

BAMBI B. SCHIEFFELIN, KATHRYN A. WOOLARD & PAUL V. KROSKRITY (eds.). *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Reviewed by Inger Mey

This book is concerned with language ideology as the mediating link between social forms and forms of talk. As a volume in a series on Anthropological Linguistics, it also addresses the social processes linking face-to-face communities to national or global communities. Language ideology is never only about language, and this seems to be the main focus of all the authors in this volume.

In her thorough and very useful introduction to the book, entitled 'Language ideology: Issues and approaches', Kathryn Woolard takes us through the history of the term ideology, and the various definitions the word has had in different philosophies and theories of science. She also makes an attempt to describe the history of language ideology, spanning from the most commonsensical notions about the nature of language in the world, to the often painful relations between languages or language varieties within a nation state, including purist standards of orthography and political ideas about standardization. The focus on language ideologies is clearly within the American scholarly tradition; references to works from other parts of the world are virtually absent.

The book is divided into three sections.

Part I, 'Scope and Force of Dominant Conceptions of Language', targets particular cultural models, becoming dominant key ideas that exert influence on other domains of activity; also, it considers how these models are exported from one social group to another, and from one social domain to another.

Part II, 'Language Ideology in Institutions of Power', deals with the role language ideologies play in particular institutions of power, be they educational, legal, or communicational.

Part III, 'Multiplicity and Contention among Ideologies', considers the alternative ideologies at work; the focus is on multiplicity, contradiction, and contention among ideologies within particular societies. Each section is followed by a commentary, comparing and critiquing the papers in that particular section, thus giving the section that internal cohesion, that we, as readers, might have missed.

For the purpose of this review, I have chosen to concentrate on Part II of the book, 'Language Ideology in Institutions of Power'.

In her paper 'Linguistic Ideology and Praxis in U.S. Law School Classrooms', Elizabeth Mertz discusses legal socialization in law school classrooms in the U.S. She posits a strong connection between professional socialization and the power structures of our society. In translating cultural experience into legal language, linguistic and social regimentation are mixed and a new relation to culture and language is transmitted to the students, they being the future guardians of legal institutions, ensuring reproduction and legitimization of the established social order. The dominant mode of interaction in these classrooms is the 'Socratic Method', a dialogic form of interrogation where the professor addresses a series of questions to a single student. Although it is frequently maintained that there are 'no right answers' in law school, there clearly are 'wrong answers'. The Socratic construction of the classroom interaction is cued to bring out 'any' answers, and to make the students defend their position. Incorrect responses from the students will be commented upon by overtly negative assessment, or indications of negativity by the professor's pitch and intonation. If the student does not follow the rules of this interaction, refuses to take a position, or to defend his/her position, the professor takes over the student's part in the dialogue and provides the class with the 'right' answers. This 'forced' socialization ensures the inscription of the correct answer, much like the 'say after me' method of socializing small children.

Methodologically, the study draws its material from eight different law schools, covering 'elite', 'prestige', 'regional', and 'local' schools. Taped classroom interaction was used; in addition, in-class coders kept track of who was speaking, and described other classroom dynamics.

As to the theoretical approaches used in this study, there are, on the one hand, those that position the study of linguistic ideology between communicative action and political economic theories of power and social inequality, while, on the other hand, we have the linguistic-anthropological framework of studying linguistic ideology at the intersection of language use and structure. Mertz draws in particular on Silverstein's idea of a dialectic between pragmatics and metapragmatics, and on the way the latter sees metapragmatic discourse influence the discursive mechanisms of society.

The second paper in Part II, 'Mediating Unity and Diversity, The Production of Language Ideologies in Zambian Broadcasting', by Debra Spitulnik, investigates the practices of the Zambian radio as a site for production and reproduction of ideology. Spitulnik examines how seven radio languages are made to represent 73 different ethnic groups, besides English as the 'national' language. Especially striking are the hierarchies that obtain between these eight languages, where English is the language of science and world politics, whereas the other seven, to varying degrees, are pushed back into the areas of folklore and local, rural topics. This despite the fact that most of the speakers, at least of the two 'biggest' African languages, live in cities and have no contact with the rural areas and moreover, a fair number of those speakers have higher educations and are interested in global affairs.

The official policy of the Zambian government, and consequently that of the Zambian Broadcast Corporation, has been and still is 'One Zambia, One Nation', expressing the ideal of a unified nation, while at the same time attending to ethnic difference and particular concerns. 'Tribalism', that is, discrimination based on ethnicity, is considered bad form, analogous to racism in our society. However, the unequal position of the seven radio languages vis-à-vis each other and also vis-à-vis English as the clearly dominant radio language, is manifested in many different ways: amounts of air time, access to prime time, types of programs, possibilities for radio professionals to participate in 'fringe benefits' made available by the state or international agencies, are among those mentioned by the author. Despite the state ideology of ethnolinguistic egalitarianism and the avowed concerns about diversity and pluralism of the Zambian government, Spitulnik demonstrates that in the case of the Zambian Broadcast Corporation, there is a certain hierarchical pluralism at work which is not negotiated, but muted, in the sense that there exists a closely monitored regulation of ethnolinguistic pluralism.

The theoretical perspective of this study brings together Saussure's concept of relational value and Voloshinov's concept of social evaluation. The combination creates notions of language valuation and evaluation and presents language ideology as a process where social values are associated with languages and also with forms and styles of speaking. In this light, radio broadcasting is seen as both a source for, and a result of, language evaluations.

The last paper in this part, 'The Role of Language in European Nationalist Ideologies', by Jan Blommaert and Jef Verschueren, documents, using newspapers from several Western European nations, a shared language ideology reflecting a 'Herderian' view of 'one language-one culture-one nation'. In this ideology, language is seen as one among several in a cluster of features, including descent, history, culture, and religion, forming the basis for 'natural groups'. Possession of one of the features, for instance language, indexes all the other features, and indexes the speaker's natural belonging to a social group. This accounts for the fact that 'language', in the newspaper articles on interethnic conflict, is virtually absent. The issue is not only about language, but about all the features in the cluster, although the absence of a distinct language casts grave doubts on the legitimacy of claims to nationhood.

The authors call this Herderian model the 'dogma of homogeneity', in which differences are considered dangerous, and where the ideal is a society without intergroup differences.

There is a certain irony in the fact that the authors document, across several national newspapers, an ideology that assumes that each society has one culture and one language, and that these same newspapers are among the ones openly committed to denationalization through the European Union. The explanation may be found in the fact that many small countries, such as the former Soviet 'satellites', are now forming nations and are slowly emerging from a situation that they consider oppressive, since it deprived them of their language and culture. These nations consider nationalism a 'freedom movement', as well as a rejection of the language and culture of the 'Empire' (read: communism).

This type of analysis, 'the view from below', shows also that the labor migrations from poorer areas and the political migrations from war zones into Western Europe, help shape the one language-one culture ideology, due to the intercultural conflicts in the host countries.

While individual multilingualism is encouraged as a path to European citizenship, intrasocietal, institutionalized multilingualism is actively discouraged by some states by means of restrictive language legislation. In contrast, multilingualism is again encouraged at the level of international (European) institutions, reflecting the fact that the European Union is a collection of

sovereign nation-states, each having a uniqueness that resides in its language and culture.

Studying mainstream newspaper articles and editorials from a specific period in the late 1990s, the authors concentrate on what is **implicitly** understood by both the journalists and their readership. Linguistic pragmatics, and the tools developed within that method, provide the means for undertaking such a study. The authors' basic assumptions are that the journalists are unable to express what they want to communicate in an explicit way, their texts leaving implicit most of the assumptions they expect their readers to share with them. While the study of isolated instances does not suffice, a consistent and systematic lack of mention of those implicit assumptions will, through careful analysis, reveal a common frame of reference or 'ideology'.

Commenting on the three articles within this part of the book, Susan U. Philips ('A Marx-influenced approach to ideology and language: Comments') finds that even though none of the authors have explicitly used Gramsci and his notion of 'hegemony', his approach, especially in Raymond Williams's interpretation, is implicitly present in all three articles. Making the implicit explicit is another feature she finds in all three articles, though to varying degrees; this makes her wonder why none of the authors have seen fit to address (except in passing) the relations between the pragmatic and the metapragmatic that other studies of ideology (such as those by Silverstein) have found useful. A possible explanation, Philips suggests, is that the authors may have been more interested in the content of their language ideologies than in the process itself of ideologizing through language use.

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