

## Reviews

---

**Mendelsohn, David J.** (ed.) *Expanding Our Vision: Insights for Language Teachers*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999, 188 pp. ISBN 0-19-541398-9, \$24

Michael Pasquale  
Cornerstone University  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Scholars in any discipline tend to look only inside that field's boundaries for insights relating to current and historical research on a subject. David Mendelsohn encourages language teachers to look beyond the scope of language pedagogy and linguistics. A classic example of this is Chomsky's appeal to Cartesian philosophy in his development of transformational grammar in the wake of structuralism (Chomsky 1966).

Three overriding concepts about widening our perspective emerge. *Expanding Our Vision: Insights for Language Teachers* contains ten chapters written by language educators. Each chapter focuses on someone outside the field of language teaching who had an influence on the author. The fields represented in these chapters are wide-ranging: biology, mythology, psychology, missiology, etc.

Three overriding concepts about widening our perspective emerge. The first idea the reader can glean is to take advantage of the vast assortment of resource materials in other disciplines. Thus, language teachers can place themselves within a broader framework. They can perceive how this historical context and current scholarly context have directly and indirectly affected language pedagogy. For example, in the chapter on neuroscientist Joseph E. Bogen (chapter two), the author applies Bogen's research on brain hemispheric specialization to the importance of using a variety of sensory input in teaching.

Secondly, while this is not primarily a book on methodology, it does provide practical examples of how we can incorporate ideas into teaching philosophy and practice. Many chapters include sections on how the diverse topics covered by the book specifically apply to language teaching. They give ideas for syllabus design, class materials, activities, and classroom setup. The author of chapter eight shows how to use the ideas of psychologist Sidney Simon by integrating cultural values in the educational curriculum. She suggests ways to include values clarification in course objectives and in student assessment.

Thirdly, Mendelsohn's book inspires us to integrate faith in education. Chapter five tells the moving story of how missionary Myra Scovel demonstrated her faith as a teacher in China during World War II. Reuven Feuerstein's Orthodox Judaism was at the center of his life and of his work in psychology (chapter six). He stood firm in the face of fierce opposition. His faith was inseparable from his work in a time when the field of psychology scorned using values as the basis of a psychological theory.

Mendelsohn's book can have a positive influence on the Christian language teaching community. It encourages the reader to look for those who have inspired them, such as former teachers and authors of influential works. It motivates us to look both within the Christian community and without in order to expand our vision.

---

**Smith, David I.** *The Spirit of the Foreign Language Classroom.* Nottingham, England: The Stapleford Centre, 2001, iii + 28 pp, ISBN 1-902234-19-7, GBP 5.99, [www.stapleford-centre.org](http://www.stapleford-centre.org)

Alexandra Sterling-Hellenbrand  
Goshen College  
Goshen, Indiana

This slim volume represents the companion to author David Smith's earlier book in the Stapleford Centre series (*Making Sense of Spiritual Development*, 1999) as well as a good introduction to the major themes