

children is broad in scope and lacks linguistic detail, the book can be read easily by anyone interested in rearing bilingual and biliterate children, irrespective of his or her background. As a matter of fact, most chapters are anecdotal in form and, at times, as entertaining as fiction. Chapter after chapter, Caldas describes, in a style lacking technicalities, the background of the study, the methodology followed to document the children's degree of bilingualism and biliteracy (audio and video recordings, diary notes, standardized instruments, teacher and child surveys), the characteristics of the home and the community, the children's schooling, and the children's linguistic and social development during the adolescent years. The only section that adds a scientific dimension to the book is chap. 11, which presents the results of the quantitative analyses.

The book's strongest sections are chaps. 8 through 10, in which Caldas discusses how family, school, and society all play a role in the construction of the children's bilingual identities during adolescence. This is a period of bilingual development that has received little attention from other researchers, and thus the author's contribution is particularly valuable to those interested in dual language development beyond childhood. In adolescence, the author shows, the parents' influence on their children's language development decreases drastically while peer influence becomes the major force behind language choice. Therefore, it is only contact with the native francophone peers that furthers and perfects the author's project goal of rearing perfectly fluent bilingual children. A successful example of longitudinal research carried out within the family, Caldas's book should be in the must-read list of all parents who intend to raise their children with two languages.

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ALISON SEALEY AND BOB CARTER, *Applied linguistics as social science*. New York: Continuum, 2004. Pp. xv, 239. Pb \$49.95.

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*Applied linguistics as social science* underscores the essential association between language and society and attempts "to make a case for regarding the discipline of applied linguistics as a social science" (1). Although Sealey and Carter are not bringing up the issue for the first time (despite the impression that the book seems to be giving), highlighting and reiterating the social and cultural nature of language in general and applied language studies in particular could be considered the major contribution of the book.

Setting out by introducing key issues in social theory and linguistics, the authors briefly review considerations of language in sociological theory and, from a realist social theoretical standpoint, represent language as an emergent cultural property. To explore issues of social scientific applied linguistics in terms of specific research issues, Sealey and Carter turn to language education as "a research field which involves a significant proportion of the people who are identified as applied linguists" (85). They argue that mainstream variables-based research traditions ignore the social situatedness of language and learning. They contend that even more socially oriented ethnographic studies account inadequately for the complexity of the process of language learning. The authors go on to revisit social categories of age, ethnicity, and class as considered in mainstream sociolinguistics. They also deal with properties and powers of language in the world in their discussions of linguistic autonomy, literacy education, and global and threatened languages. In the concluding chapter, summarizing their social realist approach to research in applied linguistics, Sealey and Carter briefly review their key claims and present a discussion of "why applied linguistic research questions need social theory" (187). Moreover, they touch upon the limits of empirical approaches, the centrality of theory, and the need for a relational view in applied linguistics research, stating that applied linguistics researchers "may feel much better equipped to address the policy-makers' concern with 'what works', if the question can be reformulated as 'what works for whom in what circumstances?'" (197).

The book attempts to cross disciplinary boundaries between applied linguistics and sociology. The demanding epistemological discussions presented here would require more in-depth and elaborate consideration than is possible in the limited space of this book. Many of the issues presented in this dense volume of theoretical argumentation are only touched rather than elaborated upon. The social realist view of applied linguistics depicted by the authors, therefore, seems to be far from adoptable by applied linguistics as a guiding disciplinary approach. A further concern about the book is that it almost completely ignores existing socially oriented approaches to language studies, including Critical Applied Linguistics and the relatively vast area known as Critical Discourse Analysis. Nonetheless, the very endeavor of a socially informed approach to applied linguistics is to be appreciated.

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FRED GENESEE, KATHERYN LINDHOLM-LEARY, WILLIAM M. SAUNDERS, AND DONNA CHRISTIAN (EDS.), *Educating English language learners: A synthesis of research evidence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. x, 245. Pb \$24.99.

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*Educating English language learners* appeared as a result of a U.S. government-funded project in an attempt to synthesize “research on the relationship among oral language, literacy, and academic achievement for English language learners (ELLs) in the United States” (1). Referring to what Donna Christian calls “educational facts” (1) about the lower academic ability of students with limited English proficiency, and placing institutionalized academic achievement at the center of their discussions, the contributors review three databases and a number of journals of language and education. They explore research trends in the education of English as a second language in the past 20 years, how research findings have been applied in U.S. schools, and possible future research directions.

The introductory chapter attempts to justify a synthetic research review and to describe the review methodology. Chap. 2 reviews the research literature on proficiency in oral English. What “proficiency” means is not discussed beyond stating that it “involves acquiring vocabulary, gaining control over grammar, and developing an understanding of the subtle semantics of English” (14). Moreover, conclusions like “there is a positive relationship between English language use outside of school and English proficiency” (41) do not seem to move beyond commonsense perceptions of what language learning involves. The third chapter, heavily relying on correlational studies, discusses cross-linguistic and cross-modal issues in literacy and calls for more research “to draw stable and definitive conclusions” (84). Instructional issues related to reading and writing by English language learners are dealt with in chap. 4. The authors assert that what they call the “one off syndrome” “may reflect pressure on university-researchers to ‘publish or perish’ and/or the need to provide answers quickly” (125). Another interesting issue in this chapter is that the authors admit – at least as far as assessment is concerned – that it is difficult to provide recommendations based on a review of the research literature “because the research is so fragmented” (138). Chap. 5 deals with academic achievement and seems to have regrettably replaced real *learning*, as what research is meant to promote, with the standards set by academic institutions. Finally, the chapter on “Conclusions and future directions,” recapitulating common trends in English language education research, calls for more research aimed at theory development and for the application of varied and multiple research designs and also recommends more systematic reviews of the research findings.

With a view of the distracted research trend that the book uncovers, rather than merely continuing “sustained programmatic research” (226) along the traditional paths, researchers need to revisit their practices in search of more natural approaches and more profound understandings of language learning as a social practice of meaning construction.

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