

errors culled from their own (marked) assignments, for use in editing their essays before submission.

Accuracy and improved organization - the authors' stated objectives - may result from judicious use of this *Guide*. (Although I would be hesitant to commit myself to a wager on it.) It is, however, highly unlikely that any sense of joy, excitement or meaningfulness in the composing process will be communicated to the student. A personal commitment to the process of making meaning on paper and sharing this with an audience will not be one of the side effects of the kind of pedagogical approach exemplified. ESL teachers will have to decide for themselves whether this is, indeed, a priority or a luxury in the teaching of writing to their students.

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R. Quirk and H.G. Widdowson (eds). *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literature*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1985. 275 pp. Paperback.

Here are the papers of an international conference entitled 'Progress in English Studies' held in London during 1984 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the British Council. There were over 70 delegates to the conference. The organisers had the bright idea of allowing two commentators to summarise their views of each paper after it was read. Many of the commentaries, however, were simply laudatory.

As you might expect, the papers delivered stressed that English is now the lingua franca of the world. At present over 700 million people use it and do so anyway that they like so long as somebody gets the general idea of what they are saying. How can there ever be such a thing as a standard type of English? Will Australians and native-born Englishmen eventually find each other incomprehensible? What about the Americans? The doom-watchers who have descended on our generation like one of the plagues of Egypt are sure that the English diaspora will result in the geographically separated users of the language developing

idiolects that will be unintelligible outside of their home regions.

Randolph Quirk discusses the pros and cons of a standard type of English by way of a neat tight-rope act: 'The English Language in a Global Context'. On the one hand, he argues for the acceptance of variability and variety in English usage both as regards spelling and grammar. But, of course, the deviations from the norm should not be too outrageous or too numerous. On the other hand, he argues for the adherence to the English of the educated speaker. But this adherence should not in any way be seen as support for élitism that will not allow for 'features that lie to a greater or lesser degree outside this common core'. The shifts and stratagems that Professor Quirk engages in so as to have his linguistic cake and eat it bemused this reviewer. They also perplexed both of the commentators on his paper: Graeme Kennedy and David Crystal.

There was much labouring of the obvious and some re-discovery of the wheel in Braj B. Kachru's paper 'Standards, codification and socio-linguistic realism: the English language in the Outer Circle'. We are told, for instance, that the linguistic and cultural effects of former British colonization have become part of the histories of regions where English is used. Quite so. Furthermore, the English used in old outposts of the Empire now operates in 'un-English' cultural contexts. Indeed. It is also said by Professor Kachru that there is significant variation in the English range of educational, administrative, social, and literary persons in countries outside of England. Certainly. Taking up a point in Professor Quirk's paper that the English spoken by inhabitants of foreign lands may be regarded as varieties in their own right, and can be accepted as institutionalized, Professor Kachru writes:

What we see here, then, is that the non-native English-using speech fellowship are using Englishes (sic) of the world in their divergent *situations* and *contexts* and with various linguistic and ethnic *attitudes*. Let me explain what I mean by these three terms: *situation* includes the linguistic, political and sociocultural, and economic ecology in which the English language is used. *Context* refers to the roles of participants in these situations and to the appropriateness of varieties of language used in these roles. And *attitude* is specifically used here for the overt and covert attitudes toward a language, its varieties, and the uses and users of these varieties.

(p.16)

We might add that the situation *qua* situation converges upon the context in so far as it relates to an attitude appropriate to English in the situation from which it arose in the first place. Providing, of course, that the divergency includes varieties and their uses by the participants of speech fellowship in a non-native ecology. Or vice versa, as the case may be.

As China will eventually decide the sort of life that the rest of the world will have or not have, the paper that Mr Yand Huizhong delivered was naturally of interest. The paper entitled 'The use of Computers in English teaching and research in China' contained some surprising facts regarding the ineffectiveness of language laboratories. As Mr Huizhong points out, the language laboratory practice covers only morphological and syntactic structures. Sentence pattern drills are separated, more often than not, from context and situation. Although he does not say so, Mr Huizhong is making the same distinction that Saussure did between 'langue' and 'parole'. In China to-day, language teachers are getting results from stressing the performance aspect of language competence rather than the acquisition of linguistic rules. In passing, it may be noted that Saussure's name did not crop up in any of the papers read at the conference.

Unfortunately, this collection of papers again illustrates the problem that linguists have of not being able to distinguish the wood from the trees. Far too many of the papers sunk beneath the weight of a meta-language that made confusion worse confounded. The 'chi-chi' term at the conference seemed to be ESP. For the uninitiated, this is an acronym for English for Specific Purposes. It could well have its old designation for the Extra Sensory Perception often needed to decipher the language employed by the world authorities on teaching and learning English.

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