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The Missing Link: Workplace Education in Small Business

Forrest Chisman.

Washington, DC: The Southport Institute for Policy Analysis. 1992.

The Workplace Literacy Primer: An Action Manual for Training and Development Professionals

William J. Rothwell and Dale C. Brandenburg.

Amherst, MA: Human Resources Development Press. 1990.

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In ESL, more than any other field of language learning, the range of ideas which represent current practices in teaching, research, and theory is a vibrant, sometimes volatile mix of sociopolitical concerns, public policy issues, and linguistic/pedagogical research. Because this range of disciplines informs ESL teaching practice, the ESL instructor can choose from a wide variety of teaching resources. In the nascent practice of workplace ESL, the field of business management and administration also has an obvious, substantial influence upon instruction and theory.

The primary teaching resources coming from the business world for workplace ESL instructors take the form of generalized how-to manuals for human resources and training professionals, which barely touch upon ESL or language training. *The Workplace Literacy Primer* falls into this category. The other book reviewed in this article, *The Missing Link: Workplace Education in Small Business*, looks at workplace education from not a business, but a public policy standpoint. Thus, these two books provide the ESL instructor with two different and nonpedagogical perspectives on workplace instruction.

The Workplace Literacy Primer is, as it is subtitled, an action manual for training and development professionals. As such, it provides a means for

ESLers to understand what human resource (HR) people do: their role in an organization, what they must do to get a training program off the ground, their jargon. Part 1 of *The Workplace Literacy Primer* briefly defines the problem of adult literacy on a national scale and shows how to recognize basic skills problems in an organization through a needs assessment. Part 2 helps the HR person figure out how to address those problems discovered through the needs assessment. Parts 3 through 6 show how to set up, operate, and evaluate an in-house training program.

Being a manual, this book reads like a university textbook. All the ideas are laid out precisely and repeatedly; each chapter has an overview, "application activities" (also known as exercises), and endnotes. Dozens of models, charts, flowcharts, graphs, and survey results provide the reader with plenty of visual reinforcement. This book provides readers with a good, if rather pedantic, understanding of how training and development professionals view (or are supposed to view) workplace literacy and basic skills training. However presented, this kind of knowledge is critical for anyone in the field of workplace literacy training.

In addition, the book provides some thought-provoking nuggets of information within the vast groves of "exhibits" (all that visual stuff), most gleaned from already well-known publications such as *The Bottom Line* and *Workforce 2000*, that are of interest to ESLers. There is a brief discussion of the legalities of pre-employment testing. (It's legal - with certain exceptions. Is language testing okay?) Numerous surveys are cited. In one, HR professionals rated the relative importance of various reasons for offering in-house training. (The most important reason was to "improve the organization's ability to respond to technological change." How would one achieve this goal in the context of an ESL workplace class?) The most common skill taught in basic skills courses, according to one survey, is not reading, writing, or math, but listening. (What's the difference between teaching listening skills to native speakers and nonnative speakers?) Exemplary, established, basic-skill programs by well-known companies have three things in common. They are: (a) delivered on the employees' own time, (b) offered more by educators than by in-house trainers, and (c) organized more by elementary or secondary grade level and subject matter than by subject or job-related activities. (How does this jibe with your own experience?) In addition to the numerous studies and surveys quoted, this book lists many kinds of organizations involved in the field and commercially available training materials.

The Workplace Literacy Primer serves much the same purpose as a general ESL text: It doesn't directly address the teaching of ESL in the workplace, but it does have within it some potentially useful ideas and informa-

tion that the workplace ESL professional can adapt to his/her own situation. Sound familiar?

The Missing Link is a summary report of an 18-month study of formal employer-sponsored basic skills (or workforce literacy) instruction in small and medium-sized firms, conducted by the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis, a think-tank based in Washington, DC. Thus, rather than describe, as *The Workplace Literacy Primer* does, what should be done and how, *The Missing Link* tries to describe what is being done and how it is being done. In addition, *The Workplace Literacy Primer* focuses on developing training programs for large corporations (500 employees or more); *The Missing Link*, as described above, focuses on smaller companies.

According to the author, Forrest Chisman, *The Missing Link* focuses on the gap between "the need and demand for workplace education and the supply" (p. 14). Noting that currently only 3% to 5% of small and medium-sized businesses are providing training for their employees and 20% to 30% want to implement such programs at their companies, Chisman writes that the challenge is to take what has been done at the 3% to 5% and make it happen at those companies that want it - "in such a way that the distinctive character of workplace education as a system for building both better workers and better firms is not lost (p. 14)." This can be done, he says, "by stimulating the public-private partnerships that are at the heart of the small business approach" (p. 14). Chisman devotes the rest of the book to an overview of the different types of workplace education programs currently being used, an analysis of why some businesses have implemented workplace education programs while others haven't, an overview of the providers of workplace education programs, and finally, a model for a federal role in workplace education - as he calls it, "A Federal Initiative To Create A New Partnership For Workplace Education" (p. 106). Chisman's message resonates throughout the entire report: This is a new, worker-centered orientation towards workplace education, one which mirrors the change in work organization which many small companies have already implemented and which should be nurtured and promoted by the federal government.

In advocating the involvement of the federal government in workplace education, Chisman specifically recommends that the federal government provide a "core" of experienced workplace educators to address problems of "market failure, quality, and funding at every level" (p. 106). Drawing an analogy with the Cooperative Extension Service, an agricultural program started in 1914 to help small farmers increase the productivity of their yields, Chisman envisions the creation of a federal Office of Workplace Education, as well as similar state offices, to be partners with small businesses in establishing workplace education programs.

While the idea of expanding the size of the federal and state bureaucracies may not be everyone's cup of tea, Chisman's ideas are clearly worthy of serious consideration and debate, particularly in California, which faces enormous challenges in improving both the educational system and the economic climate.

So, are these two books useful? Yes, and for different reasons. *The Workplace Literacy Primer* helps one gain insight into the way training professionals are taught to think about workplace literacy programs. *The Missing Link* gives one a clearer view of what is actually happening out there and more specifically addresses the issues and concerns that are relevant to the ESL workplace educator. ■

*Language and Discrimination:
A Study of Communication in Multiethnic Workplaces*

C. Roberts, E. Davies, and T. Jupp. London: Longman. 1992.

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Have you wondered, as I have, what became of Britain's National Centre for Industrial Language Training (NCILT) projects, the efforts that produced the now-classic videotape *Crosstalk* (Twitchin, 1979), a staple of North American cross-cultural and sociolinguistics courses since the 1980s? This provocative volume presents "the rest of the story," a comprehensive and insightful account of the rise and demise of NCILT's collaborative training efforts involving ESL professionals, employers, training institutions, and nonnative English-speaking workers in Britain from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s.

This book is well worthwhile for ESL professionals (and any other audiences concerned with workplace training and worker relations) for several reasons. First, from a theoretical and practical standpoint, is the insistence that linguistic and cross-cultural training be reciprocal, involving all parties, not just the relatively powerless workers or learners. This is a refreshing change from past studies of workplace training, which often reflected solely the institutional interests of employers and the views of the dominant culture (Hull, 1993). To get a good orientation to the broad social context motivating the NCILT projects, it is useful to read chapters 1, a general overview of issues in language and discrimination, and 6, the conclusion, in which the authors assess the social context and overall impact of the project, before reading the other chapters, which describe some of the linguistic and educational topics in more detail.

Chapter 6 shows that, as NCILT continued, program designers developed greater insights and more appropriate methods for balancing the perspectives of the participants served with those of the diverse teachers, sponsors, and funding agencies which participated. Their candid admission that many of the paths of action taken by NCILT were relatively unplanned at

the start, and their honesty regarding the constraints affecting program development will ring true to the experience of anyone who has ever attempted to implement a real life language project. Throughout the volume, the authors disavow overly simple, linear models of curriculum design and program implementation and thus reflect current scholarship regarding the messiness, dynamism, and blurred boundaries (or "indeterminate zones of practice" [Schön, 1987, p. 6]) of human problem-solving activities.

Chapter 2 provides a careful consideration of several available scholarly approaches (e.g., ethnography, social semiotics, pragmatics, discourse analysis) – each with its advantages and disadvantages – toward the practical issues of gathering and analyzing data on worker selection and workplace communication which arose during the course of the project. This chapter by itself is a welcome answer to the question of what various disciplines can and cannot offer to practitioners and service providers engaged in addressing real world problems. It documents the project teams' engagement with current developments in all the fields they drew upon as they went about planning and delivering services to program participants, who were, in the main, unemployed (or *redundant*, as the term is used in Britain) Black and Asian workers in Britain's industrial Midlands.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 offer fuller descriptions of how planners, teachers, and participants proceeded to identify and then deal with issues of cross-cultural and linguistic misunderstanding in the workplace through pedagogical interventions. NCILT courses went well beyond the usual general cross-cultural training programs in several ways by (a) spending time (up to a full week, far shorter than a traditional ethnography but much longer than allowed in many workplace training projects [McGroarty & Scott, 1993]) doing participant observations as a means of needs assessment in relevant settings; (b) hiring and collaborating with professional service providers and instructors who spoke the languages of the participants; and (c) paying close attention to how communicative exchanges were evaluated by all parties involved, not just by employers and supervisors. This latter effort led to the establishment of training programs that were more specifically suited to the situations of various groups of workers and, equally significant, explicit training in antiracist interviewing procedures for government service providers.

Chapter 4 demonstrates NCILT's dual-track approach to analysis of ethnographic data, with consideration of overarching matters of conflicting cultural schemata, expectations, and assumptions, coupled with a closer, but still selective, examination of specific linguistic features (i.e., prosody, syntax, and lexis). Some miscommunications were indeed caused by different uses of the latter features, particularly prosody, but far more often the mis-

match of culturally based expectations regarding roles and behavior played a larger role in creating and maintaining communicative barriers.

Chapter 5 focuses directly on language teaching and learning through summaries of four different NCILT projects related to addressing the needs of intermediate-level learners, developing student autonomy, linking language classes more closely to occupational skill training, and preparing bilingual staff. Discussion of the relative success of programs to promote learner autonomy was particularly interesting. Both teachers and students were unfamiliar with the premises and methods of self-directed learning, indicating once more that authoritarian classroom expectations and participation structures are as deeply rooted in workplace training as in other educational institutions.

For North American readers, slightly more explicit orientation to the data and to the research context would have been useful. Even with consistent use of standard transcription conventions, it is difficult to derive a sense of exactly how language functioned to discriminate against nonnative speakers in a few of the many transcripts included. As the authors note, much crucial information is carried by either intonation or implicature; for Americans unfamiliar with conventional British intonation, it is not entirely clear what, precisely, made nonnative speakers of English feel demeaned by a particular speech segment. (The authors are careful to acknowledge the extremely subtle nature and interactive effect of the cues studied. One wishes for an accompanying cassette or video to get a firmer grasp of the interpretation of data here. In a time-honored southern California tradition, I suggest it is high time for *Crosstalk II* to accompany this book.) More extensive discussion of the relationship of workers and union stewards to management in the British industries studied would also assist North American readers in understanding whether and how labor organizations contributed to training efforts, though authors do report that the influence of British unions waned greatly during the period under study. Additionally, more information about the types of adult education available (or unavailable) to members of minority language groups outside their workplaces would help readers on this side of the Atlantic grasp the extent of educational alternatives available, either through classes or self-access education centers, for workers who did not have access to NCILT, which was implemented in selected sites rather than nation wide.

These are minor quibbles, though, for this is an ambitious volume that succeeds in thoughtfully summarizing and critiquing more than a decade of high-level professional effort informed by sociolinguistic sophistication and genuine social commitment. The short bibliographic essays at the end of each chapter, the extensive bibliography, and the thorough index make the

book a valuable resource for researchers as well as teachers. Language professionals and the many other audiences of service providers, policy makers, and community advocates interested in workplace language must take the findings and cautions of *Language and Discrimination* to heart to advance the field. This book is a landmark both because of the scope of the project it reports and the even-handed presentation of the theories, data, analyses, and assumptions driving the effort. The occupationally stratified and linguistically diverse multiethnic workplaces considered here are ubiquitous in California and in most large cities of the industrialized world. It behooves language professionals to see what projects such as NCILT can and cannot do to promote equity, harmony, and autonomy in workplaces and in workers' lives. Through publication of this book, the authors have enabled ESL professionals to learn from NCILT's many successes, few failures, and, more importantly, its efforts to develop imaginative approaches to workplace training. No one interested in language and workplace training can ignore their considerable achievements. ■

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Immigrant America: A Portrait

Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut.
Berkeley: University of California Press. 1990.

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When it comes to immigrants, the mood is getting ugly ... Jobs are scarce and as the U.S. economy sputters, people accuse foreigners of stealing paychecks from Americans ... Anger is heating to a fever pitch in California where citizens' groups are calling for a crackdown on further immigration. Meanwhile politicians vow to seal U.S. borders and halt the flood of newcomers. (Getlin, 1993, p. E4)

In this climate of economic scarcity and rising anti-immigrant sentiment, we ESL teachers and administrators in all educational segments must serve the needs of our students. It behooves us, therefore, to gain some understanding of the complexities of contemporary immigration and a perspective on what the past has taught us to expect.

Portes and Rumbaut's *Immigrant America: A Portrait* provides a valuable analysis of the complexities concerning immigration that differs from simplistic public perceptions. In the preface, the authors state that their aim is to make accessible to the general public a comprehensive and comprehensible synthesis of the major aspects of the literature on immigration. The book focuses on the diversity of today's immigrants' origins and contexts of exit from their home countries, as well as the diversity of their adaptation experiences and contexts of reception into American society.

The book consists of seven chapters. It begins with a discussion of who the immigrants are and where they come from, including a typology of present-day immigrants that provides a framework for the authors' analyses of their processes of economic, political, social, cultural and psychological adaptation. The second chapter examines their points of destination and patterns of settlement, and the formation and function of new ethnic com-

munities in urban America. Chapter 3 looks at the incorporation of immigrants in the American economy and seeks to explain differences in education, occupation, entrepreneurship, and income by examining not only immigrants' resources and skills but specific government policies, labor market conditions and characteristics of various ethnic communities. Chapter 4 analyzes immigrant politics, including the underlying questions of identity, loyalty, and determinants of current patterns of naturalization among newcomers who are "in the society but not yet of it" (pp. 95-96). Chapter 5 focuses on the emotional consequences of migration and acculturation and the major determinants of immigrants' psychological responses to their changed circumstances.

Of particular interest to language teachers is Chapter 6, "Learning the Ropes," which provides a detailed discussion of English acquisition, the loss or maintenance of bilingualism across generations, and new data on the educational attainment of diverse groups of migrants in American public schools. The goal of the concluding chapter is to clarify the origins of today's undocumented immigrants and to assess their effects on America in the future.

This book not only contains a wealth of information about current immigrants and an analysis of what they mean to America, but also challenges the common media clichés and widespread stereotypes. These public perceptions often contribute to the xenophobic fears which fuel political agendas of nativist groups and also often affect the various contexts in which we ESL teachers do our work.

The authors present research findings which refute such public perceptions as the following:

1. It is only desperate poverty, squalor and unemployment in the sending countries which propels people to America.
2. Only the people with the least skills immigrate to the United States.
3. Concentrations of immigrants will lead to separatism and cultural alienation.
4. Undocumented immigration stems solely from the economic needs of the immigrants.
5. Immigrants steal low wage jobs from citizens, particularly minorities, or they cause wages to be lowered because they will work for less money.

One popular nostrum with which we ESL teachers are all familiar is that English should be the official language of the United States because of the fear that the preeminence of English is being threatened by other lan-

guages, particularly Spanish. Research findings reported in the book indicate, on the contrary, that native language monolingualism rarely outlasts the first generation, that English monolingualism is the dominant trend among the second generation, and that maintenance of fluent bilingualism is the exception which depends on the intellectual and economic resources of the parents and social supports like an ethnic enclave. The authors point out the irony that, although foreign language fluency is an asset and a scarce one at that in the United States, preserving the languages of immigrants is seen as a threat and so is not supported by the society at large.

ESL teachers should particularly take note of the common assumption that acculturation has generally been considered to have beneficial consequences for the economic progress and psychological well-being of immigrants. Portes and Rumbaut present contradictory findings. For example, a study of Mexican immigrants, native-born Mexican-Americans, and non-Spanish whites in California's Santa Clara Valley found that a pervasive sense of cultural heritage was positively related to mental health and social well-being among both immigrants and native Mexican-Americans. Another study found that the higher the level of acculturation or "Americanization," the greater the prevalence of such disorders as alcohol and drug abuse or dependence, phobia, and antisocial personality.

The last chapter includes some sensible recommendations for immigration policy concerning the various types of immigrants previously discussed, such as manual labor migrants, professionals and entrepreneurs, and refugees and asylees. The authors conclude that "clearly, the United States cannot be the last place of refuge for everyone in need, and in this sense some form of control is well justified. However, restrictionists' gloomy rhetoric concerning all present immigration is likely to prove as groundless as in the past ... Although problems and struggles are inevitable along the way, in the long run the diverse talents and energies of newcomers will reinforce the vitality of American society and the richness of its culture." (p. 246)

For those who are stimulated to delve further into the topic, the 23-page bibliography is a good resource. ■

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Language Planning and Social Change

Robert L. Cooper. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1989.

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Language planning may seem like something done only by high-ranking political officials. However, language planning or the implementation of those plans is carried out by teachers' associations (Bangbose, 1989) and by individual language teachers whenever they choose a text (Tollefson, 1991), administer a proficiency exam, make decisions on which variety of English to teach (Nelson, 1985) or how to treat the learner's native language in the classroom. ESL teachers in particular know firsthand that learner problems are not strictly language problems but are related to the history that each learner brings to school – the political and economic forces that bring them to our classrooms and their struggle to find a new way of life amongst neighbors who may or may not espouse cultural and linguistic pluralism as a core value (Smolicz, 1980). Therefore, for ESL/EFL instructors or trainees who have an interest in how language planning and social change are interconnected, who are curious about how learner motivation is affected by forces beyond the classroom, and who desire to get a more global perspective of their profession, this book is a valuable resource.

As an introduction to the field of language planning, Cooper's work is designed not specifically for the TESOL professional but for anyone with an interest in language. In fact, Cooper's presentation presupposes no prior knowledge of sociology or linguistics. Nevertheless, it is scholarly in nature and would be appropriate for a graduate-level course in sociolinguistics for future TESOL professionals.

In the first chapter, Cooper uses four examples to show that language planning is never carried out in a vacuum nor is it ever carried out for purely linguistic purposes. The first example is that of the circumstances behind the founding of the Académie Française. For those who have little time or inclination to follow, much less comprehend, the connection between politics and language policy decisions, this is an accessible account of the very

human elements that go into these decisions. The second example is that of the promotion of Hebrew in Palestine – a language planning success story – and the factors that led to the flourishing of this language for everyday life. Following this is the example of the feminist movement in the United States and its efforts to reduce sexist usage of language such as androcentric generics. Cooper outlines the historical events and social climate surrounding this movement, which is still in progress. Indeed, this movement is one of the areas that affects the English teacher directly in her or his decisions about teaching such things as generic pronouns and names for professions. Finally, Cooper traces the history of the language situation in Ethiopia from the fourth century A.D. to the revolution in the 1970s, giving us another example of how the course of human events is affected by language and its inextricable links with mass movements and group identity.

The second chapter of the book is devoted to a thorough coverage of no less than 13 different definitions of language planning. The third and fourth chapters deal with frameworks for language planning in which Cooper presents four analogies for describing the workings of language planning: (a) as an instance of innovation management, (b) as a type of marketing, (c) as a tool in the acquisition and maintenance of power, and (d) as an example of decision making. The organization of this chapter is hard to follow, but Cooper gives the reader a helpful outline at the end. In fact, if you believe that language is solely a tool for communication, chapter 4 will give you some reasons to reevaluate your position.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 present definitions and many examples of three different kinds of language planning: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning. For example, status planning – the allocation of function to particular language varieties – is seen in the declaration of statutory official status of English in California in 1986. Those involved in bilingual education will be particularly interested in this chapter, as will those who are working to secure the linguistic rights of language minorities (Ruiz, 1984). Corpus planning, Cooper explains, involves standardization, modernization, and the reduction of language into written form. This chapter is particularly helpful in demonstrating both the need for a standard and the transitory and arbitrary nature of such standards. EFL teachers and curriculum designers will find Cooper's historical background on the English language helpful in making decisions about whose English to teach and whose standard to enforce (Nelson, 1985).

Classroom language teachers and administrators will find that the chapter on acquisition planning relates directly to them, while the last chapter on social change is a good introduction to the various theories developed in the field of sociology to explain how and why societies

change. This last chapter of the text may be of help in empowering TESOL professionals who feel ignorant of the sociopolitical processes that bring learners to them and that influence bureaucrats in making policy decisions that teachers and administrators find difficult to implement.

Cooper also includes an index to topics, languages, and countries mentioned in the book. For example, for those of us concerned and confused about the situation in the former Yugoslavia, there are entries on Serbo-Croatian and Bosnian. The Vietnam War, the Spanish language, and the former Soviet Union are also represented. Due to the introductory nature of the book, however, some of the treatments of language situations are not as detailed as others. In addition, some of the language situations described by Cooper have changed since 1989, when this text was published. In light of this, further work like Cooper's – on learners' historical and cultural backgrounds – is needed in order to provide deeper insights into the dynamics of multicultural classrooms and design policies and programs that take into account the connections between language and culture. ■

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Planning Language, Planning Inequality

James W. Tollefson. New York: Longman. 1991.

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Enthusiasm, appreciation, perturbation, anger – rarely has a language book engendered the diversity of strong reactions that I have heard expressed in discussions of Tollefson's *Planning Language, Planning Inequality*. Although several recent publications have emphasized the political nature of language planning (e.g., Coulmas, 1993/1994; Luke, McHoul, & Mey, 1990), few are as clearly written and accessible to nonspecialists as is Tollefson's book – and it is precisely because it causes such diverse and sometimes uncomfortable reactions that the book is valuable reading for anyone involved in language teaching or program administration.

The main aim of the book is to show that language planning is inherently ideological and that language policies are used to maintain or further social inequalities. Tollefson argues that, despite the energy and resources put into language teaching, our language policies are driven by systems which ensure that millions of people will not be able to acquire the language competence necessary for social and economic success. As Tollefson puts it

...while modern social and economic systems require certain kinds of language competence, they simultaneously create conditions which ensure that vast numbers of people will be unable to acquire that competence. A central mechanism by which this process occurs is language policy. (p. 7)

The strength of the book – and the primary reason for positive reactions to it – lies in the variety of contexts Tollefson uses to support his main point. Eight different countries are included in the discussions. Furthermore, the book's chapters are structured in such a way as to present the major issues from a variety of perspectives. In addition to analyses of national situations, the chapters include five other useful features. First, case studies give concrete and more personal examples of the issues being addressed. In addition, media examples are used to extend the issues to dif-

ferent contexts, with excerpts ranging from United Nations resolutions to the *TESOL Newsletter*. At the end of each chapter, the "For Discussion" section raises some provocative points and suggests activities such as comparing the ideologies underlying certain textbooks, while the "For Action" section encourages observations, interviews, and visits to schools or agencies to discover more about the local situation. Finally, each chapter concludes with brief annotations of related readings.

The book is divided into eight chapters, with the first two chapters providing background information. Chapter 1 introduces the main idea of the book with discussion of language use in the United States and Namibia and defines terms from social theory, such as *power* and *hegemony*, which are important in later chapters. Chapter 2 contrasts two approaches to analyzing language situations – the *neoclassical approach*, which emphasizes the role of the individual and attributes any lack of success in a language to the individual's motivation and choices, and the *historical-structural approach*, which emphasizes social, political, and economic factors which shape a given context and constrain individuals' choices. Tollefson applies the latter approach in subsequent chapters in order to explain language policies and their consequences.

Chapters 3 to 7 comprise the heart of the book, each giving a different perspective on ideology and language planning. Chapter 3 focuses on mother tongue maintenance and second language learning in England, highlighting the "monolingual ideology" (p. 43) of both government reports and theories of language behavior. Chapter 4 then examines situations in which English is promoted as a tool for modernization, though it actually serves to maintain inequalities in society; Iran and China are used to demonstrate contrasting attitudes towards English. Issues of migration and language policies are discussed in chapter 5, in which Tollefson argues that U.S. education policies for refugees and immigrants ensure that they will stay in marginalized, low-paying jobs. Chapter 6 investigates the situation in the Philippines to show how English as a second language can also serve to benefit those established in power, just as does English as a native language for powerful groups in other countries. Finally, chapter 7 discusses countries where language rights have been protected. Australia is presented as a more stable example, and Yugoslavia is used to show that the protection of rights requires constant struggle, with their withdrawal leading to crisis. Though the description of this crisis is outdated, it does provide useful background on events which dominate international news today.

Chapter 8 provides the conclusion to the book, reviewing its main points and adding critiques of language policy research and language policies in the workplace. The ability to use one's own language at work is

emphasized as central to a democratic system; however, the discussion of language at work is surprisingly brief considering the importance Tollefson attributes to it.

In addition to the variety of contexts presented, another strength of the book is that it goes beyond large-scale language planning situations and includes issues related to language acquisition research and pedagogy. Most useful for teachers and materials writers is likely to be chapter 4. The issue of modernization is expanded to discuss many language teachers' desires to empower their students, and Tollefson critically assesses common communicative and humanistic techniques used to do this. His conclusion is that many activities, such as personal discussion, are actually counter to the empowerment goal, and like other language policies, give "an illusion of progress that may help to sustain unequal social relationships" (p. 101). This conclusion may be one reason for some readers' uncomfortable reactions to the book, but raising this issue and asking teachers to examine their practices is certainly a useful contribution.

By the end of the book, it is difficult to argue with Tollefson's statement that, "... language policy is inseparable from the relationships of power that divide societies" (p. 203). However, the weakness of the book – and the reason for many negative reactions – lies in a lack of thorough discussion of what realistically can be done to change situations. Nowhere are concrete, realistic alternatives given for the unjust language policies which are described. Although promoting awareness may be Tollefson's goal, the lack of serious alternatives weakens the impact the book can have.

In the chapter about mother tongue maintenance, for example, Tollefson uses the case study of Harib, a child from Bangladesh, who is attending school in England. Harib speaks Bengali and Sylheti already but is pressured by teachers and other students to use English at school. Tollefson criticizes the situation: "The alternative that might be best for Harib – for his teachers and friends to learn Bengali or Sylheti – is not considered" (p. 78). Such an "alternative," however, is not truly an alternative. Even readers sympathetic to Tollefson's point can see that learning the language of every immigrant child who comes to the school would be an impossible task for teachers. For readers who are not sympathetic, a suggestion such as this and the lack of other, workable alternatives makes it too easy to dispense with the book as unrealistic liberal ideology. Tollefson thus misses the chance to be truly persuasive with people who are skeptical of his ideas or who appreciate the ideas but are skeptical of their practical implementation.

Despite its shortcomings, however, Tollefson's book is valuable reading. It presents a great deal of information about language policies in the U.S.

and other countries, and convincingly makes the point that ideology is part of language planning. A reader's reaction may be enthusiastic adoption of Tollefson's ideas and appreciation that the political nature of language has been openly discussed, or it may be anger and frustration at criticism of existing programs and the lack of concrete alternatives – or it may include both of these. Whatever the reaction, however, the book is bound to be effective in meeting one of Tollefson's aims: to facilitate language professionals' exploration of the ideology behind their activities and theories and to encourage them to make their values explicit. Reading and discussing *Planning Language, Planning Inequality* does promote clarification of one's own values and one's beliefs about the best language policies for a classroom or program, as well as for larger regional, national, and international contexts. ■

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