Lee McKay, Sandra and **H. Hornberger, Nancy (eds.). 1996.** *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching.* Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. Pp. 474.

This book is a collection of papers written by a group of American researchers who work on the field of Sociolinguistics. It attempts to show how important can be the role played by sociolinguistic research in language teaching/learning attitudes, and in the linguistically diverse classroom. It also proves how elements such as the choices we, as teachers, make when we communicate with learners can affect the second language teaching / learning process. Each chapter offers a sociolinguistic analysis of a certain aspect and its implications for the teaching / learning process.

The work is structured in four different parts, each of them composed of several chapters, and a final conclusion. Each part studies language from a different perspective. The first part titled *Language and Society* deals basically with the way in which the larger social and political context can affect language use, and shows how social attitudes can determine the preferences of one language or variety over another. This part contains four chapters. The first chapter analyzes the influence that social factors can exert on personal attitudes and motivations to learn a language as well as how social attitudes can create and legitimize linguistic standards. The

author finally points out how language teachers can promote individual motivation to learn a language. In chapter two, Kamal Sridhar examines bilingual and multilingual contexts as well as the reasons why certain languages and uses are preferred over others in specific communities. This author emphasizes the importance of standards, in this kind of contexts, for the success of language teaching. Chapter three, as the very title suggests *World Englishes* deals with English as the global language and provides a profile of the uses and users of English throughout the world. It also points out the possibility of enrichment of the language teaching process through the study of varieties. Finally, chapter four examines the means of language planning and policy adopted by societies in order to solve conflicts over language.

The second part, *Language and Variation,* focuses on how the larger social context affects the particular linguistic forms that an individual uses. It shows how geographical, social, ethnic background and even gender differences can determine the use of certain phonological, structural, and lexical forms instead of others. This part is composed of three chapters; chapter five, explores the variability of "English" in relation to the geographical and personal characteristics of its users. The author, John Rickford, emphasizes the influence that these factors can exert on a learner's attitude toward English. In chapter six,

Patricia Nichols studies the creation of pidgins and creoles out of "old cloth" (prestigious language). She also analyzes the negative attitudes towards these varieties regarded as inferior in relation to the prestigious language, with which they can coexist. Finally, she advises the use of pidgins and creoles, where necessary, as a resource to improve the understanding in the classroom. The last section in this part is chapter seven, which discusses sexism in language. The authors propose alternative ways to use a more neutral language, and suggest that teachers should promote in learners a kind of language which finishes with whatever inequities (of gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, etc.).

Part three, *Language and Interaction*, is also divided into three chapters. In chapter eight the author proposes "both a method and a point of view" called Ethnographic mycroanalysis, through which he analyzes various aspects that take place in linguistic interaction. Related to the classroom context, he suggests the use of this research approach with different applications. Deborah Schiffrin, in chapter nine, reviews Goffman's and Gumperz's findings as far as interactional sociolinguistics is concerned, and shows its possibility to define the aim of language teaching. Chapter ten explores sociolinguistic sources that produce intercultural miscommunication. Chick exhorts teachers to be careful with their language choices, since they can produce discrimination.

Part four, *Language and Culture*, deals with the ways the different cultures and communities use and value language. In the first chapter of this part, chapter eleven, the author concentrates on the field of ethnography of communication, pointing out its basic terms, findings and applications in the language teaching / learning process. Chapter twelve studies in depth the field of speech acts, reviewing methods used and findings obtained from them (apologies, refusals, complaints and so on). To conclude, the author wonders if speech acts can be taught. Chapter thirteen shows "the ways in which literate behaviour is dependent on the social context", considering literature from a sociolinguistic point of view. Just to finish, the author encourages teachers to analyze literature as a social instrument.

Finally, the conclusion or *Language and Education,* which coincides with chapter fourteen, is devoted to summarizing how societal, variational, interactional and cultural elements influence and are influenced by education.

Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching is a highly commendable book, especially for people working on the field of sociolinguistics. Written in a very accessible style, its purpose is "to help language teachers and gain an understanding of the many ways in which language and society interact." It offers a wide horizon of all the different sociolinguistic factors that can, and in

fact, play a role in the context of language teaching and learning. (Carmen Isabel LUJÁN GARCÍA, *Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria*).

Loveday, Leo J. *Language Contact in Japan. A Sociolinguistic History.* Clarendon Press: Oxford. 1996. Pp. 235.

Language Contact in Japan can be included within the series *Oxford Studies in Language Contact*. The main aim of this series is to study the contact between languages as an important element in the everyday lives of a lot of people. In this sense, this book tries to finish with the image of Japanese culture as exclusive and ethnocentric, by offering an analysis in depth of the socio-linguistic relation between this and other (Asian and European) cultures.

In his attempts to make the book accessible to all readers, especially to those who are not familiarized with the Japanese culture, the author makes a general introduction about basic aspects that help to understand his research. Thus, throughout these pages he explains the approach given to the study, the organization of the book, provides an introduction to the Japanese language, and a guide of Japanese writing.

After the above mentioned introduction, the book is structured in seven chapters «which may be read as separate, self-contained units and so not necessarily in the order in which they

are arranged.» The first chapter, as its very title suggests, *Introducing Language Contact,* is actually an introduction to the main subject of the book, the study of language-contact phenomena mainly from a sociolinguistic point of view. The study will become more specific in chapters two and three, focusing on the Japanese language and its contacts with Asian and European languages. The semantic and phonological impact as well as the economic consequences of this Westernization of Japanese is dealt with in chapters four and five. And finally, chapters six and seven are more concerned with the social attitudes (negative and positive) which seem to favour this linguistic mixture and the social reasons that have led and go on leading the Japanese culture to keep this language contact. The study offers the reader a great variety of examples (basically semantic and phonological) of words that have undergone changes or have been introduced within Japanese in this language contact process.

In the first chapter we can find a brief introduction to language-contact phenomena as well as a proposal of a universal typology (theory of language contact) to relate different types of language to their social settings, obviously, concentrating on the Japanese scenario. In the second chapter, the author analyses the history of Japanese linguistic relations with Asian languages,

emphasizing aspects such as the cultural and technological innovation undergone by the Japanese, and produced by their profound and pervasive contact with Chinese people and culture. Chapter three deals with the Euro-Japanese language contact from the sixteenth century until the Second World War, and proves English as the main source of borrowings. He looks back to the channels, agents, settings and causes that promoted the use of a preferred foreign form.

Chapter four concentrates on the reasons that made the Japanese community absorb foreign words and the typical contexts in which they occur. The author considers the socio-economic change undergone by Japan as the main cause of this assimilation. Within the same line, chapter five offers a complete account of the complex and diverse changes (phonological and morpho-logical) produced in English, when assimilated by the Japanese language. As well as the subsequent striking and growing divergence from English norms that have introduced some «deviant» forms within the Japanese vocabulary.

Chapter six, titled *The Social Reception of Contact with English Now*, studies common attitudes, within the Japanese community, towards this Euro-Japanese mixing and borrowing of words. For this study, he uses the survey method (461 informants) whose results show attitudes of acceptance and attitudes of resistance towards this linguistic fact. Similarly, the last chapter offers a unified model that tries

to cover all the diverse motivations and purposes (especially social and individual needs) for the Japanese culture to keep such language contact with English.

The next section of the book is that of conclusions, where the author summarizes his own findings for each of the chapters, and provides four appendixes. In the first appendix, Loveday offers a series of negative opinions towards the printed use of foreign words within the Japanese language. The second appendix shows the model of questionnaire that he used for his research. Appendix three gives you a brief outline of the origins of Japanese literature (native and foreign tradition). And finally, appendix four offers the reader a brief score of the types of words (pure Japanese, foreign lexis or Chinese derived) more commonly used related to Japanese restaurant-names.

Language Contact in Japan is a book written in a style that invites you to its reading. It offers a very interesting sociolinguistic analysis of an exotic culture such as the Japanese. I find it especially useful for those people working on sociolinguistics and attitudes towards language contact. As the author himself states, «the book will be valuable for comparative purposes, especially to those searching for data to help them formulate cross-cultural universals in language contact behaviour.» (Carmen Isabel LUJÁN GARCÍA, *Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria*)

Lynch, Tony. *Communication in The Language Classroom.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. 174.

As the other titles of the series *Oxford Handbooks for Language Teachers*, this book is designed to provide a source of reference for both language teachers and teacher trainers, always bearing in mind something that continuous educational reforms seem to have missed out, that «when it comes to changing the way languages are taught and learnt, the attitudes of individuals matter at least as much as the resources of institutions». But, not only personal attitudes are important; Tony Lynch also agrees with Mark Clarke´s listing of ten constraints on teachers´ decision-making in a typical day, constraints that cover from physical space to available resources or community considerations.

The book is structured in nine chapters grouped into two parts. Part One reports the findings of research into input, interaction and negotiation and discusses their implications for classroom use; while in Part Two Tony Lynch presents classroom applications of the interaction-based teaching for the four traditional skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each chapter finishes with a comprehensive and concise summary of its contents and commented suggestions for further reading on the subject. In his effort to be serviceable, he ends this book with a glossary of terms with special or technical meaning in the learning and teaching of languages and a general bibliography.

In Chapter 1, the author examines two-way communication, such as face-to-face conversation between fully competent native speakers of English, to reach the conclusion that, although conversations between native speakers contained obstacles such as memory lapses, inappropiate word choices, obscure terms…, communication is still established. Then, he wonders why teachers assess learners in terms of a «perfect» performance and, a second point, he comments on the fact that in real life, success in conversation is a matter of interactive collaboration.

Chapter 2 explores the learner´s comprehension resources. Context, background knowledge, simplification, explanation are studied as a means to ensure that messages are accessible.

Chapter 3 looks at Teacher Talk in detail and describes the three types of modification (input, interaction and information choice) used in this kind of talk to assist the learners´ comprehension. After the analysis, the author concludes that a shorter message is not always easier to understand than a longer one, interactive negotiation of meaning is bound to be less straightforward than when talking to just one listener, and that checking learners´ comprehension with «okays» and «all rights» waiting for no response is not **genuine** interaction between teachers and learners.

In Chapter 4, Lynch reviews fourteen research studies on the different types of modification mentioned in Chapter 3 and their implications for classroom practice.

In Part Two, which includes chapters 5,6,7 and 8, he presents ways to incorporate interaction-based activities to the four traditional skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Finally, Chapter 9, the Postscript, deals with «the four reasons for not changing anything», namely teachers´ most common objections to the use of more interactive tasks.

Written in a lively and approachable style, this volume offers the reader the possibility of judging, through second-hand experience, how various interaction-based classroom tasks worked, so that they could be adapted to one´s teaching situation. In view of what has been said, I feel that those concerned with methodology will find this book of great interest. (María Jesús VERA CAZORLA. *Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria*)

Pérez A.I. and **Aguilar N.B.** *Initial Steps in Reading Comprehension.* Nivel I, Módulo I. Argentina: Ediciones Eudecor. 1996. Pp.168.

This textbook is primarily intended for university level students who need to use English, particularly for reading, in the context of Agricultural Science Studies. This includes learners with no knowledge of English and professionals working in the field to whom the English language will not be so familiar. It is an introductory reading comprehension course designed for use in class for a specific subject within the students' curriculum. The combination of a language-based and a subject-specific approach allows learners the possibility to develop the necessary and fundamental language resources and to start out to explore Agricultural Science language concurrently. From this point of view, in preparing the textbook the main purpose has been threefold:

1. To make the students aware that an overall proficiency in a foreign language becomes an instrumental means of enormous information. Effectiveness in reading correlates with gaining greater access to information.

2. To provide the students with reading techniques which allow them to identify relevant information in technical or scientific texts as quickly and efficiently as possible.

3. To develop the students' ability to interpret the message in a text.

The book contains five units. Each of them comprises between three or five language sections followed by its corresponding specific objectives. In the context of second language reading of technical and scientific texts high lexical density is naturally difficult to deal with at this level. Hence, the importance of the ability to deduce meaning from the context emphasized by the authors.

Likewise, another important skill to be developed through a focus upon word-building exercises is that of strategies for basic word recognition and understanding sentence structure. Students' attention is gradually focused on Agricultural Science texts as the units develop. It is through them that they are very briefly introduced to some reading techniques such as predicting, inferring, scanning (looking for specific information), skimming (identifying the main points in a text), or the understanding of the relationships between sentences (either through linguistic reference or through the use of connectives and the value assigned to them).

In general, the rules for a grammatical area are given to the students but sometimes they are asked to work out "a rule of form" from examples illustrating the language typical of the subject. After each grammar presentation there is usually written controlled practice which encourages students to put the language items studied to immediate active use. The primary aim of the tasks is to build learners' confidence. They are rule-based and developed in an interactive and systematic way so that learners can concentrate on when and how the language is used. The activities make revision with basic language items constantly being reactivated and contrasted with new items and new uses of the language. The exercises of translation promote acquisition of vocabulary and lexical development. At the end of each unit there is an *Appendix*. A list of the most commonly used prepositions and adverbs, supplementary material for translation, an Irregular verbs list, or scientific texts for further practice are integrated in this section. The language of most texts is authentic, and only adapted-authentic when simplification has been necessary.

This locally prepared textbook has arisen out of the authors' pedagogic concern and teaching experience over a number of years. Since it takes into account these particular learners' special requirements it is likely to be of great benefit for learners at the lower levels of language ability. In the light of the importance of the different conditions within which ESP curricula are to be prepared nowadays, we believe that the target learners the text is aimed at support the validity of the text approach. We consider the textbook of potential value in developing the reading competence of second language university students coming new to the discipline, and hope its implementation can be improved on in the future. (Mª del Pilar GONZÁLEZ de la ROSA. *Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria*)

Coulmas, Florian, ed. *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Oxford, UK/ Cambridge, USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd. 1997. Pp. 532.

Adding to the multi-volume series

Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics, devoted to the various subdisciplines within linguistics, this new Handbook provides a comprehensive introduction to the main areas of sociolinguistic research. The editor has selected and collected a total of twenty-seven contributions from distinguished scholars covering a wide range of topics which make the book a highly commendable work of reference for those interested in the major areas of inquiry. The list of specialists include well-known authors such as R.B. Le Page, J. & L. Milroy, W. Wolfram, C. Myers-Scotton, C. Craig, P.H. Nelde, M. Clyne, J. Fishman, M. Stubbs or E. Finegan, among other leading researchers.

The book consists of twenty-seven chapters organized into four main parts. These are preceded by the corresponding Lists of Figures, Tables, and Contributors, and the Introduction, in which Coulmas makes no claim at dealing with «all the vast field of sociolinguistics» (11), due to the limited size of the volume. Besides, in this introductory section the editor reviews the theoretical and methodological foundations of the discipline, and presents the major issues as reflected in each of the chapters and sections of the Handbook. Thus, while Part I focuses on the foundations to the discipline, Parts II and III constitute the key sections. They deal respectively with the social dimensions of language and the linguistic dimensions of society, whereas Part IV is devoted to applied issues. A comprehensive bibliography - meant to be used as a research tool - is also offered at the end of the Handbook.

Part I contains two works aimed at examining the theories underlying the micro-macro distinction within the field. R.B. Le Page reviews «The Evolution of a Sociolinguistic Theory of Language»», whereas Verdoodt deals with «The Demography of Language». As stated above, Part II studies the social dimensions of language throughout thirteen chapters in which central topics are developed, such as varieties and variation, language change, social factors influencing language change, sociophonology, dialects in society, the role of variables such as gender, age, spoken and written language, communication media, diglossia, code-switching, language contact, or language generation and degeneration.

Part III comprises eight chapters that explore various aspects within the linguistic dimensions of society. The headings refer to questions such as language contact and displacement, language conflict, multilingualism, language and identity, language and ethnicity, language and experience, or linguistic etiquette. Finally, Part IV approaches several areas of applied scholarship with four studies which illustrate the crucial role language plays in the organization of society and in social institutions. Thus, the close

relationship between sociolinguistics and education, sociolinguistics and the Law, together with controversial issues such as bilingual education and language planning and reform are deeply analysed in each of these final chapters.

In sum, this is definitely an invaluable work to all those concerned with the study of the relations between language and society, and needing to keep up with the rapid developments of the discipline. With this overview of the state of the art, they are bound to find informed answers to all their questions, together with references to primary sources and orientation for future research. (Mª Isabel GONZÁLEZ CRUZ, *Universidad de Las Palmas de G.C.*)

Expósito González, Mª de la Cruz.
La Estructura del Sintagma Nominal en El Inglés de La Cancillería: 1400-1450.
Barcelona: Kadle Books. 1994. Pp. 286.

This book presents a syntactic analysis of the noun phrase in fifteenth-century Chancery English. The author analyses 6,602 noun phrases in order to determine the different patterns which may appear in a noun phrase and the distribution of constituents within its domain. The data are collected from Chancery documents of Late Middle English. The diachronic dimension is done by comparing Raumolin-Brunberg (1991) for the 16th century and Jucker (1992) for Present Day English.

It is divided into ten chapters and a concluding chapter. In the first chapter, the author outlines the history of the noun phrase from traditional grammars up to the grammar presented in Quirk et al. (1985). The latter is preferred as the frame for grammatical reference in her study. The second chapter sets the method, the description of data, and sources used. The author also explains the importance of Chancery English in the particular sense in which it constitutes the basis for Standard English. Chapter three and four respectively describe determiners and premodifiers within the boundaries of the noun phrase.

Chapter five analyses the head of the noun phrase. The author studies the different categories which may appear as the head of the noun phrase. Depending on the nature of the head, this can be nominal, pronominal, deverbal and empty heads. Both nominal and pronominal heads are studied in chapters six and seven respectively. In this last chapter, section three describes the -ing deverbal heads, and section four presents an analysis of empty heads.

In the last three chapters, the author sets the description of postmodifiers. Chapter nine concentrates on the use of postmodifiers. Section number 9.3 is completely devoted to the periphrastical genitive (of-structures). The relative modifiers are left as main subject in

chapter ten. In the concluding chapter, the author points out the major findings of her research which she compares with sixteenth-century noun phrases in order to view the noun phrase from a historical dimension.

To sum up, this book offers a wide scope of the noun phrase of Chancery English in a time span of fifty years (1400-1450). This analysis of the noun phrase is important not only because it is studied on non-literary texts, but also because it stands as an essential reference for further studies dealing with the normalization of the English Language. (Francisco ALONSO ALMEIDA. Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)

Bolaños Medina, L; Cárdenes Rodríguez, A.; García Fernández, Mª Manuela (eds). *Actas de las I Jornadas Canarias de Lenguas Aplicadas a la Ciencia y la Tecnología.* Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Departamento de Filología Moderna de la Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. 1997. Pp. 304

The Canary Islands have been for some centuries a crossroad for people from many different places, particularly from Africa, America and Europe. Due to their geographical location the Canaries have become a strategic area of the first magnitude because of its commercial and historical importance. Regarding this fact Antonio Junco

comments on his paper (p. 196) the close relationship between trade and tourism in the Islands and the importance of English language and culture along their history.

Despite distance, this First Canarian Conference on Languages Applied to Science and Technology became a forum for a large amount of teachers of LSP (Languages for Specific Purposes) who came to the Islands. As it is said in the introduction of these proceedings: "(the conference was) an opportunity for teachers to meet colleagues devoted to LSP who have come from all over Spain, Europe and America."

Therefore, there is a thematic diversity that is noticeable not only in the languages used (English, French, German, Spanish), but also in the various subjects developed along the Conference and which are now present in these proceedings.

On the one hand there are papers dealing with more current issues such as LSP on bussiness, medicine, engineering and architecture and on the other hand there are interesting references to LSP related to less known subjects (though not less important) as criminology and bakery.

A remarkable aspect developed in the proceedings is the design of the course on LSP, which has been a key issue for some people attending this event. The design of the currriculum for Languages for Specific Purposes, needs analysis in order to enhance LSP teaching and the practice of the required skills are all important

parts of the contribution of these proceedings.

This publication provides the reader with an up-to-date view of the situation and its increasing importance throughout the world and, at the same time, it has paved the way for a wider difussion of all the work carried out in this concrete field. (Alexander CÁRDENES RODRÍGUEZ. Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)

Deibler, Ellis W. et al. *Notes on Translation*, vol. 10/1-4. Texas: Summer Institute of Linguistics. 1996. Pp.232.

This journal, concise yet broad in coverage and often illuminating in analysis, provides a recopilation of articles useful both for general readers and specialists in translation and interpreting. *Notes on Translation* is published quarterly by the Summer Institute of Linguistics and serves their translation program by sharing information related to the theory and practice of translation. The magazine is a carefully documented and critically analysed example of the growing emphasis on translation in syllabuses. It also bridges the gap between academics' theorising and teachers' work and describes how secondary teachers have planned and implemented translation curricula on a range of topics, from literal translation to paronomastic constructions in biblical hebrew. It also listens to teachers reflecting on their teaching and analyses classroom talk and extrapolates from present practice to a future translation with implicit and explicit information. "When is a literal translation acceptable?," "When is Ambiguity Acceptable?," "Teaching the Translation of Euphemisms" or "Should a translation Advisor Learn the Target Language?" question any easily progressive model of semantic change, demonstrating the persistence rather than the obsolescence of language technologies over time. Contributions like these would be of great value for those interested in the application of languages for specific purposes because they can easily identify effective styles of leadership as well as explore new dimensions and examples of intertextuality between translation and the specific orientation of a foreign language.

This volume includes important contributions by Ellis W. Deibler, Milton Watt, Tim Farrell, Kermit Titrud, David A. Ross, Nancy Ayres, Margaret Spielmann, Peter Unseth, Paul Neeley, David Thomas, Michael Martens, Fritz Goerling, Jim Butler, Freddy Boswell, Stephen Doty, Ed Ruch, Christoph Unger and Nick Lunn. (Santiago HENRÍQUEZ JIMÉNEZ. Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)