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MARTIN PÜTZ, JOSHUA A. FISHMAN, AND JOANNE NEFF-VAN AERTSELAER (eds.), *'Along the routes of power': Explorations of empowerment through language*. Contributions to the *Sociology of Language* 92. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2006. Pp. xxi, 426. Hb. \$132.30.

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This volume presents 20 papers from the 31st International LAUD Symposium, together with an introduction by the editors. They are classified into three sections, the first including relatively theoretical discussions of the notion of power and its relevance within sociolinguistics, the second dealing with various types of language planning policies, and the third presenting case studies of specific African communities. The papers thus include both factual reports and argumentative discussion, broad theoretical analysis and detailed description of specific situations, sometimes with concrete examples of actual discourse reflecting power relations (as provided by Carol Myers-Scotton and Rose Marie Beck).

The volume offers a wealth of individual case studies, with a majority from African contexts (including South Africa, Botswana, Tanzania, Nigeria, Namibia, and Cameroon) but also including reports on communities in Australia, the Pacific islands, Europe and the United States. Similar observations and arguments recur across the chapters, but there is a divergence of opinion between those authors who believe empowerment can be achieved through reinforcing the use of local indigenous languages and those who see access to a language of global distribution as a means to empowerment.

Among the first category, we can mention Michael Clyne on multilingual policies in Australia, Neville Alexander on post-apartheid South Africa, Ofelia Garcia on the use of Spanish in New York City, and Heiko F. Marten's remarks about how parliaments may help to empower minorities. In contrast, several authors note that the empowerment of one language group may be achieved only at the expense of another group. Both Janina Brutt-Griffler and Herman M. Batibo raise the problem of students who receive "mother-tongue medium education" in languages that are not their own at all. Hans-Georg Wolf and Herbert Igboanusi show that rivalry between members of different language groups in Nigeria may lead some to sabotage the use of others' languages. Augustin Simo Bobda reports similar language rivalries in Cameroon, and, in a rather different context, Ulrich Ammon describes conflicting attitudes within the European Union, where members of the smaller language communities wish the number of working languages to be reduced but those whose language features among the working languages naturally want the number to be maintained.

In the light of such problems, it is no surprise that some authors conclude that empowerment may ultimately come through the colonizer's language. Hans-Georg Wolf and Herbert Igboanusi insist that the advantages of knowing English outweigh linguists' theories about the benefits of mother-tongue education, and Paulin G. Djité concludes that to abandon the colonizer's language leads to disempowerment. Ultimately, then, the papers in this volume, rather than presenting unanimous conclusions, make the reader more aware of the complexity of the issues involved in the relations between language use and empowerment.

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