

World Evangelization held thirty years ago in Lausanne, Switzerland, he calls for a revolution of values that will lead to justice and peace, a new spirituality that brings together worship and public life and in which people are reconciled to Christ and to each other, and a restructuring of the Church that leads to lives of sacrificial service to Christ. Although some of the rhetoric (such as breaking free from “the military-industrial-political complex that enslaves them”) may alienate some readers, the call to examine ourselves and to lead fully responsible lives of Christian discipleship is powerful.

This review is being written just after the January 2005 constitutional elections in Iraq. The situation in that country shifts from one moment to the next, and the end results are still unclear. It is difficult to make pronouncements or predictions about how the Iraqi situation will turn out. Of course we pray for peace for Iraq with a government responsive to the needs of its citizens. But regardless of how the situation may end, we cannot abnegate our responsibility to think through the justifications given for the war and our own attitudes that may conflict with our call to Christian discipleship. We can ask for forgiveness for wrong that has been done, and we can resolve to influence future decisions about war and peace. In this process, it is wise to consider the perspective of our Latin American brothers and sisters in Christ. This book should be on the reading list of every reflective Christian in North America.

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**Johnston, Bill.** *Values in English Language Teaching.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003, 171pp. ISBN 0-8058-4294-2 \$24.50

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Perhaps the most telling commentary on the last 50 years of professional discussion of language education to emerge from this slim volume by Bill Johnston is the fact that the idea that language teaching is an irreducibly moral process should have to be presented as a new idea. Johnston

locates his account against the background of the tendency until the 1990s for studies of language education to focus on individual or group psychological factors and the shift since that time towards an increasing recognition of ideological factors informing all aspects of language education. Johnston's approach is to take what have too often been thought of as technical processes of guided language acquisition and show through a string of examples how various aspects of these processes are rooted in moral assumptions and decisions. His explanation of what he means by "moral" is worth quoting at length:

"language teaching...is moral, that is, value laden, in at least three crucial ways. First, teaching is rooted in relation, above all the relation between teacher and student; and relation, in turn - the nature of our interactions with our fellow humans - is essentially moral in character...Second, all teaching aims to change people; any attempt to change another person has to be done with the assumption, usually implicit, that the change will be for the better. Matters of what is good and bad, better or worse, are moral matters. Third, although "science" in the form of research in various disciplines...can give us some pointers, in the overwhelming majority of cases it cannot tell us exactly how to run our class. Thus, the decisions we make as teachers - what homework to assign, how to grade student writing, what to do about the disruptive student in the back row - ultimately have to be based on moral rather than objective or scientific principles: That is, they have to be based on what we believe is right and good" (5)

It will be clear from this that Johnston works with a very broad notion of the moral - one that is open to question if taken at face value. Judgments of aesthetic quality, for instance, involve values and ideas of good and bad, better and worse, but it does not seem helpful to regard them as therefore inevitably moral judgments. In Johnston's many examples, however, he appears to be thinking of good and bad primarily in terms of what is believed to promote human thriving, and in this regard he offers a string of detailed examples of how teacher decisions and classroom processes are influenced by such beliefs.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of Johnston's book in relation to the wider literature on language teaching is an explicit engagement with faith and religion as sources of values relevant to language teaching. He argues in general terms that "our deepest and best instincts as teachers arise from belief or faith rather than from pure logic," (9) and then, consistent with that insight, defends the validity of rooting teaching decisions in Christian beliefs that he himself explicitly does not share. Exploration of such issues even in mainstream publications on language education is not entirely new (see, to take one example, Earl Stevick's 1990 volume with Oxford University Press titled *Humanism in Language Teaching*, which Johnston does not cite), and Johnston's account has some limitations. As well as lacking interaction with some relevant existing literature (his claim that there is no existing literature on the religious beliefs of teachers and their relationship to teaching practices is wide of the mark), it also offers some rather brief generalizations about religion and colonialism and the problem of religious certainty that could be more nuanced. Given the rarity of open exploration of such issues in mainstream literature on language teaching, however, Johnston's willingness to not only raise the issue of faith but also defend its validity as an area of investigation is worthy of note.

The book does not stay at the level of generalities about teaching, but deals in turn with examples relating to classroom interaction, the politics of ESL, testing and assessment, teacher identity and teacher development. Johnston's broad notion of the moral allows him to range across an array of different teaching issues and show in each case that some conception of what is good and right is at stake. By the end there is perhaps a slight sense of lack of specific focus – the book shows that many aspects of language teaching are value-laden, but left this reader wishing for more detailed exploration of the particular projections of language teaching that might be suggested by some particular, coherent set of moral values (Johnston bends over backwards not to impose his own moral vision, while also stating it clearly at the end). In a discipline still recovering from a heavily positivistic past, however, the broad and open-ended overview is welcome and helpful. The book offers a helpful primer on the value-laden nature of language pedagogy, and is recommended reading for anyone who wishes to get some initial insight into what morality and faith can have to do with the detail of teaching processes and decisions.