

## REVIEWS

### MULTILINGUALISM AND ATTITUDES: ANDERS ANDERSSON,

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The general purpose of Mr. Anderson's explorative-descriptive study is, in his own words, "to measure the manifest attitude of students in general secondary schools in Ethiopia and Tanzania towards English and the official national language in each country". His more specific aims are to identify those social groups which reveal a negative element in their attitude towards one or other of the languages in question and to make a comparison of the languages in terms of the users' attitudes.

Languages in contact are potentially explosive, and Mr. Anderson handles his theme with befitting caution. His purpose, he is careful to insist, is a practical one, to make "a contribution to the concerned school authorities who are dealing with problems that arise in connection with multilingual situations. The idea here is not so much focused on the shaping of policies as on the implementing of existing policies in the best way possible." He is careful, too, to embed the account of his investigations (which forms Part IV of the thesis) in the wider context of multilingualism (Part I), African education (Part II), and a survey of related conditions in Ethiopia and Tanzania. (Part III). In his introduction, Mr. Andersson expresses the fear that some readers may consider these three portions disproportionately long. As far as the present writer is concerned, the fear is groundless: the length of these sections (which are extremely interesting in themselves) serves to underline the important point that the problems which arise in multilingual situations are something more than pretexts for academic exercises; they are real problems, psychological, social and educational problems, which, because they lie close to the heart of a community and do not disfigure its face in the way that disease or poverty do, may all too readily be ignored or dismissed. It is useful, too, to be reminded that, while the study is confined to secondary school students in Ethiopia and Tanzania, the problems are by no means confined to these two countries or even to this continent, and that research into bilingualism in Wales may have relevance for education in Ethiopia and Tanzania — as research in Ethiopia and Tanzania may have for Wales.

In Part IV Mr. Anderson discusses the theoretical bases of his study and goes on to deal with the techniques of sampling, the construction of scales and instruments, the data collected, and the methods of analysing the data. The data was collected by means of a 3-hour battery of questionnaires and tests administered to 875 students in Ethiopia and 1026 in Tanzania. Specimens of these questionnaires are given in the appendix. They were (1) Paired Comparisons ("How Do You Like Different School Subjects?"), (2) Imagined Situations ("Which Language Do You Use When?"), and (3) the main questionnaire ("How Do You Like Language?"). There was also a personal data questionnaire and a mental ability test. The presentation and interpretation of statistical data on language attitudes does not come under the heading of light reading, and the more careful the interpreta-

tion, the harder the reading. It is therefore no dispraise of the author to say that Part IV is not recommended as a bedside book.

The General Summary, Part V, is easier going. Here the author permits himself to draw a number of conclusions "with a fairly high degree of certainty":

In both countries speakers of local languages are less favourable than the others towards the national language.

There is no difference in their attitude towards English between national language speakers and local language speakers.

English is preferred, as a school subject, to the national language - especially by local language speakers.

English, when liked, is liked mainly for utilitarian reasons.

The students' language preference is markedly situation-bound.

Other conclusions which may be drawn, though with less certainty are :

In respect to the national language, students from more "educated" homes show a less favourable attitude than the others. In Ethiopia the negative attitude increases with rising grade level.

In respect to English, girls show a more favourable attitude than boys. In Tanzania the attitude becomes less favourable with rising class level. In Ethiopia the attitude is markedly less favourable in grade 12 than in grade 11, possibly because of worry about the E.S.L.C. English examination.

Perhaps there is nothing novel about these conclusions. Perhaps they merely confirm what had long been suspected. Even so, "a fairly high degree of certainty" provides a reasonable basis for constructive action, whereas mere suspicion was a reasonable excuse for doing nothing.

### **TRAVELLERS IN ETHIOPIA**

**Richard Pankhurst (Editor), London: Oxford University Press, 1965, 148 pp.**

Looking at Ethiopia through the eyes of travellers who, during approximately a millennial period, visited this ancient land is indeed an interesting subject for a book. Professor Pankhurst has presented, in surprisingly few pages, a parade of historically significant excerpts from the writings of "a score of travellers of various nationalities — including two Ethiopians and a Yemeni Arab." The first passage is from an account of the imports and exports of the Aksumite empire as given by a Greek-speaking trader during the latter half of the first century A.D. The last excerpts come from the pens of two Englishmen who visited Emperor Menelik II and his new city of Addis Ababa during the closing years of the nineteenth century A.D. In between the reader is presented with a variety of verbal vignettes from Ethiopia's past.

Professional historians and serious students of Ethiopian history will undoubtedly find "Travellers" to be an interesting supplement to their texts. They may feel some frustration and disappointment in the rather general references to sources, however, The biographical section identifies the authors, the titles

of their writings, and, in most cases, the source of translations (though, in at least two cases, the reader is left to assume that the editor himself translated from the original French texts). Should the reader be enticed to attempt further reading from the sources given, however, he must plod through the volumes in their entirety since no specific page references are furnished.

The reader who claims to be neither a professional historian nor a serious student of Ethiopian history, but whose curiosity causes him to join the "Travellers", may find himself in difficult company. In the first place, Professor Pankhurst's comments, which introduce each new entry, are exceedingly brief and assume a sophistication in Ethiopian history on the parts of readers which may frequently be unjustified. By expanding the introductory comments only slightly to include a little more of the historical setting in which the drama unfolds, the book would have increased the scope of its appeal and utility many times. The fragments would have fit into a much more unified whole. In the second place, for the nonprofessional, many of the "aids" found at the back of the book would have been much more helpful had they been included in the main text. The biographies of the authors, along with sources of the passages, add interest if readily available before the reader actually is confronted with the written work. Appropriate pictures interspersed among the written text assist the reader in conceptualizing the events described. In most cases, the glossary of terms, as well as the supplementary information on the rulers of Ethiopia, would have been much more helpful to the nonprofessional if such assistance had been footnoted as immediate references.

In spite of what appear to be some weaknesses, **Travellers In Ethiopia** is nevertheless a valuable contribution for anyone interested in Ethiopian study. In addition to many other sources of application, it might prove to be an excellent supplemental text for secondary school students who could, if permitted, learn a little of the historians' approach while constructing their own segments of the history of Ethiopia from source materials such as "Travellers", rather than always being forced to memorize someone else's interpretation. One can only hope for more, rather than less, books of the kind Professor Pankhurst has produced.

### ENGLISH FOR EDUCATION?

Papers on the Teaching of English as a Second Language  
Ed. G. P. McGregor. University of Zambia: School of  
Education Occasional Paper No. 1, 1969

Though Mr. McGregor is described on the title page as the editor of these ten papers, he is in fact the author of all but two of them. The collection is none the worse for that, for Mr. McGregor is a stimulating writer, and, as the Dean of the Zambian School of Education remarks in the foreword, he "rightly views the teaching of English as more than an exercise in linguistics; he views it as an opening to a vast stock of the world's technological and scientific knowledge, to literature and art, and to matter of the spirit."

This is not to suggest that the book is merely an apologia for English in the Zambian curriculum. The papers were originally read to a conference of teachers of English in Zambia, and the themes of the book are the practical problems of

the secondary teacher — Vocabulary Selection, Extensive and Intensive Reading, the Teaching of Poetry, the Teaching of Writing Skills, etc., etc. — but the treatment of these themes is informed by the author's own experience in the classroom and by a humanity and a sense of humour which are as refreshing as they are rare.

This is a book which can be read with profit — and pleasure — not only by the teacher of English but by anyone who has an interest in the language problems of the African student. As such, it ought to be a prescribed text for any TESL course.