

EDITED BY CAROL A. CHAPELLE



THE CONCISE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

WILEY Blackwell

The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics

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Edited by
Carol A. Chapelle

WILEY Blackwell

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General Editor

Carol A. Chapelle, Distinguished Professor in the Applied Linguistics Program at Iowa State University, USA, investigates second language assessment and learning materials, with a focus on how technology is changing research and practice. Her recent books are *The Handbook of Technology and Language Learning and Teaching* (Wiley Blackwell, 2017; with S. Sauro) and *Teaching Culture in Introductory Foreign Language Textbooks* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). She is editor of *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (Wiley Blackwell, 2013) as well as coeditor of the *Cambridge Applied Linguistics* series. Other books include *Building a Validity Argument for the Test of English as a Foreign Language* (Routledge, 2008; with M. Enright and J. Jamieson) and *English Language Learning and Technology* (open access from John Benjamins, 2003). Her awards include the 2015 American Association for Applied Linguistics Distinguished Service and Scholarship Award and the 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award in Language Testing from the University of Cambridge and the International Language Testing Association.

Contributors

Kathryn Accurso, *University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA*
Rosa Alonso Alonso, *University of Vigo, Spain*
Jennifer Andrus, *University of Utah, USA*
Katy Arnett, *St. Mary's College of Maryland, USA*
Ilker Aytürk, *Bilkent University, Turkey*
Beverly A. Baker, *University of Ottawa, Canada*
Ana Maria Ferreira Barcelos, *Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil*
Helen Basturkmen, *University of Auckland, New Zealand*
Tony Berber Sardinha, *São Paulo Catholic University, Brazil*
Margie Berns, *Purdue University, USA*
Patricia Bou-Franch, *Universitat de València, Spain*
George Braine, *Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*
Catherine E. Brouwer, *University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*
Adam Brown, *AIS St Helens, Auckland, New Zealand*
Kevin C. Browne, *Yamanashi Prefectural University, Japan*
Michael Byram, *University of Durham, UK*
Jasone Cenoz, *University of the Basque Country, UPV/EHU, Spain*
Carol A. Chapelle, *Iowa State University, USA*
Delia Chiaro, *University of Bologna, Italy*
YunDeok Choi, *International Graduate School of Education, Republic of Korea*
Dorothy M. Chun, *University of California, Santa Barbara, USA*
Eve V. Clark, *Stanford University, USA*
Begoña Clavel-Arroitia, *Universitat de València, Spain*
Joseph Collentine, *Northern Arizona University, USA*
Karina Collentine, *Northern Arizona University, USA*
Laura Collins, *Concordia University, Canada*
Vivian Cook, *Newcastle University, UK*
Elena Cotos, *Iowa State University, USA*
Averil Coxhead, *Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand*
Graham Crookes, *University of Hawai'i, USA*
Sara T. Cushing, *Georgia State University, USA*
Diane Dagenais, *Simon Fraser University, Canada*
Jee Wha Dakin, *Educational Testing Service, USA*
Frank E. Daulton, *Ryukoku University, Japan*
Eduardo H. Diniz De Figueiredo, *Universidade Federal do Paraná, Brazil*
Anna De Fina, *Georgetown University, USA*
Annette M. B. De Groot, *University of Amsterdam, Netherlands*
Annick De Houwer, *Universität Erfurt, Germany*
Nivja H. de Jong, *Leiden University, Netherlands*
Simona Pekarek Doehler, *Neuchâtel University, Switzerland*
Patricia A. Duff, *University of British Columbia, Canada*
John Edwards, *St Francis Xavier University, Canada, and Dalhousie University, Canada*
Johanna Ennser-Kananen, *University of Jyväskylä, Finland*
Rosemary Erlam, *University of Auckland, New Zealand*
Hossein Farhady, *Yeditepe University, Turkey*
Hafiz Muhammad Fazalehaq, *University of New Mexico, USA*
Anna Filipi, *Monash University, Australia*

- Kerstin Fischer, *University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*
 John Flowerdew, *Lancaster University, UK, and Birkbeck College, University of London, UK*
 Lynne Flowerdew, *Birkbeck College, University of London, UK*
 William A. Foley, *University of Sydney, Australia*
 Elena Forzani, *Boston University, USA*
 Peter Franklin, *Konstanz University of Applied Sciences, Germany*
 Eric Friginal, *Georgia State University, USA*
 Haruna Fukui, *Kansai University, Japan*
 Ofelia García, *City University of New York, USA*
 Meg Gebhard, *University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA*
 Fred Genesee, *McGill University, Canada*
 Roger Gilabert, *University of Barcelona, Spain*
 Saran Kaur Gill, *Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia*
 April Ginther, *Purdue University, USA*
 Andrea Golato, *Texas State University, USA*
 Peter Golato, *Texas State University, USA*
 Janet Goodwin, *University of California, USA*
 Durk Gorter, *University of the Basque Country, UPV/EHU, Spain*
 Margo Gottlieb, *University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA*
 William Grabe, *Northern Arizona University, USA*
 Sylviane Granger, *University of Louvain, Belgium*
 Scott E. Grapin, *New York University, USA*
 Laura Grassick, *University of Leeds, UK*
 Anthony Green, *University of Bedfordshire, UK*
 Stefan Th. Gries, *University of California, Santa Barbara, USA*
 François Grosjean, *Neuchâtel University, Switzerland*
 Yongqi Gu, *Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand*
 Matthew J. Hammill, *Syracuse University, USA*
 Jing Hao, *Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong*
 Luke Harding, *Lancaster University, UK*
 Victoria Hasko, *University of Georgia, USA*
 Susan C. Herring, *Indiana University, Bloomington, USA*
 Suzanne K. Hilgendorf, *Simon Fraser University, Canada*
 Michael Hoey, *University of Liverpool, UK*
 Elizabeth Holt, *University of Huddersfield, UK*
 Juliane House, *University of Hamburg, Germany*
 Alex Housen, *University of Brussels, Belgium*
 Leo Francis Hoyer, *University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*
 Susan Hunston, *University of Birmingham, UK*
 Ken Hyland, *University of East Anglia, UK*
 Kenneth Hyltenstam, *Stockholm University, Sweden*
 Jane Jackson, *Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*
 Christopher Jenks, *University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*
 Jane Helen Johnson, *University of Bologna, Italy*
 Rodney H. Jones, *University of Reading, UK*
 Dániel Z. Kádár, *Dalian University of Foreign Languages, China, and Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary*
 Paula Kalaja, *University of Jyväskylä, Finland*
 Nkonko M. Kamwangamalu, *Howard University, USA*
 David Katan, *Università del Salento, Italy, and University of South Africa, South Africa*
 Anne Katz, *New School, USA*

- Casey Keck, *Boise State University, USA*
 Friederike Kern, *Bielefeld University, Germany*
 Carita Kiili, *University of Oslo, Norway, and University of Jyväskylä, Finland*
 Dan Kim, *Korea Educational Broadcasting System, Republic of Korea*
 Youmie J. Kim, *Syracuse University, USA*
 Youn-Kyung Kim, *Spalding University, USA*
 Kendall A. King, *University of Minnesota, USA*
 Andy Kirkpatrick, *Griffith University, Australia*
 Keiko Kitade, *Ritsumeikan University, Japan*
 Tatyana Kleyn, *City University of New York, USA*
 John S. Knox, *Macquarie University, Australia*
 Keiko Koda, *Carnegie Mellon University, USA*
 Almut Koester, *Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, Institute for English Business Communication, Austria*
 Magdalena Kubanyiova, *University of Leeds, UK*
 Agnes Kukulska-Hulme, *The Open University, UK*
 Juliet Langman, *University of Texas at San Antonio, USA*
 Diane Larsen-Freeman, *University of Michigan, USA*
 David Lasagabaster, *University of the Basque Country, UPV/EHU, Spain*
 Ronald P. Leow, *Georgetown University, USA*
 Sirpa Leppänen, *University of Jyväskylä, Finland*
 Donald J. Leu, *University of Connecticut, USA*
 John Levis, *Iowa State University, USA*
 Miriam A. Locher, *University of Basel, Switzerland*
 Shawn Loewen, *Michigan State University, USA*
 Michael H. Long, *University of Maryland, USA*
 Roy Lyster, *McGill University, Canada*
 Marijana Macis, *Manchester Metropolitan University, UK*
 Elizabeth Stallman Madden, *University of Minnesota, USA*
 Holbrook Mahn, *University of New Mexico, USA*
 Roy C. Major, *Stanford University, USA*
 Theodoros Marinis, *University of Konstanz, Germany*
 Waldemar Martyniuk, *Jagiellonian University, Poland*
 Aya Matsuda, *Arizona State University, USA*
 J. Greg McVerry, *Southern Connecticut State University, USA*
 Detmar Meurers, *University of Tübingen, Germany*
 Tommaso M. Milani, *University of Gothenburg, Sweden*
 Andrew Moody, *University of Macau, Macau*
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 W. Ian O'Byrne, *College of Charleston, USA*
 Gary J. Ockey, *Iowa State University, USA*
 Brian Paltridge, *University of Sydney, Australia*
 Alan Partington, *University of Bologna, Italy*

- Katie Patterson, *University of Roehampton, UK*
 Saija Peuronen, *University of Jyväskylä, Finland*
 Robert Phillipson, *Copenhagen Business School, Denmark*
 Lia Plakans, *University of Iowa, USA*
 Christos Pliatsikas, *University of Reading, UK*
 James E. Purpura, *Teachers College, Columbia University, USA*
 Mart Rannut, *Integration Research Institute, Estonia*
 Paul Rayson, *Lancaster University, UK*
 John Read, *University of Auckland, New Zealand*
 Shannon Reiersen, *University of New Mexico, USA*
 Karen Risager, *Roskilde University, Denmark*
 Hanna Risku, *Danube University Krems, Austria*
 Peter Robinson, *Aoyama Gakuin University, Japan*
 Carsten Roever, *University of Melbourne, Australia*
 Jesús Romero-Trillo, *Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain*
 Kathryn Roulston, *University of Georgia, USA*
 June Ruivivar, *Concordia University, Canada*
 Cristina Sanz, *Georgetown University, USA*
 Peter Sayer, *Ohio State University, USA*
 Jonathan Schmidgall, *Educational Testing Service, USA*
 Norbert Schmitt, *University of Nottingham, UK*
 Paul Seedhouse, *Newcastle University, UK*
 Margret Selting, *University of Potsdam, Germany*
 Jérémie Séror, *University of Ottawa, Canada*
 Philip M. Shaw, *Stockholm University, Sweden*
 Aki Siegel, *Linnaeus University, Sweden*
 Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, *University of Roskilde, Denmark (retired), and Åbo Akademi University, Finland*
 Graham Smart, *Carleton University, Canada*
 Marguerite Ann Snow, *California State University, Los Angeles, USA*
 Suhad Sonbul, *Umm Al-Qura University, Saudi Arabia*
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 Ruslan Suvorov, *University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, USA*
 Merrill Swain, *OISE University of Toronto, Canada*
 Christine M. Tardy, *University of Arizona, USA*
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 Brian Tomlinson, *University of Liverpool, UK, Shanghai International Studies University, China, and Anaheim University, USA*
 Vincenza Tudini, *University of South Australia, Australia*
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 Maria Tymoczko, *University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA*
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 Ema Ushioda, *University of Warwick, UK*
 Georges Daniel Véronique, *Université de Provence, France*
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 Sonca Vo, *Iowa State University, USA*

Johannes Wagner, *University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*
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Xiaomei Wang, *Xiamen University Malaysia, Malaysia*
Paige Ware, *Southern Methodist University, USA*
Mark Warschauer, *University of California, Irvine, USA*
Yuko Watanabe, *OISE University of Toronto, Canada*
Stuart Webb, *Western University, Canada*
Martin Wedell, *University of Leeds, UK*
Jennifer M. Wei, *Soochow University, Taiwan, Province of China*
Li Wei, *Birkbeck College, University of London, UK*
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Xiaoming Xi, *Educational Testing Service, USA*
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Lisa Zawilinski, *University of Hartford, USA*
Nicole Ziegler, *University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, USA*
Eve Zyzik, *University of California, Santa Cruz, USA*

Introduction to *The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*

CAROL A. CHAPELLE

The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics introduces readers to language-related issues that arise in the real world where languages are learned and used. It is a reference work compiled from the more extensive *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, which in 2019 was available in close to 1,000 libraries and professional organizations throughout over 50 countries worldwide.¹ Usage data from the electronic versions of *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* were consulted to create *The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* by updating 180 of the most accessed entries from the *Encyclopedia*. *The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* was created to offer readers a vivid picture of the range of issues and research approaches in the diverse field of applied linguistics.

Defining Applied Linguistics

Applied linguistics is a field of inquiry that addresses language-related problems typically occurring in situations of language contact and technological innovation. In these settings, language problems include, for example, explaining misunderstandings in face-to-face oral conversation, making decisions about official languages for the government at a national or regional level, diagnosing language competencies of language learners, and building automated speech recognition systems for businesses. Language contact refers to situations in which people speaking different languages need to communicate to accomplish business, political, or personal goals. Language contact occurs where speakers of minority languages assert their collective rights to their language and culture while using the majority language to achieve some of their goals. Language contact is also a consequence of international mobility, migration, communication, business, and politics, all resulting in unprecedented language contact in face-to-face and online communication. Technology plays an important role in all varieties of language-related problems and also serves applied linguists in their analysis of language itself.

¹ The area editors of *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* designed the content configuration of each of its 27 topic areas. The area editors with their respective areas are the following: Karin Aijmer (Grammar), Claudia V. Angelelli (Translation and Interpreting), Brian Baer (Translation and Interpreting), Jasone Cenoz (Bilingual and Multilingual Education & Bilingualism and Multilingualism), Thomas Cobb (Technology and Language), Ulla Connor (Language for Specific Purposes), Patricia Friedrich (Language Ideology), Marta González-Lloret (Pragmatics), Durk Gorter (Bilingual and Multilingual Education & Bilingualism and Multilingualism), Nadja Grbic (Translation and Interpreting), Marianne Gullberg (Cognitive Second Language Acquisition), Dorothea Halbe (Corpus Linguistics), Linda Harklau (Qualitative Methods), Joan Jamieson (Quantitative and Mixed Methods), Rodney H. Jones (Analysis of Discourse and Interaction), Krzysztof Kredens (Forensic Linguistics), Eva Lam (Literacy), John Levis (Phonetics and Phonology), Angel Lin (Critical Discourse Analysis), Joseph Lo Bianco (Language Policy and Planning), Aya Matsuda (Language Ideology & World Englishes), Kim McDonough (Quantitative and Mixed Methods), Kristian Mortensen (Conversation Analysis), Murray J. Munro (Phonetics and Phonology), Sigrid Norris (Discourse), Amy Snyder Ohta (Social Dynamic and Complexity Theory Approaches to Second Language Development), Lourdes Ortega (Language Learning and Teaching), Lia Plakans (Assessment and Testing), Karen Risager (Culture and Context), Meryl Siegal (Qualitative Methods), Michael Stubbs (Corpus Linguistics), Thomas A. Upton (Language for Specific Purposes), Johannes Wagner (Conversation Analysis), John Williams (Cognitive Second Language Acquisition), and Brent Wolter (Lexis).

Multifaceted language-related issues are seldom the concern of applied linguistics exclusively (Davies, 2007). For example, applied linguists study the learning and teaching of languages, but language teaching is one subject area within education. The processes of acquiring an additional language, one topic in applied linguistics, may also be studied by psychologists and by researchers in other fields. Applied linguists study language for specific purposes, but this is also the topic of the field of business and technical communication. Translation and interpreting are considered one area in applied linguistics, but they also have their own professional community. The study of technology and language spans a growing number of disciplines, including applied linguistics. In short, applied linguists study a wide range of issues, each of which may be shared by another discipline.

The identity of applied linguistics is found at the nexus of language-related, real-world problems and the analytic approaches taken to investigate them. Whatever the contributions of other fields to language-related issues, their blind spot is typically the nature of language as it is used in specific contexts for accomplishing particular goals. For applied linguists, the linguistic choices made to accomplish social goals is central, but how do they study such choices?

Can applied linguists simply apply the analytic approaches from linguistics to the various problems they investigate, as the name of the field *applied linguistics* would suggest? The earliest applied linguists acknowledged that the field drew upon analytic perspectives and knowledge from linguistics. However, unlike linguists, pioneer applied linguist Corder recognized that applied linguists see linguistics “through the eyes of the applied linguist” (1973, p. 7) because applied linguists need theory that is useful for their real-world practice rather than analytic perspectives with the purely scientific goal of better understanding language. Corder’s view of the relationship between linguistics and applied linguistics has been repeatedly affirmed by applied linguists’ work over the past decades. For example, it was expanded on by Cook thirty years later:

Linguistic theory and description cannot . . . be deployed directly to solve the problems with which applied linguistics is concerned. One important reason is the nature of the problems themselves. They, too, like models of linguistics, represent certain perspectives on reality. Applied linguistics is not simply a matter of matching up findings about language with pre-existing problems but of using findings to explore how the perception of problems might be changed. It may be that when problems are reformulated from a different point of view they become more amenable to solution. This changed perception may then, in turn, have implications for linguistics. (Cook, 2003, p. 10)

Attempts to define applied linguistics inevitably maintain a high level of abstraction in order to encompass the varied issues and methods of the field. Simpson defines it as “the academic field which connects knowledge about language to decision making in the real world” (Simpson, 2011, p. 1). Hall, Smith, and Wicaksono (2011) see applied linguistics as a mode of inquiry engaged with real people and issues arising in a political environment where academic perspectives and research alone may or may not be important in conceptualizing problems and finding solutions. They emphasize that problem solvers must genuinely engage with local knowledge and practice in seeking solutions.

More precision in the definition is best achieved by examining the types of language-related problems that applied linguists have worked on over the past decades and how they do it, as editors of past collections on applied linguistics have noted (Davies & Elder, 2004; Kaplan, 2010). *The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* invites readers to undertake such an examination by providing a collection of entries that describe the types of problems applied linguists work on and their analytic approaches. The majority of entries are focused

on the problems which are presented and explained along with the relevant constellation of theory, research, and practice. Work across these areas of inquiry draws upon certain analytic approaches that applied linguists have developed, or borrowed and refined, and adapted to meet the needs posed by the problem at hand. Some of the entries emphasize the problems applied linguists investigate and others target research methods used in applied linguistics, but readers will undoubtedly note a confluence of theory, research, and practice within each of the entries. Such boundary crossing is a defining characteristic of applied linguistics.

Problems in Applied Linguistics

Language-related problems typically take shape in response to language contact among individuals and societies as well as in adopting and adapting to technologies that function linguistically in society. Nine clusters of such issues are included in *The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. One of these clusters presents issues of **multilingualism** as it is studied in applied linguistics, from personal and cognitive issues associated with speaking more than one language to issues arising in education and the physical spaces in society where language is visible. Applied linguists have put forward new concepts such as *multicompetence* and *translanguaging* to study the capabilities and performance of people who speak more than one language. They study *emersion education* designed to increase academic language competence in more than one language and to afford status to and maintenance of more than one language in society. They study *linguistic landscapes* that reveal the roles and status of certain languages as well as the degree of multilingualism in a geographical area.

Multilingualism within a region often intersects with **language policy and planning** whereby particular actors attempt to manage the use of certain languages for the good of society or the benefit of a particular group. Illustrations of language policy and planning through the lens of applied linguistics appear in the entries on *Russification in the Soviet and Post-Soviet era* as well as on the *English-only movement* in the United States. The study of policy and planning also spans national borders with issues such as the *role of linguistic human rights in language policy and planning* and the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*. Both implicit and explicit language policies can be factors in the demand for teaching certain languages.

Additional language learning, also called foreign language learning or second language learning, is the topic of another cluster of entries. Over the past decades issues of **language learning and teaching** have grown in significance and complexity as they intersect with both globalization and technology. In these entries readers will see the unique case that language teaching presents in education, where specialist methodologies such as *form-focused instruction*, *genre-based language teaching*, and *corpus linguistics in language teaching* have been developed by applied linguists to address educational needs that take into account the nature of language and language learning.

Such language teaching methodological contributions from applied linguistics come in part from applied linguists' study of **second language development**. Developing a second language is a multifaceted and complex process encompassing a combination of cognitive, psychological, and social factors. Accordingly, researchers investigate a variety of questions from perspectives of cognitive second language acquisition as well as social, dynamic, and complexity theory approaches to second language development. Entries in the former area, such as *attention, noticing, and awareness in second language acquisition*, explain researchers' investigations of how the human mind processes language during learning in order to organize and learn the new language. The latter includes research that situates human language

development within a social interactive process which affects broader aspects of human cognition and personality, as described in *chaos/complexity theory for second language acquisition*.

In all of the areas outlined above, professionals rely on **language assessment and testing** to assess learners' success in learning and their ability to perform in the contexts of interest. Specifically, language tests, or assessments, are used to systematically gather language-related behaviors to make inferences about test takers' language ability and capacity for language use on other occasions. Theory, research, and practice in this area combine relevant concepts in educational measurement with construct theories about what it means to know a language, a question of central importance in applied linguistics. The entries on this topic include *assessment of writing*, *rating oral language*, and *validation of language assessments*.

The profession of **translation and interpreting** predates applied linguistics, but, like other areas of practice, issues related to this work have been magnified in recent times because of increased language-contact situations arising in multinational economic and political entities such as the European Union. Communication among people of diverse languages is supported technically by an infrastructure such as the Internet, but the achievement of communicative success is often the result of work by translators and interpreters. High-quality, often nuanced, communication is expected by participants who are dealing with sophisticated topics with social consequences. Entries in this cluster including *cognitive approaches to translation* and *cultural approaches to translation* hint at the complex interface between communication needs, technologies, and translation and interpreting. They intersect with the study of language for specific purposes, which is itself an area of study in applied linguistics.

The study of **language for specific purposes** has grown over the history of applied linguistics as a result of practices such as language teaching and assessment as well as from investigations of language use. Applied linguists create materials to teach and assess the specific forms and functions of language that are relevant to learners for specific purposes and contexts. Such practices are described in the entry *needs analysis and syllabus design for language for specific purposes*. An important contribution of applied linguistics research that analyzes actual language use is its conceptualization of language as a system that is probabilistically constrained by contextual parameters such as topic and purpose. The context-specific examination of vocabulary, lexical phrases, grammar, and discourse is evident in entries including *English for business*, *vocabulary and language for specific purposes*, and *genre and discourse analysis in language for specific purposes*.

Another cluster of entries illustrates applied linguists' approach to **World Englishes**, the varieties of English that are used internationally by people for whom English may or may not be their native language and who may not live in the traditional centers of English use. The applied linguist's study of actual English use, in contrast to the linguist's study of the idealized native speaker, makes World Englishes and their use a topic of importance. Entries such as *intelligibility in World Englishes* and *English in Asian and European higher education* describe areas of research in World Englishes.

Intertwined with nearly all language-related issues is the intersection of **technology and language**. As illustrated throughout many of the entries, technology plays a vital role in increasing language contact and solidifying language communities as well as in creating new approaches for language teaching, assessment, translation, and analysis. The entries on technology and language highlight some of the areas where the interface between technology and language-related problems creates a new layer of issues that might be conceived of as technology studies in applied linguistics. The nature of technology studies constantly evolves with new technologies, needs, uses, and participants, but the entries in this cluster, such as *computer-mediated communication and second language development*, *natural language processing and language learning*, and *multimodal discourse analysis*, provide a glimpse of the many current and future areas of research. Computer technology comes into play in many