Thomas (R. Murray) and Kobayashi (Victor N.) (eds.) *Educational Technology: Its Creation, Development and Cross-Cultural Transfer*. Pergamon Comparative and International Education, Vol. 4. Oxford, Pergamon Press. 1987. 275 p. £16 (Paperback), £37 (Hardback).

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This book records the proceedings of the 1986 Conference of the Western Region of the Comparative and International Education Society. The papers presented provide its four central parts – electronic computers, television/radio, print media, and operating systems. This spread of topics and areas matches well with the broad definition of educational technology adopted as a framework. It also permits the inclusion of the methods of performing tasks that require no special equipment, eg the conduct of a discussion within a class or group. This approach leads to the elaboration of a 'Domain of Educational Technology' model which covers all stages from management functions through development functions to learning resources and the learners.

The sub-title of the book indicates the conditions under which educational technology is created and used in one society, as well as the means by which it is transferred to other societies. The authors state also that in attempting to encompass such a vast field in a single volume, their selection of four varieties of technology has been intended to illustrate four conditioning factors, namely potential breadth of impact, popular attention, recency of innovation and technological diversity. Each of the four parts of the book offers two examples of the use of educational technology. One example is drawn from a more modernized country and the second from a less modernized country. These pairs of chapters serve to illustrate the difficulties inherent in the wholesale importation of technologies into different societies at different stages in their development.

The plea in the concluding chapter for the possible extension of educational technology into all aspects of life offers the reader little to reduce concern that our lives have been – and are still being – transformed by educational technology. While readers are reminded of the capabilities of the flamingoes and hedgehogs in *Alice in Wonderland* to avoid becoming mere objects controlled by external forces, one is left with an overriding worry that as educational technology invades daily life and actions more and more, it will have a greater dehumanizing influence. While the reader is reminded of the persistence of older technologies and richness of a more diverse world of educational technology, one feels that such persistence will represent only a phase in the march of educational technology. The patronage inherent in these assurances is most unsatisfactory. What readers will find of value is the contrast between countries and situations and the welcome acknowledgement that technologies must match cultural patterns if any success is to be expected. However, the impression remains that relative take-up is a cultural variable which will be eliminated in the fullness of time, when the benefits of educational technology in all its forms have been assimilated.

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