

Educational and applied linguistic publications

Short notices by Gerhard Leitner, Freie Universität Berlin

The following notices focus on publications of four academic and educational institutions, the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR), Macquarie University in Sydney, the Curriculum Corporation, and the Board of Studies (both in Melbourne), and the Aboriginal Studies Press in Canberra.

NCELTR forms a part of the former the federally and decentrally-structured National Languages and Literacy Institute in Australia (NLLIA) at Canberra. Other centres are, for instance, at Monash University (on language and society), University of Queensland (language teaching technology) and the University of Sydney (language acquisition). Recently, NLLIA was restructured as "Language Australia" (LA) and is still managed by the expert in this field, J. Lo Bianco, author of the key document on language policy (*National policy on languages*, 1987). That commissioned book was the trigger so to speak of subsequent policies. NLLIA was a result of that report that was to liaise with universities and draw on academic expertise in a range of fields.

NCELTR, headed by the British linguist Christopher Candlin, is one of these centres with a wide range of applied linguistic and educational publications. Some of them are the result of outside collaboration with institutions such as the Adult Migration English Service (AMES), etc. And such collaboration implies access to practical teaching environments in the adult sphere and the possibility to provide an input into teaching methodology and content, and teacher training.

NCELTR's publications address the migrant sector, those of the Curriculum Corporation the secondary sector, Australian schools. Like NCELTR's publications theirs are practical even when they present in great detail educational targets and testing methods. The Board of Studies, finally, is a section of the Victorian Department of Education and deals, amongst others, with curricula issues in state schools.

The Aboriginal Studies Press is a publication outlet for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (ATSIC) and has been privatised recently. It publishes educational and related books to do with Aboriginal education and languages in particular.

The publications selected for presentation may not tell too much about Australia for Australian Studies etc. but they do reflect the dynamism of Australian applied language research. What they also do is imply that mainstream Australian English is, as Lo Bianco's report foreshadowed, the undisputed teaching goal. Linguistic identity has well and truly been achieved. More than that, while language-related problems may be quite different in Europe, there are aspects that call for solutions in the shorter to middle term, an awareness of Australian research and practices can prove valuable.

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The following books deal with the teaching of English as a second language to adult migrants and with intercultural communication.

Anne Burns, Helen Joyce, Sandra Gollin, 1996. 'I see what you mean'. Using spoken discourse in the classroom: a handbook for teachers. Macquarie University, National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Sydney. viii+125 pp.

I see what you mean resulted from a three-year project, the "Spoken Discourse Project" (1990-3), that united teachers and applied linguists in an in-service training and applied research project. It is an excellent result that is typical of Australian collaboration patterns between universities and related institutions and introduces teachers and students into research backgrounds to spoken language, applied research strategies, and their implementation in actual teaching, i.e. curriculum design, planning of learning/teaching units, etc.

The authors provide clear and comprehensible accounts of systemic-functional linguistics, genre and register analysis, conversational analysis, pragmatics, ethnography of speaking, and critical discourse analysis. Outlining their respective background and goals, the authors exemplify uses that can be made of them on the basis of real-life conversational samples and analyses. The book

gradually builds up to a discussion of teaching strategies that are clearly laid out with flow-charts and other visual techniques.

The book interests applied linguists and language teachers, who may be insecure in the use of conversational data in the classroom. It is clearly written and amply illustrated.

Willa Hogarth, Linda Burnett, 1995. *Talking it through. Teachers' guide and classroom materials, book and cassette* [=Teacher Resources Series No. 1], National Centre for Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University, Sydney. xxv+77 pp.

Like the preceding monograph, this one is for teachers in the adult migrant context and focuses on spoken interaction involving non-English-background speakers. It is based on real-life samples of strategies used in multi-cultural workplace environments. Its analyses are to heighten awareness of communication problems and to enable teachers to find appropriate remedies. The linguistic background is similar to the preceding book and integrates systemic-functional grammar, various strands of discourse analysis, pragmatics (e.g. on politeness or modulation). Naturally it highlights pragmatic competence and the roles of speakers and listeners.

The book is designed as a resource book with taped samples for classroom use. The style of the samples is, as expected, colloquial, if at a formal level. What strikes the sociolinguist is that mainstream Australian English (mAE) is the unquestioned teaching target. And that reflects the maturity of mAE and its role as an 'epicentre' in English worldwide. The book is accompanied by a cassette that provides samples of native and migrant forms English.

Hood, Susan, Nicky Solomon, Anne Burns, 1996. *Focus on reading. New edition*, National Centre for Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University, Sydney. vi+134 pp.

This volume, written at the request from teachers, student teachers and teacher educators explores the nature of reading and the teaching of reading to migrant adults. It is part of a series, the latest of which is *Focus on speaking* by Anne Burns and Helen Joyce. They will be reviewed in the next issue.

Language and Culture Series, National Centre for Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University, Sydney:

- a) **Brick, Jean, 1991. *China. A handbook in intercultural communication*. Pp vi+170.**
- b) **Koyama, Tomoko, 1992. *Japan. A handbook in intercultural communication*. Pp x+130.**
- c) **Ronowicz, Eddie, 1995. *Poland. A handbook in intercultural communication*. Pp xiv+1112.**

The *Language and Culture Series* (LCS) targets teachers, staff working with migrants, teachers of English in respective countries abroad. Conforming to a series pattern, volumes start with the notion of intercultural communication, the changeable roles of teacher and learner in the process of teaching culture, the dangers involved in it, particularly that of stereotyping, experiencing and coping with culture shock, etc.

The books on China, Japan, and Poland reflect old and new migration patterns. Chinese have come early to Australia, but their numbers declined rapidly from before the Commonwealth. Only recently ethnic Chinese and Chinese nationals have come in great numbers. Japanese are few but trade contacts bring thousands of Japanese to Australia for temporary periods. As for Poles they no longer come in great numbers but their totals are important enough and they represent patterns of central-east European culture.

Books contain a short synopsis of relevant historical, political, and linguistic details about the countries of origin, topics that are continued at the end with chapters on education and the value systems in those countries. The central parts deal with (i) the self in society, (ii) living and (iii) interacting in society.

(i) deals with characteristics of the self in society, such as address forms, communication of personal details at the workplace, family relationships, or the role of women. (ii) focuses on the needs that arise in the search for employment, housing, shopping, banking and the like. And (iii) deals with such speech events as socialising, expressing feelings and emotions, permission and apologies, etc. In all, it is the ordinary features of everyday life that is at the centre of the books, which are, after all, sources of continuous and accentuating miscommunication.

Chapters generally contain a large range of questions for discussion and more structured classroom tasks that are meant to stimulate discussion and lead to a higher, well-reflected level of

awareness of cultural differences and the fact that cultures have their own logic and rules. Value judgments are not meant to be avoided but they should be grounded in careful observation and reflection.

Books are contrastive, if at a basic level, making use of, and reflecting on, common experiences and recent research on contrastive sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis. They are provide informative insight into how Australia deals with multicultural issues. One cannot fail to notice the desire to project positive images of other cultures and to generate appropriate sources of information for teaching and learning. From that perspective, they must clearly count as models for the connection between applied linguistics, education, and social policy implementation. There is very little of that in Germany, although one might mention the series on foreigners in Berlin, published by the *Ausländerbeauftragte*.

Let me now turn to publications for the school sector, in particular to the teaching of English as a first language and to languages other than English (LOTE). The following publications do contain some consideration of problems that migrant children may face. It may be worthwhile in passing to note that the acronym LOTE is a recent creation and has replaced the notion of community languages other than English (CLOTE) that was felt to be inappropriate as it implies that English is not a community language.

English-a curriculum profile for Australian schools. [A joint project of States, Territories and the Commonwealth of Australia initiated by the Australian Education Council], 1994. Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne. iv+160 pp.

The fact that Australian schools are generally free to develop their own curricula, choose teaching contents and methods, and are bound only by outcomes' statements they have to achieve in Year 12 is well-known. It is all the more important that States, Territories and the Commonwealth have, after years of planning, managed to agree on national goals for schooling in eight areas of learning that do make suggestions for teaching content, methodology, and testing. Mother tongue English teaching is one of them and has, unsurprisingly, met with heated controversies in teachers' circles and departments of education and English.

A detailed analysis must be left with teacher training departments but it is worth mentioning that the profile highlights spoken and written language competencies, a variety of text types, the roles of culture and context in understanding, etc. It incorporates systemic-functional linguistics, whose use is much debated now; it is communication-oriented and assumes mAE as the natural vehicle in Australia (retaining in practice a close relationship with international standard forms of English).

McLean, Kathy, Helen Campagna-Wildash, 1994. *Using the English profile*. Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne. 177 pp.

This is an accompanying volume to assist teachers and schools to cope with the complexities of the profile's technical language and precise layout and structure. It is informative, not critical, and a good resource for a better understanding of recent developments in the secondary sector in Australia.

It does, however, make explicit what was left unsaid in the profile, viz. that standard Australian English is the teaching goal and that Australian literature accounts for an essential part of reading (p 9).

English-Curriculum and standards framework 1995. Board of Studies, Melbourne. 69 pp.

Although this book appeared later than the national profile, it shows that states are rather free to interpret that document and to add or delete from it. It focuses on practical communication and appropriate texts, as well as on the role of socio-cultural contexts for effective understanding. It also emphasizes that literature is "fundamental to the English curriculum" (p 11).

Languages other than English (LOTE). Curriculum and standards framework, 1995. Board of Studies, Melbourne. 69 pp.

This volume, which is structured much like the preceding one, translates general objectives into concrete proposals for content, outcomes, etc. It is interesting for sociolinguistics and Australian Studies to note that LOTEs are not seen as foreign languages. In fact attempts are to be made to show the use and roles of LOTEs inside the wider Australian community. "Students should also

be encouraged to take part in activities and events in the language community in Australia, where these are available." (p 11). Multiculturalism and multilingualism (or, rather, the presence of many migrant languages) undoubtedly feed into non-English language teaching (while migrant forms of English do not, at secondary school level).

Like the preceding volumes this one illustrates the manner in which curricula are designed for the school sector.

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To conclude with very brief notices of books from the Aboriginal Studies Press. Note that a more comprehensive summary will follow in the next issue.

Harris, Stephen, 1990. *Two-way Aboriginal schooling. Education and cultural survival.* Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press. xvi+176 pp.

There are heated controversies about what two-way education may mean. For Stephen Harris it means the division of language/culture teaching according to domains, the one(s) for traditional languages, the other(s) for English. Patrick McConvell and others disagree. They argue that two-way must mean that the language(s) must be taught for use in all domains. It is to be left to the individual if and when they want to distinguish domains. Other still, such as Ian Malcolm, argue that two-way must apply also Aboriginal English, which, they feel, is sufficiently different from mainstream English to call it a code of its own.

The book then is not only important but highly controversial, drawing not only on Harris's experiences in north Australia but also on those of American Indians etc. It is well written and well documented with a sizable bibliography.

Keeffe, Kevin, 1992. *From the centre to the city. Aboriginal education, culture and power.* Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press. xiv+198 pp.

This book deals with central issues of curricula design, school organization, etc. in Aboriginal Australia. It differs from Harris's in that it integrates the debate about education needs in the country and the city.