At IALL '97 this past Summer in Victoria, I had the pleasure of joining my colleagues and friends Ursula Williams, Jan Marston, and Ed Bardwell in a panel discussion on the role of technology in the teaching and appreciation of language. The panel—"Monads, Monks, Missing Links, and Multimedia: When Instructional Technology Fails"—evolved from a discussion that Ursula and I had started over a year before. During that time, we had been jointly discussing what I might describe as a dispepsis we both felt with the world of language technology. What was it that was not working in our language labs and media centers? Is technology really the be all and end all in language teaching?

As a language teacher, I hold steadfastly to the overriding principle that words, beautifully shaped, shape lives. In this vein, it is not enough merely to teach a grammar or expose our learners to the now instantaneous stream of language to which they have access via television, radio, satellite, and even the World-Wide Web. It is not sufficient to reach only for comprehension or oral communicative competence as goals. Where is the opportunity to stop, to consider, to appreciate the beauty that is language and the insight that culture brings? We typically save such appreciative approaches for advanced undergraduate literature classes—courses which the vast majority of language learners in the United States never reach. Can we infuse all of language learning with the quiet joy we all have experienced in a line from Roethke or Moliere? And does technology really have much to offer learners striving to contemplate that beauty?

To know, the naturalist John Burroughs wrote, is only half; to love is the other half. Although technology and the electronic media can support the work we do in the classroom, they can never in and of themselves provide the inspiration that we as teachers can offer. As a panel, I think we agreed that ours is to not only to present material to language students, but also to demonstrate a love for the language and

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culture which we teach. Ours is to inspire the learners and scholars who come after us. And although technology will help us motivate students, it is we as teachers who inspire. The data behemoth that is the Internet may indeed prove to be the single greatest change to the way we as educators do business in the late 20th century. But one still can’t stream inspiration on the ‘net, and you can’t fit love in a data packet.

For in the end, we as language educators have a dual role: to lead our students on a pilgrimage of both knowing and of loving. For without the “other” half, we allow language teaching to become merely a subject matter, perhaps worthy of several semesters of a college student’s time, but for the most part not the stuff of life-long love and contemplation.

Several of the articles in this issue pick up on themes we raised at the “Monads” panel. With this number, we welcome Rachel Saury not only as our new Managing Editor, but also as a contributor. Her article on change and creativity in program implementation considers both the promise of technology and its “shadow side.” Patricia Lamb, one of IALL’s new Board members, considers core values for language media center employees as she discusses the human element in lab management. And Rachel and Patricia are joined by veteran Journal columnist David Pankratz and our newest columnist, Michael Heller. I hope that you find this issue of the IALL Journal as fascinating as I do!