

Another faulty sentence is the following:

Applicants holding a baccalaureus or magister degree will be eligible for appointment.

The discussion reads:

Here the 'false friends' are the respectable-looking Latin words *baccalaureus* and *magister*. Of course this does not mean to say that all Latin words are suspect in English. Many of them have become so much a part of the language that they hardly strike one as being Latin, e.g. *memorandum*, *compendium*, *data*, *addendum*, and a host of others. But the point we want to make here is that the Latin word is not always equally appropriate in Afrikaans and English. Thus our translation of *baccalaureus-* of *magistergraad* should be *bachelor's or master's degree*.

The sentence, 'You will have to get a visum to enter the country', contains what the editor refers to as 'another shady character parading in a respectable Roman toga!' The word *visum* (Afr. *visum*) should be *visa*.

In his final paragraph the editor warns that 'a single error of the kind given in these examples will mar an otherwise perfect passage of English, making the writer and, more important, the organisation he represents look silly'.

This is a most useful publication and we hope that it has come to stay.

Mey Hurter

Valerie Kay & Peter Strevens: *Beyond the Dictionary in English*, London, Cassell, 1974, 105 pp., Paper, n.p.

Because of the rapidity with which language develops and changes in meaning, and because of the fairly long period between the revision and up-dating of dictionaries, dictionaries are often little help to the person trying to understand current English colloquialisms. It is gratifying, therefore, to find 'a handbook of colloquial usage' designed to provide

'the advanced learner of English with some information about meaning and usage in present-day English which he will not find in the dictionary.' (p. 7)

The first, and longest, section provides an alphabetical list of general colloquialisms. Here are some random samples:

blue. Pornographic, as in blue movies (films, jokes).

joint. A piece of meat suitable for roasting in an oven. The traditional British Sunday dinner is a roast joint, whether of beef, pork or lamb. Also, in drug-users' slang, a marijuana cigarette.

loo. Popular expression for lavatory, W.C., toilet. This is currently the most frequent *spoken* term, though it is only rarely written.

teetotal. Abstaining from alcoholic drink; often abbreviated to *t.t.*

to nobble. To drug or dope a horse so as to affect its performance in a race. *e.g.*: 'The favourite came last in the 4.30. I'm sure he'd been nobbled.'

After this fairly comprehensive general section, there is a brief discussion of the 'Pitfalls of Pronunciation'. As the authors point out: 'This is not a handbook of phonetics; but there are a number of common types of difficulty about which a book of this kind can offer some help.' (p. 82) Intonation, disparities between spelling and pronunciation, the pronunciation of some English place names such as Berkshire, Gloucestershire and Thames, and some advice on how to avoid mis-pronunciation are discussed briefly yet in a lively style. In the sub-section on how to avoid the pitfalls of pronunciation, for example, the reader is advised to 'Remember that what matters is *being understood*, not trying to pass as a BBC announcer!' (p. 86)

The book concludes with five short 'Special Vocabularies' which deal in turn with space, computers, roads and transport, somewhere to live, and swearing and bad language. This final section is characterised by its tongue-in-cheek seriousness. For example, 'Get knotted' and 'Get stuffed' are said to mean 'May something unpleasant happen to you!' Nevertheless, the section is prefaced by some good advice and a pertinent comment on the use of bad language by foreigners:

There is one piece of advice which we offer to readers who are learning English: AVOID USING BAD LANGUAGE. Being an

offensive kind of behaviour, nobody should be encouraged to use it; when it *is* used, bad language is generally regarded as even more offensive if the speaker is not a native speaker of the language. (p. 103).

Some readers may object to the presence of these phrases, together with a number of common expletives, but the advanced learner of English is bound to come across this type of usage, both written and spoken, in day-to-day life. And one might counter this objection by pointing out that the existence of such words is hardly an obligation to use them!

The handbook has been designed chiefly for foreigners living in England, and it is probably unfair, therefore, to criticise the authors' use of Sunday *dinner*, which may suggest to some readers an evening rather than a lunchtime meal. But this is a trifling quibble. The lively, informative approach and the occasional use of light humour save this handbook from dry-as-dust pedantry, and it successfully achieves its stated aims within the modest space of 105 pages.

A.G. Ulliyatt.

Jiri Kramsky: *The Word as a linguistic unit*, Mouton, The Hague, 1973.
Fl. 14.

The word is an institution in linguistics, notwithstanding – or perhaps because of – its nebulous status. The processing of the voluminous literature on the word in such a wide variety of languages constitutes a challenge to the adept polyglot. Kramsky's bold attempt gives a very useful summary of viewpoints expressed in the European and especially the less readily accessible East-European literature. Scant attention is paid to the Reichling's word theory, which is, however, tucked away in Dutch publications.

The account of the most important word characteristics, i.e. inner cohesion and mobility, is clear and straightforward (pp. 22-9). Unfortunately these central formal characteristics are not represented clearly in the general – and rather vague – definition of the word on p. 67. The gradient, non-absolute nature of these features is noted but not exploited by Kramsky. Various units (bound morpheme, clitic, full