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KAREN RISAGER, *Language and culture: Global flows and local complexity*. (Languages for Intercultural Communication and Education 11.) Buffalo: Multilingual Matters, 2006. Pp. x, 212. Pb \$44.95.

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Karen Risager seeks to challenge the traditional linguistic orthodoxy that views language and culture as inseparable. The goal of her new book is to establish that language and culture are not necessarily linked and can be analyzed separately. Risager maintains that while languages may be psychologically related to a particular culture and cultural experiences of individuals, they are sociologically separate from other cultural phenomena. She takes a refreshingly new and insightful approach by formulating the critical issues facing language and culture pedagogy and language teaching, and then giving them their due consideration. The implications of Risager's theory and analysis are indeed noteworthy and extensive.

The notion of the inseparability of language and culture has been around for so long that we often tend to forget that it is a theoretical construction with its own particular historical trajectory, located in particular traditions. Risager begins with a brief history of the concepts of "language" and "culture," which appropriately includes the European linguistic tradition as well. The history serves as a reminder of how the idea of inseparability gained currency over the years. She claims her own view of language is an "integrative" one that necessitates "the investigation of the interface between language and culture" and "the theoretical understanding of language and linguistic practice as parts of larger wholes and for the development of the various areas of practice where language plays a central role" (p. 1).

Risager undertakes the task of demonstrating that, for analytical purposes, a distinction needs to be created between language and culture – that is, "between linguistically formed culture and non-linguistically formed culture"(5). She challenges the foundation of the claim of the inseparability of language and culture by calling into question the validity of studies that limit themselves to the geographical area where a language is spoken. Nor should we bind ourselves, Risager cautions, to study languages only in their capacity as first, second, or foreign languages, but rather look at the worldwide networks in which languages are found and through which they flow. Her own proposition is that

languages spread across cultures, and cultures spread across languages. Linguistic and cultural practices change and spread through social networks along partially different routes, principally on the basis of transnational patterns of

migration and markets. I am, then, adopting a view of language and culture that stresses transnational dynamics in a global perspective. (2)

In her conceptual analysis, Risager distinguishes between language and culture in the “generic sense,” and language and culture in the “differential sense.” By the generic sense of language, Risager means language as psychological/cognitive and social phenomena. She argues that in the generic sense, “it makes no sense to say that language and culture can be separated. Human culture always includes language, and human language cannot be conceived without culture. Linguistic practice is always embedded in some cultural context or another” (4). Up to this point, Risager is in agreement with the traditional view. However, her contribution lies in deconstructing language and culture in the “differential sense,” which she explains as

specific forms of linguistic practice, such as “whole languages, language varieties, registers, loan words, as well as specific forms of cultural practice: various meanings and meaningful forms (in relation to such sign systems as images, fashion, food, music, dance), various norms and values, symbols ideas and ideologies. The question of language and culture spread belongs to the differential level, as does the question of language teaching (teaching of specific languages and specific cultural phenomena). Theoretical concepts such as foreign language/ second language, child language/children’s culture and written language/literate culture belong to the differential level. (4)

While explaining the differential level of language, Risager confines herself to the general theoretical issues of language spread without delving too much into the specific or the descriptive level of, say, German as a foreign language or Norwegian written language, even though she illustrates her analyses by using examples from German, Norwegian, and Danish teaching situations. Using the differential sense of language, Risager critiques the notion of culture-bound language, which, according to her, “can be linked to the first-language bias within linguistics in a broad sense (also called native-speaker bias or monolingual bias” (10). Similarly, the idea of the connection between the national language and culture is dismissed by Risager, who charges that in practice this link has to do with those “who from their childhood have grown up with the first language and ‘the first-language culture’” (10). To her, these assumptions put language and culture pedagogy “in the paradoxical situation that it builds on the above-mentioned first-language bias while dealing precisely with language as foreign- and second-language” (10).

In 14 chapters, Risager takes the reader on an expedition through the multifaceted relationship between language and culture. She elucidates the complex connection between the two by using the example of a Danish classroom where students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds learn about the Tour de France in their German language class. This vignette, which recurs through-

out the book, serves to illustrate the key points of Risager's argument. She reviews the concept of culture in the cultural-anthropological tradition, and then she explores the traditional ties among nation, language, and culture by presenting the ideas of the two prominent German philosophers of language, Herder and Humboldt. While both were interested in establishing the link between language and nation, or rather, one language and one people, Risager cautions us that it would be a mistake to view them as the originators of the theory of the inseparability of language and culture in a differential sense. The idea, according to her, belongs firmly in the 20th century and must be credited to Benjamin Lee Whorf's work in the 1930s, and later in the 1960s to the work of Joshua Fishman on language and ethnicity around the time when the "new culture pedagogy" emerged (61).

My personal favorite is the chapter where Risager ventures into the formative work of Ulf Hannerz and his theory of cultural complexity and cultural flows in the "global ecumene" – a term she borrows from Hannerz to mean cultural interconnections across the world. Risager also models her own approach on that of the "macro-anthropological" perspective of Hannerz, who takes the micro-interactions in society as his starting point, and then adopts the dynamic, network-oriented approach to culture by looking at "how cultural processes of various, possibly global, extent result in local mixes" (68).

After a historical review, Risager begins to put together her own analysis by taking a sociolinguistic perspective on language. She proposes the need for differentiating among the "three loci of language: linguistic practice, linguistic resources and the discursively constructed idea of a linguistic system" (16). The first two, practice and resources, correspond to Hannerz's two loci, internal and external, of culture: "human minds" and "public forms" (84). To these Risager adds her own third locus, the linguistic system or structure. Risager warns us of the danger of not "deconstructing the tendency to think in systems" (85) by pointing out that systems, even though they are based on observable patterns in linguistic practice, are historical constructions that arise from various political and ideological attitudes. This is (often) ignored in language pedagogy, "especially in foreign-language pedagogy, which has been particularly immune to insights concerning social variation in linguistic practice – and concerning the relationship between language, discourse and power" (85).

Risager adopts a global perspective to explore the dynamics of "language flows," where language not only operates as first language or early second language, but also as a foreign or late second language. Linguistic flows differ depending on whether they are first language flows or foreign language ones. So, while language teaching is more complex in linguistic terms, "the discourse of language teaching often emphasizes homogeneity rather than complexity" (107). Risager introduces the reader to the concept of "languaculture," a term she borrows from linguistic anthropologist Michael Agar, and refines it further to explore the links between language and culture. For Risager, the concept of

linguaculture can be used to “reduce the assertion of the inseparability of ‘language’ and ‘linguaculture’ for the person who speaks the language as a first language or early second language. The reduction implies that there is some ‘culture’ that is not ‘linguaculture’” (115). Risager, then, explores “linguaculture” in the three loci of linguistic practice, in linguistic resources, and in the linguistic system.

She also devotes a chapter to “discourse,” which like “linguaculture” is a mediating concept between language and culture, and countervails the dichotomy between language and culture. She maintains that “linguistic and discursive flows do not necessarily move along the same paths in the world”(16) and considers how this separation influences the concept of intertextuality. Risager laments that studies of intertextuality have ignored the linguistic aspect of interactions, focusing solely on the discursive dimension of how discourses arise and form varied textual links. She underscores the importance of the individual language that is used in the text.

I found her discussion of the “cultural context” and its relationship to linguistic and discursive practice fruitful, because she analyzes context at both the micro and the macro levels. To her, cultural context and cultural content become relevant only if we look at the relationship between language and culture from a linguistic vantage point. However, Risager is quick to point out the need “for a more socially oriented analysis, whereby we transform the macro-contexts into socially organized cultural processes (flows)” (172). She revisits Claire Kramsch’s three-part description of the relationship between language and culture to explicate the “language-culture nexus.” Kramsch’s first point is that “language expresses cultural reality.” Risager takes it to mean the “meaning and reference potential of the individual language” where one is going beyond language. The second and third points, that “language embodies cultural reality,” and “symbolizes cultural reality,” correspond to Risager’s “semantic-pragmatic dimension” of linguaculture and the “identity dimension of linguaculture,” respectively (192). For Risager, the latter two points are “not examples of going beyond language, but merely point to properties of language itself” (192).

If I have to find fault with an otherwise compelling analysis, I would say that Risager puts too many sections and subdivisions with their own headings in the chapters, which, at times, seem to get in the way. If one persists despite this trivial hindrance, the payoff is immense. Risager succeeds in negating the propensity for reductionism in this rich area of inquiry by disentangling language, linguaculture, discourse, and culture, concepts that clutter the relationship between language and culture.

In the last chapter, Risager reflects on the implications of her formulations for language and culture pedagogy and linguistics. She once again emphasizes the need to go beyond the traditional first-language bias in the study of the relationship between language and culture. Moreover, it is high time, Risager contends, that we pay more heed to the problematics of translation and trans-

lation strategies “from both public and the academic side” (199) by advancing research on the political, cultural, and sociological dimensions of translation, “including the choice to translate or not to translate particular texts” (199). She also advocates the need to connect critical discourse analysis to translation studies, so that one can study how “certain discourses are transformed on their journey from one linguistic community to another.” I concur with her view that this is especially urgent, considering the “media situation of the world” (199). It is all the more critical that today, when concepts such as globalization, internationalization, and transnationalism have garnered so much exposure and popularity within academia and outside, that we pay serious attention to the reality of multilingual and multicultural societies and communities that surround us and learn to use them as resources, rather than neglect or, worse still, pay mere lip service to them.

Finally, I particularly welcomed Risager’s emphasis on how her integrative view of language “presupposes interdisciplinary openness” and a “dialogue between disciplines that at present are far removed from each other in terms of theory and method” (199). She mentions sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, cognitive linguistics, and systemic linguistics, among others. To her list, I would add my own discipline of rhetoric, which I think can contribute much to this dialogue with “other disciplines that deal with society, culture, and the human psyche” (199) about the relationship between language and culture, and perhaps, gain even more from it.

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DAGMAR DUEBER, *Nigerian Pidgin English: Language contact, variation and change in an African urban setting*. London: Battlebridge, 2005. Pp. xiii, 273. Pb £25.

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This is a corpus-based study of Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) among the educated in the urban center of Lagos. Deuber’s report on the use of NPE in Lagos makes for interesting comparison with the spread and use of other contact varieties in urban areas in Africa (e.g., Sheng in Nairobi; see Fink 2005 and references therein) and its impact on indigenous languages. It is also comparable with the discussions of urban varieties of creoles reported in Patrick’s (1999) work and more recently in Hackert 2004. One of the obvious issues is the functioning of the variety in new public formal domains. Issues related to both corpus and status planning are discussed (cf. Devonish 1986). To help the reader navigate