

Review

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Language in Society

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DIMENSIONS OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS

GIORGIO RAIMONDO CARDONA, *Introduzione all'etnolinguistica*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1976.

Giorgio Cardona's *Introduzione all'etnolinguistica* is impressive, interpreting ethnolinguistics as both *ethnographic* and *ethnological* in scope and depth. The author defines ethnolinguistics as "the study and interpretation of linguistic expressions in relation to the specific culture that has produced them, but at the same time relating them to a network of universally valid categories" (12). From this statement, the volume commits itself to a major task, bringing to the readership an array of culture-specific and cross-culturally characteristic links between codes and communities of speaker-hearers.

The book is organized into nine major sections: (1) Introduction (7-18); (2) History and Future Perspectives for Ethnolinguistics (19-74); (3) Language and Society (75-97); (4) Linguistic Structures and Cultural Systems (99-131); (5) Names as Omens (133-155); (6) Instruments of Communication (157-177); (7) Communicative Competence (179-212); (8) Functions and Uses of Language (213-236); (9) Excursus on Data Collection and Analysis Techniques (237-247). These sections reflect major areas of interest within the field, and were it in English, it would be a very useful text for a language and culture course within either a linguistics or anthropology department in this country.

Cardona's style is decidedly scholarly. Each topic is researched with extraordinary scope. This is particularly true in the 56-page discussion of historical figures and ideas of ethnolinguistic interest. Cardona covers insights of the Greeks, the Chinese, Muslim travelers of the ninth century, Italian travelers of the Middle Ages, and European missionaries from the sixteenth century on. He goes on to consider more modern contributions to anthropological linguistics, the work of such figures as Boas, Sapir, Malinowski, Firth, Lévi-Strauss, Pike, and Hymes. Resources abound. Not only are primary sources cited, but other sources relevant to contributors in the field are mentioned as well, much in the manner of Hymes' earlier volume, *Language in culture and society*. The reader who feasts on the little-known will be delighted with the bibliography at the end of the volume, with over 800 works cited across 69 pages.

The very richness of its resources makes this not a volume for an introductory undergraduate course. It is, rather, an introduction for the more sophisticated reader. Some previous knowledge of linguistic and/or anthropo-

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logical literature seems to be a necessary prerequisite for understanding some parts of Cardona's discussion and critiques (e.g., when he mentions generative grammar (73) or when he discusses Searle's speech acts theory (214-15)).

That this book is geared to the more advanced student is evidenced as well by the nature of the final chapter, an account of how to actually gather and treat material for ethnolinguistic analysis. This chapter provides one of the few comprehensive reviews of existing field manuals for the collection of phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and discourse features in their cultural contexts. Further, it provides practical information concerning the advantages and disadvantages of particular pieces of equipment and supplies. From the perspective of an experienced field worker, Cardona warns the would-be researcher that audio-recordings are not in themselves analyses; they must be transcribed, translated, and evaluated to achieve this status.

In summary, Cardona's book provides a serious and intriguing discussion of the important pursuits of culture-conscious linguists and language-conscious anthropologists and sociologists.

It is a pity that so few researchers and students in this country can read Italian sufficiently to benefit from this volume. In the past few years, there have appeared a number of edited volumes on ethnolinguistic topics, but current comprehensive texts on which to base a graduate language and culture course are hard to come by. The Italian researcher and student have access to such a text. If translated into English, *Introduzione all'etnolinguistica* could reach the wider readership it deserves.

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JACK GOODY, *The domestication of the savage mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977. Pp. 179.

The study of writing systems has had a long history within the discipline of anthropology, and opinions concerning its importance, as well as the kinds of problems to which it should properly address itself, have exhibited considerable diversity. Nineteenth-century evolutionists seized upon the presence or absence of writing as typological criteria which, when used to define different levels of cultural development, served handily to distinguish "civilization" from its antecedent stages (e.g. Bastian 1860; Maine 1873; McClennan 1876; Tylor 1865). Shortly before 1900, interest shifted to the history of writing itself, and in the years that followed a number of unilinear schemes were propounded which traced the evolution of graphic communication from its simplest forms to the appearance of fullblown alphabets (e.g. Cohen 1958; Diringier 1949, 1962; Fevrier 1948; Gelb 1963; Mallory 1893; Moorhouse 1953). In the 1930s and 40s, by which time American anthropologists had turned their attention to other issues, writing systems figured prominently in