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RESENHA

RICHARDS, Jack, John Platt and Heidi Weber (1985) *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*. Pp. ix + 314. Harlow: Longman Group Ltd. Paperback.

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Linguistics, like mathematics, comes in two forms: 'pure' and 'applied'. While there are at least two useful dictionaries of the jargon of 'pure' linguistics in print, this is the first attempt to cut through the terminological jungle of 'applied linguistics' (AL). The first problem these authors faced was to define the field of AL itself. It seems that in different countries there are different 'schools' and even different experts in AL who define their field with little consensus: some include areas such as translation theory, language therapy, or technical terminology documentation, while others do not. The authors of this unique dictionary have interpreted AL as embracing all aspects of language teaching, which includes native, second and foreign. 'Teaching' is to be read in its broadest sense: the dictionary is not dominated by terms from language teaching methodology, but includes pedagogically relevant terms from eight disciplines: descriptive phonetics, syntax, morphology and semantics; discourse analysis, sociolinguistics; psycholinguistics; syllabus design; testing and statistics; and language pedagogy proper. Some 1500 of the most frequently occurring terms in general use in AL constitute the dictionary's headworks. These were culled from a wide sample of introductory textbooks and journal articles and tentative definitions were circulated to experts in AL worldwide for comment. No wonder the dictionary took four years to compile!

This dictionary is a response to a high worldwide demand. While linguistics - pure and applied - has remained a minority undergraduate option, at postgraduate level introductory taught-course Masters degrees are still big business. In Britain they bring essential overseas students' fee revenue to Arts Faculties. Perhaps half the readership will therefore be overseas teachers of English as a foreign language. The back cover of the dictionary identifies just this target readership, while the introduction (p.v) appears to prefer the reader '..whose mother tongue is English.' In fact, the strains felt by students of AL meeting the new jargon at the outset of their course are as acute in the native as in the overseas teacher. Lecturers often meet hostile reactions to their jargon from their otherwise very articulate students. Some issue checklists of their own jargon while others put on special mini-course to cover the jargon before the course proper is begun. The dictionary should make such special provisions unnecessary in the future.

This dictionary is unique and needed. It has enormous intrinsic quality besides. Its definitions are models of lucidity and conceptually related terms are cross-referenced: this will minimise the danger of students picking up a piecemeal grasp of the technical field, a danger endemic to glossaries. British and American variants of pronunciation are given for every relevant entry. The guide on p.iv shows the user exactly how to use the resources of the dictionary. And (s)he is given a key reference for further reading at the end of the entry. On a less utilitarian level, the dictionary will be of theoretical interest to applied linguists, since it is a tentative ostensive definition of the field.

There are no serious faults. Some might object that it is a little over-concerned with statistical concepts - and there are plenty of instructions to educational statistics anyway. Inevitably, there are a few

omissions: Graded objectives, niveau seuil (Waystage), but then new jargon appears daily: readers are invited to write to the senior author suggesting additions, so there is every chance that this could become an on-going self-updating publication. The potential dangers of such a dictionary are in the user rather than in the book. Many will use it in an attempt to cut corners, as a substitute means for learning AL at the expense of the text book and the journal. That would be counterproductive, as one area of AL - English for Science and Technology or EST - has demonstrated: nobody becomes a scientist merely by mastering the jargon: the same is true of AL.