

**David Evans (ed), *Language and Identity: Discourse in the World*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015; xii+233 pp. £75 (hbk).**

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The contributions to David Evans' volume discuss the relationships between language, culture, and identity, with an emphasis on language as a form of cultural capital. The book has a clear pedagogical and political focus, showing the impact of language policy and planning on multilingual communities as well as the consequences of different approaches to language teaching and learning. The chapters vary in their use of the term 'discourse', relating it both to ideological discourses rooted within given socio-political cultural contexts, and the language use of speakers who establish their local identities through their talk. Combined, then, the book will be of interest to applied linguists and sociolinguists more broadly.

Structured in three parts, the book first introduces key theoretical positions relevant to the study of language and identity, with two chapters by Evans and one by Philippe Chassy. Evans' introductory chapter aims to explain key terms related to language, culture, identity, and discourse. His second chapter provides a useful discussion of the connections and differences between the theoretical approaches of, amongst others, Chomsky, Bourdieu, Foucault, Vygotsky, and Fairclough. This chapter nicely contextualises the book's social constructionist approach, and is followed by Chassy's Chapter 3: a coherent and succinct account of linguistic relativism. Both Chapters 2 and 3 would be appropriate as introductory texts to key concepts, with Chassy's chapter in particular providing useful examples to illustrate and explain complex ideas.

The second section is comprised of four case studies from very different sociolinguistic contexts. This section clearly speaks to the book's focus on language as cultural capital, showing how language planning alters the perceived value of minority languages and impacts upon speakers' identities. Ruth Kircher investigates language attitudes in Montreal – the only Canadian province with a majority Francophone population. She shows that language planning has succeeded in encouraging adolescents to speak French, and that these speakers rate it highly in relation to solidarity. Despite the efforts of policy-makers, however, she shows that English is evaluated as more *useful* due to its significance globally. Similarly, Sunuodula, Feng and Adamson assess speakers' attitudes to the encroachment of English on Uyghur people, an ethnic minority group in Northwest China. In this context, English is seen as a language of opportunity, but not as a threat to the indigenous language due to its role as a lingua franca. Instead, Mandarin Chinese – the official medium of communication – is perceived by Uyghurs as potentially damaging because it is associated with a conflicting culture. The impact of language planning on cultural identities is illustrated in absorbing detail, and with clarity, in both chapters.

This discussion is laid in contrast to Alex Guilherme's account of marginalised languages in Brazil, where government policy explicitly aims to address issues of language death. Though no data is included, this chapter provides an extremely

important discussion of the impact of the migration and settlement of Europeans on native people and their language(s). It also explains the link between language use and membership to a cultural community, with an extremely useful account of indexicality. Similarly, indexicality is discussed in Marije van Hattum's analysis of nineteenth-century Irish Emigrant letters from Australia, as the writers code-switch between Irish and English. This interesting chapter provides content analysis of letters written by three emigrants, finding evidence not only of the indexing of their 'former' identities, but of the beginnings of new idiolects and immigrant identities. Together, then, the chapters of Part 2 consider the discourse of speakers and link this to the socio-political contexts of their identity work.

In contrast, the chapters of Part 3 have been brought together to address issues of pedagogy and the role of language learning on speakers' identities. Wendy Bignold's chapter begins this section, however, with an analysis of how a subcultural identity – one associated with unicycling – is constructed through discourse. This chapter shows how language use can enable membership to communities which transcend geographical boundaries, and thus how subcultural identities may be constructed through discourse. Though it is clearly relevant to include, in this section, a discussion of how speakers learn context-specific identities via the acquisition of meaningful discourse, this link did perhaps need to be made more explicitly in order for the chapter to fit coherently within a section that is otherwise entirely focused on classroom-based issues of second language learning. The chapter stands alone as an intriguing and worthwhile study, but it feels somewhat isolated from the rest of the book and, as such, the volume would have benefitted from another contribution outlining discourse as a group endeavour.

The remaining three chapters of this section take an explicitly critical pedagogical approach. Bernie Hughes' chapter, for example, advocates drama and language play in the L2 classroom, so that learners perform the identity of a native speaker. Evans' (third) chapter follows this, arguing that prevalent educational discourses of language learning need to move away from an emphasis on capitalist endeavours in a globalised world, and towards the associated cultural identities of a language. Richard Kiely focuses on teachers of English as a foreign language, arguing that a traditional, authoritarian 'teacher' persona may prevent language learners from gaining their own linguistic identity. In these three chapters, a link between language and cultural identity is clear – whether in relation to the culture of a language, or the identity within the classroom – and they are well placed together. They fit less clearly, however, with the chapters in the previous section; though Parts 2 and 3 are not conflicting, the different ways in which they employ the concepts of 'discourse' and 'identity' does make each section quite distinct.

Overall, however, this book is brought together by its authors' fascinating discussions of *culture*. Every chapter is concerned with the links between language use – whether the linguistic repertoire of a particular subcultural group, language as it is learnt in the classroom, or the language policies of particular regions – and the culture imbued within that language. Part 1 – and

particularly Chassy's chapter – provides a useful overview of core theoretical concepts explaining the relationship between language and identity. Part 2 delivers an accessible and very interesting account of the sociolinguistics of globalisation and multilingualism, whilst those hoping to learn more about the relationship between identity and second language learning will certainly benefit from the chapters in Part 3.