9-1995

Review of *Sustaining Local Literacies*, edited by David Barton

Nancy C. Dorian
Bryn Mawr College

REFERENCES

Biber, Douglas (1988). *Variation across speech and writing*. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press.
Clanchy, M. T. (1979). *From memory to written record, 1066-1307*. London: Arnold.
Havelock, Eric A. (1976). *Origins of Western literacy*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
Olson, David R. (1977). From utterance to text: The bias of language in speech and writing. *Harvard Educational Review* 47:257-81.
Ong, Walter J. (1982). *Orality and literacy: The technologizing of the word*. London: Methuen.
Scribner, Sylvia, & Cole, Michael (1981). *The psychology of literacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Stubbs, Michael (1980). *Language and literacy: The sociolinguistics of reading and writing*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Tannen, Deborah (1982), ed. *Spoken and written language: Exploring orality and literacy*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

DAVID BARTON (ed.), *Sustaining local literacies*. (*Language and Education* 8:1/2.) Clevedon, Avon (UK): Multilingual Matters, 1994. Pp. 103.

Reviewed by NANCY C. DORIAN
German/Anthropology, Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

This special journal issue grew out of a seminar bearing the same title held at the University of Reading, Britain, in the spring of 1993. It does not constitute a report as such on the seminar, however, since the case-study and small-group-discussion format of the seminar did not lend itself to a direct report on the proceedings.

The first two papers in the collection offer an introduction to varieties of local literacies and to the difficulties of sustaining them. David Barton, "Globalisation and diversification: Two opposing influences on local literacies," points to the tension between one global tendency, the increasing dominance of a small number of languages of wider communication, and another, the assertion of previously submerged ethnic identities and languages. He notes that even the former tendency does not guarantee uniformity, whether in speech or in writing – since local literacies, like local dialects, may differentiate themselves to some extent both in form and in function. He expresses concern, however, for the long-term survival chances of small languages that do not enjoy the validation of written use; while recognizing the power of such validation, he acknowledges that writing a language down does not necessarily save it, and that local-language literacy may even threaten a small language by providing a stepping stone to large-language literacy.

Brian Street, "What is meant by local literacies?", discusses his own experience of observing the Iranian government's efforts, in the 1970s, to "intro-

duce" literacy into a region where considerable literacy had already developed through religious training, and had in fact been extended to non-religious contexts and uses. Because local literacies distinct from government-sponsored literacy have sometimes been overlooked or discounted, students of literacy now explicitly recognize the possibility of multiple literacies – including co-existent languages and writing systems, invented local literacies, and vernacular literacies. Invented literacies and vernacular literacies may be present even where the school-promoted forms of literacy are absent or scarce. The former was true, for example, of some Liberians literate only in the locally invented Vai writing system when studied by Scribner & Cole 1981; the latter proved true among Philadelphia highschoolers who produced little and reluctant writing in the school context, but a good deal within their alternative non-school world (Camitta 1993).

The Barton and Street papers present a broad spectrum of literacy possibilities, in light of which a number of specific cases are then discussed: South Africa (Zubeida Desai), Malta (Peter Mayo), the Solomon Islands (Lesley Moseley), India (R. K. Agnihotri), and Uganda (J. B. Kwesiga). Most of these discussions, as well as the rest of the papers here, are so brief as barely to sketch out the range of problems, local and general, encountered within the boundaries of the average contemporary country. An exception is Nancy Hornberger, "Literacy and language planning," which offers a framework of LP goals – encompassing status planning, acquisition planning, and corpus planning – in terms both of policy planning (concentrating on form) and of cultivation planning (concentrating on function). Hornberger points out that "most new nations are not ethnic nations" (76); and indeed most of the cases discussed or mentioned in this collection involve conspicuously multi-lingual societies encompassing multiple ethnicities. An extreme case is Cameroon, introduced by Clinton D. W. Robinson, "Local language for local literacies? Debating a central dilemma," with more than 230 languages.

The fact that Malta departs in some striking respects from the stereo-typical multilingual society, while perfectly embodying it in others, makes the Maltese language-and-literacy situation particularly useful for inclusion here. On the one hand, Malta is tiny, and ethnically rather homogeneous (Roman Catholic, with a local Semitic language). On the other hand, despite political autonomy since 1974, it continues to have two official languages, Maltese and English, the latter still dominant in the educational system. This reflects a colonial history which conforms well to the stereotypical case; only an unusual frequency of change in the external ruling power differentiates Maltese from the more typical case. Lack of adequate territory and of a secure economic base, along with the resultant tradition of government-encouraged emigration, are likely to preserve the favored role of English indefinitely, even in the present Maltese republic.

Although extreme brevity makes superficiality unavoidable in nearly all of these papers, *Sustaining local literacies* manages, by the variety of problems and range of cases touched upon, to provide a useful introduction to the problematics of literacy in diverse societies.

REFERENCES

Camitta, Miriam (1993). Vernacular writing: Varieties of literacy among Philadelphia high school students. In Brian V. Street (ed.), *Cross-cultural approaches to literacy*, 228–46. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press.
Scribner, Sylvia, & Cole, Michael (1981). *The psychology of literacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

CAROL MYERS-SCOTTON, *Duelling languages: Grammatical structure in code-switching*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1993. Pp. xiv, 263. Hb £30.00, $45.00.

Reviewed by STIG ELIASSON
Linguistics, University of Mainz
D-55099, Mainz, Germany

In recent years, there has been a flurry of publications on code-switching (CS). Myers-Scotton's latest book *Duelling languages* (*DL*) is a welcome addition to this group: an ambitious attempt to formulate a general model to account for the structural patterns observed in code-switched utterances. Myers-Scotton emphasizes that – despite differing social conditions, varying linguistic competences of speakers, and typological diversity of languages involved – "the parameters limiting codeswitching are the same everywhere," and that "within these parameters ... what is *possible* and *not possible* can be predicted" (3). In *DL*, she develops her earlier widely acclaimed investigations of CS into a coherent theoretical framework, which she dubs the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model. The model focuses on code-switching within sentences (intrasentential CS), which is structurally of greater interest than switching between sentences (intersentential CS).

Chap. 1 provides a general introduction to the volume; and Chap. 2 critically reviews earlier proposals for structural constraints on intrasentential switching. Chap. 3 grounds the MLF model in psycholinguistic research, and evaluates criteria for assessing the relative roles of the languages being switched. Next follow the two chapters that constitute the core of the book: Chap. 4 explicates the major principles of the MLF theory, while Chap. 5 examines the ways in which structural congruence and incongruence between the participating languages affect code-switching. Chaps. 6–7 relate the MLF model to lexical and grammatical borrowing, respectively. Chap. 8, finally,