The volume *Speaking in a Second Language*, edited by Rosa Alonso Alonso, represents an excellent contribution to the area of L2 research that addresses L2 speaking from an updated and innovative perspective. The volume is updated since it discloses research on L2 speaking meeting current times and real learners’ needs, and it is innovative, as Lynda Yates (this volume) suggests, since it approaches research on L2 speaking from various perspectives. The volume is structured in ten chapters that address timely research insights as regards L2 speaking. The academic contributions presented in this volume offer readers a distinct and comprehensive view of L2 speaking that certainly will enrich researchers and language teachers.

In addition to these ten chapters, the volume also includes a “Preface” by professor Lynda Yates, who revisits language teaching practices as regards L2 speaking and invites readers to reflect on how the skill of speaking has been traditionally understood (both in teaching and research) and how it has evolved over the years. Furthermore, Yates provides an overview of the different chapters of the volume and indicates that the authors view language as a human endeavour, in which language is understood as multi-faceted, dynamic as well as embodied, and speaking as socially and context dependent. Current issues concerning L2 speaking, such as multimodality and multilingualism, are recognised in this volume, which implies an important change in the way L2 speaking has been traditionally treated. In fact, in today’s world, multimodality and multilingualism should be seen as integrative entities as they reflect how communication (e.g., L1, L2, etc.) is constructed and deconstructed. On the one hand, from a multimodal perspective, L2 speakers employ different semiotic resources or communicative modes that allow them to create meaning, and therefore meaning can be explored by attending to those resources (see Jewitt et al. 2016). On the other hand, assuming that the world is multilingual and that speakers may possess a full linguistic repertoire, the multilingual phenomenon and the role it plays in L2 acquisition cannot be overlooked (see Ruiz de Zarobe and Ruiz de Zarobe 2015). Multimodality and multilingualism are two complex phenomena that should be carefully explored in the area of L2 speaking and, although this volume sheds some light upon these aspects, further research is needed. To put it briefly, as this volume suggests, research on L2 speaking has evolved over the years, but there is still much work to do, and it is our responsibility as researchers to share insights with language teachers in order to narrow the gap between research and teaching in order to improve the quality of L2 teaching and meet current demands.

**Chapter one,**

by Geeslin, Gudmestad, Kanwit, Linford, Long, Schmidt and Solon, provides a current state-of-the-art on research on sociolinguistic competence and L2 research, focusing particularly on sociolinguistic variation and L2 speaking. As the authors claim, the development of L2 sociolinguistic competence is crucial to construct successful communicative outcomes. This perspective goes beyond traditional approaches to L2 speaking which tend to rely mainly on lin-
Chapter two,

by van Compernolle, addresses L2 speaking from a different angle. The author, taking a Vygotskian perspective, centres on the development of L2 speaking within interactional competence, seen as a situated activity in which L2 speakers draw on specific contextually communicative resources to create a shared mental space where interaction takes place. Broadly speaking, interactional competence involves not only learning which resources are available and how to use them appropriately, but also one's competence in using relevant resources for a particular context. Drawing on previous research (Rine, 2009), van Compernolle (2015) proposes a model of interactional competence consisting of topic management, action sequencing, participants framework, turn-taking, and register. Among these components, in this study, the author focuses on register, specifically on sociopragmatics in French and Spanish, and explores how interactional competence can be developed in the language classroom through concept-based pragmatics instruction (CBPI). The author illustrates the pedagogical potential of CBPI with various examples taken from previous research and discusses interactional competence in terms of learners’ orientations to communication as well as their ability to execute and control orientations in L2 interactions, text-based chat and written discourse completion tasks. Further research and new pedagogical treatments involve, as van Compernolle argues, expanding CBPI to deal with the different domains of interactional competence.

In chapter three,

Stam acknowledges the multimodal nature of communication (see Jewitt et al. 2016) by addressing L2 speaking from a holistic perspective. The author views gestures as an integral part of speaking and argues that speaking is dynamic and involves an action. Stam provides a literature review that centres on different types of gestures (i.e., co-speech gestures, speech-linked gestures and emblems) and on the role of gesture in L2 speaking. Co-speech gestures refer to spontaneous hand movements that are co-expressed with speech and have cognitive and communicative functions since they may complement what the speaker says and relieve cognitive load. Speech-linked gestures and emblems, although different, occur with some sort of conscious awareness. The former types of gestures are asynchronous with speech and try to fill a gap or a grammatical slot in a sentence (e.g., searching for words). By contrast, the latter are culturally specific, conventionalised, and translatable (e.g., thumbs up) and are commonly known in specific communities. In addition to this, concerning gestures in L2 speaking, the author discusses that relation in terms of assessment, communicative competence, emblems and learners’ gestures and their functions (see Stam 2013). Finally, research agenda for gesture research in native speaker and L2 learners, and future directions in terms of L2 pedagogy are presented.

Chapter four,

by Eskildsen and Markee focuses on the nature of L2 speaking as a social accomplishment from a conversationalist and multimodal perspective (see Mondada 2016 for a review on multimodality and conversation analysis). The authors, as Stam does in this volume, recognise the multimodal turn of speaking, which briefly consists of an interplay of various semiotic resources. As the authors claim, language is understood as a repertoire for social action, and language, cognition and learning are socially distributed, co-constructed, embodied and embedded in local situations. Bearing in mind these aspects, Eskildsen and Markee, following a conversation analysis perspective (a spin-off of ethnomethodology), make research claims as regards L2 speaking as a social endeavour and provide insights into talk-in-interaction as a social accomplishment. To do so, the authors examine various examples coming from different settings that illustrate how speakers’ interactional features shape talk-in-interaction and achieve communicative purposes. Drawing on these examples, the authors evidence the complexity of L2 talk, show the locally situated nature of speaking and show that language, cognition and learning are embedded in the specific circumstances of talk, distributed across the various speakers, and embodied. Finally, the authors also show that L2 speaking involves speakers drawing on interlocutor’s actions, navigate local ecologies, and use a variety of semiotic resources to accomplish talk-in-interaction.

In chapter five,

Lowie, Verspoor and van Dijk explore the acquisition of L2 speaking from the perspective of the complex dynamic sys-
Chapter six,

by Gilquin, offers an explanatory study set in the field of Applied Construction Grammar that attempts to identify recurrent sequences in L2 speaking from higher intermediate to advanced proficiency levels. Data for the study are taken from a specific learner spoken corpus, Louvain International Database of Spoken English Interlanguage (LINDSEI, Gilquin et al. 2010). The methodology of this study involves analysing part-of-speech tag sequences from the LINDSEI corpus and the Louvain Corpus of Native English Conversation (LOCNEC, De Cock 2004). Interestingly, this study takes an innovative perspective since it attempts to use part-of-speech tag sequences to explore construction. The author not only discusses the results of the study but also some methodological issues. On the one hand, as the study shows, learners and native speakers commonly employ basic noun phrases. Furthermore, compared to native speakers, learners’ data reveal that they seemed to rely more on coordinated constructions and position adverbs in a different way. On the other hand, although the methodology followed may have some limitations, it has served to provide new insights as regards recurrent constructions of L2 speakers. Definitely, this study can provide language teachers with relevant information as regards learners’ constructions which, in turn, contribute to developing in a more accurate manner L2 speaking practices.

In chapter seven,

Bygate offers a more pedagogically-oriented contribution that clearly provides fruitful insights into L2 teaching and research. Particularly, the author claims that L2 speaking requires special attention and argues for creating pedagogical spaces to meet that learning necessity. Drawing on previous research, the author states that speaking and writing are different as regards the processing skills L2 learners need, and as regards patterns of written and spoken discourse. Although this may influence instruction and curriculum planning, Bygate does not suggest that L2 speaking should be separated from other language skills (see Norris et al. 2017). In fact, creating pedagogical spaces implies providing learners with appropriate opportunities and conditions for participating in tasks that are purposefully designed to develop L2 speaking. Concerning this, Bygate proposes some basic principles for teaching L2 speaking and suggests that tasks should be carefully constructed to promote successful learners’ development of L2 speaking. Effective tasks may show some sort of structure and elicit meaningful outcomes, and serve as a bridge between initial or group work and plenary teacher-talk, which may result in collaborative talk between learners and teachers. In addition, it should be noted that although the teaching of L2 speaking has evolved over the years, much work remains to be done in this area, for example, with traditional language materials (e.g., textbooks).

Chapter nine,

by Tarone and Meyers, discusses the pedagogical value of The Mirroring Project, which broadly speaking cen-
Final chapter

Alonso, the editor of the volume, offers a final chapter that serves as a sort of academic commentary on this cutting-edge field of research. The author provides a critical review of the role of L2 speaking and comments on current approaches to teaching L2 speaking, revisits and comments on the main contributions of the different chapters included in the volume, and offers a precise overview of future research directions based on the salient research outcomes of the volume. The section devoted to the role of L2 speaking across various teaching methods serves the reader to explore how this particular language skill has been treated across different teaching methods, including, among others, the Grammar Translation Method or the Direct Method, and of course, current approaches such as the Communicative Approach and the Task-based Approach, which are learner-centred and understand L2 speaking as a key element. This review is followed by current approaches to L2 speaking, such as Task-based Language Teaching, Content Integrated Language Learning. The author highlights that current perspectives view language as a social activity in which the social and cognitive construct are integrated. Finally, the author reflects on future research directions that definitely will be valuable for researchers in the area of L2 speaking.

Overall, the volume reviewed here represents an impressive academic contribution in terms of the vast array of topics and issues that it addresses. As acknowledged in this review, this compilation of chapters covers a wide range of academic concerns as regards L2 speaking and offers academic, critical and pedagogical reflection from various perspectives. Together, they provide a glimpse into promising directions of future research and language teaching in the area of L2 speaking.

The relevance of sociolinguistic competence as part of L2 speaking is highlighted in chapter one, while the development of interactional competence is discussed in chapter two. In both chapters, the authors provide a theoretical background that support their scope and offer various examples that clearly evidence the importance of developing these competences in the L2 classroom. These two competences are also in line with pragmatic competence, which, unfortunately, is not directly addressed in this volume. The role of gestures in L2 speaking are acknowledged in chapter three, in which the author reviews various types of gestures and the role of gestures in L2 speaking. The author presents various examples to illustrate that L2 speaking is not static but an action. In chapter four the authors show the potential of following a conversation analysis perspective to explore how L2 speaking is constructed in interaction. Through a series of examples, the authors discuss L2 speaking as an embodied and socially distributed social accomplishment.

In chapter five, using CDTS, the authors show learners’ variability by exploring the performance of two twins over a period of time. Findings support the need for revisiting language teaching practices in order to provide learners with further opportunities to develop L2 skills. A corpus-driven analysis of L2 talk (non-native speakers and native speakers) is presented in chapter six. This study provides insights into the methodological approach followed in the study as well as into the development of L2 speaking, which definitely will be beneficial for language teachers. The role of task in L2 speaking is revisited in chapter seven in which the author claims for creating pedagogical spaces for L2 speaking. The author suggests designing specific tasks that engage learners in group work and whole class talk, and enhance meaningful L2 speaking outcomes. In chapter eight, the author focuses on the Spanish heritage classroom with bilingual speakers (Spanish and English) to explore English code-switching in peer interaction. Findings are not only revealing as regards different code-switching functions but also as regards the pedagogical value of code-switching. Chapter nine offers a case study of a learner’s development of L2 speaking that focuses particularly on intelligibility and bodily actions. Chapter ten, as indicated above, serves as an academic commentary on the current situation of L2 speaking in which the author not only provides a review of L2 speaking but also reflects on speaking as a social and cognitive construct. Finally, the author, drawing on the key academic outcomes of the different contributors, identifies future research directions.

Certainly, the volume provides an up-dated academic contribution that discusses various and innovative ways to approach L2 speaking from different pedagogical and
research perspectives, and tries to meet current trends in language research and teaching such as multimodality and multilingualism. The different contributions of the volume constitute an academic effort that demonstrates the value of specific pedagogical applications, contributes to disseminating academic research, and detects promising areas of research. Broadly speaking, in this volume, L2 speaking is seen as dynamic and socially-based, assuming that language and speaking involves the use of a variety of communicative modes in multilingual contexts. Taken as a whole, the volume presents a balanced overview of L2 speaking research and teaching. I remain hopeful that these academic chapters can contribute to narrowing the existing gap between language teachers and research in the area of L2 speaking. Finally, I also believe that this volume will be instrumental for researchers in the area of L2 speaking, language teachers as well as graduate and postgraduate students interested in this particular field.

REFERENCES


