistics. Still, the recognition of the bona fides of the various sign languages of the world is relatively recent. In this volume, Brentari offers a fascinating series of case studies of borrowing in five different sign languages.

The relationship between signed and spoken languages is a central concern here. Brentari identifies two structures for adaptation of nonnative words into sign languages: *mundbilder* or “silent oral articulations,” and words containing letters of the manual alphabet. The first paper takes a revealing look at the functions of *mundbilder* as a component of German Swiss Sign Language. The structures of mouth (or lip) movement and fingerspelling are featured in a paper on English-based borrowings in British Sign Language (BSL), which shows that, in most cases in BSL, fingerspelling is accompanied by mouthing. The following paper provides a thorough treatment of the incorporation of English elements into American Sign Language (ASL) and finds these mechanisms to be “constrained, systematic, and expressed within the grammar of ASL” (p. 117).

Systematization is also at the heart of a lucid paper on typological and modality constraints on borrowing in the Sign Language of the Netherlands (SNL). Here we see how a visual-gestural language (SNL) assimilates verb particles from an aural-oral language (Dutch). The final paper discusses Quebec Sign Language (LSQ). LSQ is closely related to a spoken language, French, another sign language, ASL, and through ASL to French Sign Language. These overlapping origins manifest an intriguing array of borrowed forms in LSQ.

Brentari states that “the bilingual nature of sign language communities and their co-existence alongside their spoken language neighbors make them fertile ground for research on the interpenetration of languages with widely divergent grammars” (p. xix). In offering cogent examples from a variety of sign languages Brentari makes a most welcome contribution to the literature in this field.

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MOTIVATION AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (TECH. REP. NO. 23).
Zoltán Dörnyei and Richard Schmidt (Eds.). Manoa: University of Hawai'i at
Manoa, 2001. Pp. x + 499. \$30.00 paper.

In its 20 chapters, this edited book opens new paths for theory and research in the area of foreign and second language (L2) motivation. It will be particularly useful to researchers, graduate students, and others who want to see an array of approaches to the topic. Both qualitative and quantitative investigations are included along with a number of themes that have not yet received much research attention: learning strategies and motivation, teacher motivation and its effect on learner motivation, personal identity, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and beyond, unsuccessful learners' motivation, demotivation, and learning as "foraging."

Several chapters elucidate and compare theoretical models of L2 motivation. The first chapter, "Integrative Motivation and Second Language Acquisition," is by Gardner, the eminent researcher who began studying L2 motivation decades ago and continues to provide an expanded theoretical framework for the topic. The last chapter, "The Convergence of Multiple Models of Motivation for Second Language Learning: Gardner, Pintrich, Kuhl, and McCroskey," by MacIntyre, MacMaster, and Baker, compares Gardner's socioeducational model of L2 motivation with three other (more general) motivation models and systematically demonstrates the amount of overlap between them.

All of the chapters, no matter how theoretical, are grounded in or linked to empirical research. The reader never gets the feeling that theoretical claims are being made without some basic forms of evidence. The studies included in the book are well constructed and worth reading. However, the book errs on the side of presenting so much empirical work that there is no place left for the necessary syntheses across chapters. It would have been a boon to the reader if there were thematic sections, each providing some form of synthesis, summary, or discussion of overarching issues.

L2 motivation research in a variety of settings and countries around the world is presented in this volume. Research studies by specialists such as Julkunen, Noels, McGroarty, Ushioda, Syed, Nikolov, Williams, Burden, Al-Baharna, Jacques, Kassabgy, Boraie, and Schmidt reflect the need to understand L2 motivation investigations in particular contexts rather than making generalizations that ostensibly relate to all L2 learners. There are three chapters that deal with the psychometric aspects of research on L2 motivation: one by Tremblay; another by Brown, Cunha, Frota, and Ferreira; and a third by Masgoret Bernaus and Gardner. Additional chapters concern pedagogical, strategic, linguistic, and personality issues in language-learning motivation (e.g., Inbar, Sdonitsa-Schmidt, & Shohamy; Schmidt & Watanabe; Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar; Dörnyei & Clément; and Kondo-Brown). Schumann's fascinating "foraging" chapter, "Learning as Foraging," presents an extension of his neurobiological model of L2 motivation.

The book could have been improved by offering a strong preface and conclusion, abstracts for all chapters instead of just some, a unified reference list, and a subject index. Despite these shortcomings, the book will be helpful to many. It deserves careful reading by individuals who have some background in the sometimes conflicted and confusing—but very important—arena of L2 motivation and who want to explore this field more deeply.

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ALPHA BETA: HOW 26 LETTERS SHAPED THE WESTERN WORLD. *John Man.* New York: Wiley and Sons, 2001. Pp. 312. \$24.95 cloth.

This volume is a fascinating, erudite, gripping, and well-researched work on a subject that many of us would expect to find dry, dull, and for academics only. John Man has succeeded, however, in taking and transforming the topic into a highly readable and very accessible book that reads like a whodunit from beginning to end. He traces the origins of the alphabet, from 4,000 years ago to modern times, taking us on captivating and exotic excursions along the way: how the Exodus might have come about; who the Phoenicians were and how they got their name; how Cyrillic came into being; how Times Roman has come to be one of the most popular and recognizable typefaces today.

Man postulates that Egypt is the most likely place to hold the key to the beginnings of how 26 unique, simple, and adaptable letters have had an impact on and continue to shape our lives. The early chapters deal with hieroglyphic and cuneiform systems—the “seedbed from which the alphabet sprang” (p. 57). The next major breakthrough is with the 22 letters of the Phoenician alphabet, which by 900 B.C. was used by other neighboring groups, especially Greek traders who saw its advantages and took the alphabet a stage further by combining Phoenician and Greek letters. It is at this stage that Homer enters and bridges the worlds of preliteracy and literacy, kick-starting “alphabetical literacy in the western world” (p. 225). The next great leap forward—to the Etruscans, Italy, and Latin—takes us to the emergence of the letters “U” and “W” from “V” and the letter “I” splitting into two, giving us “J” as well. The last chapter, “The Limits to Growth,” examines the Internet and the alphabet and asks whether these 26 letters will be universal. We have indeed traveled from prehistory to the twenty-first century, but, as Man asserts, we have not completed the search.

For those who wish to scrutinize and study the development of the letters and compare them with other alphabets, there are two useful appendixes as well as a comprehensive bibliography.

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