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MEASURED WORDS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF OBJECTIVE LANGUAGE TESTING. *Bernard Spolsky.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Pp. xiv + 402. $20.00 paper.

This is a refreshing book. Bernard Spolsky's history of the development of objective language teaching covers the growth of the language testing industry from 1877 to (almost) the present day, with the development of the TOEFL tests as its centerpiece. Events are placed firmly in their economic, political, and social contexts, so—a rarity in books on language teaching—the influence of money, wars, personal ambition, and profit is described alongside developments in linguistic theory and testing techniques.

The story is full of fascinating details and anecdotes, many of them to be found in footnotes that are wiser and wittier than one usually finds; these often provide personalized commentary on the main events. We learn, for example, that during the Cold War the Department of Agriculture was used as a discreet euphemism for the CIA, or that Michel Foucault categorizes *examinations* as an element of discipline in a chapter that also deals with torture and punishment.

The early chapters of the book are a salutary reminder that we in the language teaching world know little of our own history, and, for this reviewer at least, the groundlaying work of testers like Edgeworth and Spearman at or before the turn of the century helps rid us of the idea that the profession began in, say, 1961.

The main part of the book is a detailed account of the development of TOEFL and the struggle for power between the testing experts who were concerned with reliability above all, who victoriously led the test to concentrate on what could be profitably tested in large volume, and those who wanted to provide a test that corresponded more to language learning (e.g., the testing of oral skills). He quotes Peter Skehan as saying "the person who preferred to search for a missing object in the living room where there was a light rather than in the dark kitchen where it had been lost" (p. 4) and suggests that economic forces led TOEFL to have a constraining rather than a creative effect on language teaching.

Parallel to the history of TOEFL is a description of the development of British testing, especially the Cambridge Local Syndicate exams, to which he presents with an obscurantist resistance to applying any kind of reliability standards. The criticisms are probably justified, but I feel that the account does less than justice to the positive contribution of the Cambridge exams to the development of good English language teaching. The Council of Europe's work on scale descriptors is dismissed with less attention than it deserves, too.

But overall the book is essential, riveting reading for anyone who has been involved with language testing—an epic story with heroes like John Carroll. Spolsky's final remarks convey that language learning *is* complex and that we should not be afraid of this: "To assume that all this complexity can usefully and meaningfully be squeezed into a single number or a single

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point in a unidimensional scale is . . . absurd" (p. 358). He calls on testers to make honest decisions on the purposes of tests and to be honest about the uncertain truth of the answers. Spolsky reminds us that in the language teaching profession we work in the real world, with real problems and real consequences to what we do. This is the great value of an outstanding book.

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POWER AND INEQUALITY IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION. *James W. Tollefson (Ed.).* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. ix + 212. $47.95 cloth, $19.95 paper.

Power and Inequality in Language Education is a timely, well-written, and well-edited collection of papers examining the exercise of power—and resulting inequalities—in the contexts of language education, policy, and politics. It treats a wide variety of language use situations, from English school education in the United States and the Solomon Islands, to bilingual education in the United Kingdom, to official language movements in Belgium at the beginning of the 20th century, to the "five vowels versus three" debate on the orthography of Quechua in Peru. This variety indicates the broad scope of language-and-power research currently being undertaken by applied linguists.

Tollefson's introduction to the volume sets the scene by highlighting six of the major themes of the volume: (1) "Research in applied linguistics must incorporate, as a central concept, the issue of *power*" (p. 1); (2) Theories viewing power as simply imposed unidirectionally from above are deficient—that is, that language policy is both an instrument of power and an area in which it can be contested and negotiated; (3) TESL has an inescapable political context—the imposition and spread of English as an International Language (EIL); (4) Migration issues are an important consideration for applied linguists and language teachers, because much of what we do is in response to large-scale movement of peoples across national boundaries; (5) National language policies often serve to "marginalize" migrants and language minority groups by placing them at the bottom economically; and (6) Applied linguistics and language teaching are in need of "critical self-examination," based on the first five themes of the volume.

For those interested particularly in second language acquisition and teaching, the chapters by Auerbach and Pennycook are perhaps the most relevant. Auerbach shows how decisions on curricula, textbooks, and language choice in U.S. adult education encode power relations for new immigrants, placing them in a subservient and disadvantaged role. Auerbach then offers an alternative, a Freire-influenced approach to language education—one in which participants take a "critical" and "participatory" stance in relation to their socioeconomic positions. One might thus view Auerbach's approach as a sort of "liberation pedagogy," paralleling the liberation theology practiced by some clergy in the third world.

In his chapter, Pennycook questions whether EIL is really the neutral medium for communication it is often portrayed to be. The answer, of course, is "no." Instead, EIL encodes a vast array of power relationships and disadvantaging consequences, in a sense carrying on its colonial and exploitative legacy. For example, English language education plays a critical

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