

**Allerton, D.J. Paul Skandera, Cornelia Tschichold, eds, 2002. *Perspectives on English as a world language*. Basel: Schwabe. XIV+175 pp.**

**Reviewed by Gerhard Leitner, Berlin**

This volume derives from a conference at the University of Basel and contains contributions from experts at other universities of the Upper Rhine region. It is organized in three parts. The first one deals with native English and has papers on Scotland (Martina Häcker), a comparison between BrE Received Pronunciation and general American (pronunciation) (Patricia Buccellato), the English in Canada (as distinct from in North America) (Brigitte Halford), in Australia (Sarah Ebner), and in New Zealand (Marianne Hundt). The second part looks at non-native English in the Caribbean (Andrea Sand), Africa (Paul Skandera), the role of English in France (Albert Hamm) and Switzerland (Urs Dürrmüller). The final part has papers on learner English (Cornelia Tschichold), on dictionaries of non-British varieties (Pius ten Hacken), on Odgen's concept of "Basic English" (D.J. Allerton) and a wind-up on the reasons for the spread of English (Christian Mair). There is a map of the distribution of English as a major language (pp viiif) and a key word index.

The design of the book is interesting in that it reflects its region of origin, the upper Rhine region. And it is good to have a Swiss and French angle. The papers of the greatest interest to Australianists are those by Ebner and Hundt but also that by Mair. Ebner's paper starts out with central topics on the history of AusE, i.e. the kind of English spoken by convicts and naval officers, its regional homogeneity, the role of Irish English and other issues. Her coverage of the accent is mainly based on acoustic studies and lists main phonemic variants. Lexis and grammar get less space but are interesting accounts of what is typical in AusE. The paper ends with a look at the standardization and educational uses of AusE and the fact that AusE today stands on its own feet and needs no *derivative* description. There is no mention of Aboriginal English, of Kriol or the English of many migrants. Hundt's paper on New Zealand English covers much the same ground as Ebner's but draws on her own study of the language based on a computer corpus. It ends with a very pertinent observation on research history. NZE is one of the varieties of English that attracts a lot of energy and AusE, which used to be on the forefront of research, has fallen well behind. Ten Hacken makes interesting observations on the Oxford tradition of AusE lexicology. He focuses, in other words, on Morris's *Austral English* (1898) and the *Australian national dictionary* (1988). Since he deals with desk-top dictionaries it is unclear why the *Macquarie dictionary* (1981) only gets a passing mention. It is after not due to a "recent development" (p 146) but has a history of 22 years behind it. Mair reviews two extreme views on the spread of English, i.e. what he calls the *exploitation* and the *grass-roots* model, but does not go into the issue of native varieties, such as AusE. It would be pertinent to at least mention the potential of these models to address language conflicts with Aboriginal and migrants in Australia (and other former anglo-phone colonies).

The book under review is a worthwhile contribution to English worldwide. What is missing is a greater emphasis on comparison – similarities between, say, ScotE and AusE or NZE – and the inclusion of contact varieties of English inside native English countries.