

Luba word is different from the form or meaning in other relevant Bantu languages. Presenting the Luba meaning of a word as 'Bantu' conveys the sometimes false impression that the Luba meaning is general to Bantu, and thus more likely than an alternative etymology from another relevant language.

There are a number of inaccuracies in various discussions, particularly in the introduction. For example, Wolof, Serer, Fulani and various other languages of the Atlantic branch of Niger-Congo are misclassified as Mande, a very different branch in the same area (p. xx). Bordering on the humorous is the inclusion of 'ideophones' in a list of musical instruments exemplifying 'Bantu musical contributions' to American culture (p. xxvi). Ideophones are words belonging to a grammatical category of intensifiers in most African and various other languages.

With regard to general problems in etymological methodology, particularly as practised by the second author, I refer the reader to my review (*Language in Society* 1983: 106-10) of her book, a major source included in the present compilation. Symptomatic of the continued substitution of the will to believe for critical scholarship is the blitheness of the introductory discussion: 'Many words listed by Turner have multiple African etymologies. For example, the word *aba* is found in both Twi and Tshiluba. In Twi, *aba* is a day name ... In Tshiluba it is a verb. Twi is a West African language completely unrelated to the Bantu languages' (p. xiv). There are many problems with this passage. One is that Twi and the Bantu languages are related by sister branches of Niger-Congo. Another is that the meaning of the Tshiluba verb is not given (but can be found in a later chapter). However, my main point is that the authors do not go on to indicate how multiple etymologies create problems of validity. That is left as an implication for the sophisticated reader to gather. The naive reader may simply be impressed by the number of African languages which have contributed to (varieties of) American English, even to the same word!

Nonetheless, I particularly enjoyed chapter 4 on place names and the cultural notes in chapter 5, despite the shortcomings of the general discussion.

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SALZMANN, ZDENEK *Language, culture, and society: an introduction to linguistic anthropology*. xiv, 269 pp., illus., maps, tables, bibliogr. Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1993. £36.95 (cloth), £12.95 (paper)

After having taught an introductory course in linguistic anthropology for more than twenty

years, Salzmann transformed his seminar notes and materials into a book that he presents to his readers as 'a broad survey of linguistic anthropology' reflecting 'the healthy eclecticism that has always characterized the field' (p. xii). This origin and the intended eclecticism of this textbook also reflect both its advantages and its shortcomings.

This introductory text is not only clearly structured and well considered especially from the didactic point of view that shows the author to be an experienced teacher. It also offers the beginning student of anthropology an access to linguistics, illustrating why Charles F. Hockett's view presented in his book on *Man's place in nature* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1973) still holds: 'linguistics without anthropology is sterile; anthropology without linguistics is blind' (p. 675).

The book's first chapter presents the history, aims, and methods of this linguistic anthropology; Salzmann then discusses various forms and channels of communication in animals and humans. With human speech he puts his emphasis on design features, language acquisition and socialization, and adds a few cursory remarks on the role of the brain for speech.

The next two chapters give a very basic (and for a beginning student of linguistics a much too rudimentary and outdated) introduction to the linguistic subdisciplines: phonology, morphology and syntax.

Then follows a brief presentation of theories of language origins and two chapters that discuss aspects of language change in diachronic and in synchronic perspective, including topics such as reconstructing protolanguages, glottochronology, genetic classification of languages, dialects, multilingualism, pidgins, Black English, and languages of the world.

The core of the next chapter on language and culture focuses on the topic of linguistic relativity. This chapter introduces the student to the Sapir-Whorf hypotheses and to pioneers of cognitive anthropology; however, with this chapter the disadvantages of Salzmann's textbook become most evident. During the last twenty years or so the paradigms of cognitive anthropology have developed, but there is hardly any reference to these developments in Salzmann's presentation of what he prefers to call 'ethnoscience'.

The next two chapters give a brief introduction into sociolinguistics and the ethnography of communication, discussing topics such as sociolinguistic change, forms of address (but not other politeness phenomena), linguistic etiquette, speech and gender, speech community, speech behaviour, attitudes towards speech, and writing. Although the selection of topics illustrates that the author attempts to be

as comprehensive as possible, it comes as a surprise that he does not mention pragmatics as a linguistic subdiscipline which deals with many of these topics, too.

After a chapter introducing aspects of non-verbal communication (including whistle-, drum- and sign languages) and of writing, and after a chapter on oral folklore and spoken art, Salzmann finishes his textbook with an attempt to evaluate linguistic anthropology in the contemporary world.

The book ends with a glossary of technical terms, the bibliography, a map of the languages mentioned in the text, and a helpful index.

Despite its shortcomings, this book is a good introduction to linguistic anthropology for the beginning student of anthropology (but not linguistics). Its arguments are well illustrated, the definitions presented are easy to understand, and the quotes from original sources presented in 'boxes' together with suggestions for further reading at the end of every chapter may serve the motivated student as a guideline to the more relevant literature.

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STROMBERG, PETER G. *Language and self-transformation: a study of the Christian conversion narrative*. xvi, 148 pp., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1993. £30.00

On the very first page, the author forewarns readers that this book is not an ethnographic study of people who have undergone conversion experiences. It is, instead, as the subtitle indicates, a study of conversion narratives – of the stories that a few American women and men tell about the experiences that have resulted in them becoming Evangelical Christians.

The central argument is that conversion narratives are a kind of ritual in which certain people engage in order to reconcile what they unconsciously experience as conflicting dimensions of their identity. Conversion narratives are reframing techniques that allow problematic and disturbing feelings to be redefined in ways that do not cause as much conflict as they did in the period prior to the conversion experience. For example, Stromberg analyses the story that one woman tells about her life as revolving around ambivalent and contradictory feelings about accommodating others, on the one hand, and controlling them, on the other. These problematic aims are rechannelled and made both meaningful and acceptable through her conversion narrative, wherein Stromberg finds evidence that the woman has come to relinquish

to God 'some of her own aim to be omnipotent' (p. 111).

The evidence for the author's claims about conversion narratives is drawn from a close analysis of interviews that he conducted with six individuals. Segments of these interviews are presented in careful, yet easily readable, transcript form. The exposition and interpretation of the transcripts presented here is, in many places, masterful. Anyone working with transcripts should read these analyses as models of how to explore narrative and generate understanding from them.

The book is part of Cambridge University Press's recently established series in psychological anthropology; however, and one's acceptance or rejection of the substance of author's interpretations of his material will depend on one's views of what psychological anthropology is and what it can offer. This reader, being not especially sympathetic to any form of psychoanalytic thought and expecting a more cultural reading of the narratives analysed here, was disturbed by the Freudian assumptions (tornadoes in dreams are female genitalia, pleasure at cooking for father is a sign of an unresolved Oedipal stage) that guided a number of key interpretations. Furthermore, I found myself feeling uncomfortable about the continual slippage in the text from detailed discussions of actual examples of narrative performance to quite sweeping generalizations about the lives of people whom the author appears barely to have known. Thus, solely, it seems, on the basis of his analysis of single one-hour interviews, the author makes confident assessments of the kinds of problems and 'unacknowledged aims' that govern his subjects' lives and compel them towards conversion experiences.

Readers interested in therapeutic discourse may find this sort of analysis insightful. This reader found it questionable. Analytically distilling 'unacknowledged aims' out of single instances of subjects' narratives, then projecting those aims back onto the subjects, as problems they themselves seek to solve, strikes me as a form of analysis particularly vulnerable to the charge by Bourdieu and others that what is being hypostatized is the model of the researcher, not the lived reality of the people being researched.

The book will be of interest to researchers working with narrative and life-history material. Scholars studying various aspects of Christianity may find it helpful, even though the specifically religious dimensions of the experiences described and examined here are muffled. Those concerned with issues of intentionality and language will recognize here arguments similar to those propounded in very different contexts by American and European