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JENNY COOK-GUMPERZ (ed.), *The social construction of literacy*, 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. ix, 315. Pb \$34.99.

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In the preface to this book, editor Jenny Cook-Gumperz offers a rationale for publishing this second edition: to include additional studies that focus on the intersection of literacy and sociolinguistic practices. Authors who contributed chapters to the first edition were given the opportunity to write new introductions and make revisions. Readers with specific interests in literacy education, as well as a broader audience of educators in general, will find the studies reported on in this volume useful in their work, both as practitioners and researchers.

Chap. 1 provides an overview of the ways in which literacy education has been studied, perceived, and practiced by educators. Cook-Gumperz argues that literacy practices are socially constructed, and therefore literacy education can be more effectively addressed by focusing on the interaction among culture, social constructs, and educational practices. This argument sets the stage for the remaining chapters.

Chaps. 2 and 3 offer a historical context for literacy education seen through a sociolinguistics lens, which provides the reader a foundation for thinking about the studies reported on in chaps. 4 through 11. In the chapter by Gordon Wells, he reports on his study comparing the language children produce at home and at school. What he found, and what is echoed in other chapters, is that there are ways in which context and social structures affect the children's literacy practices that are not at once transparent.

Three of the chapters report on studies that examine contexts for reading instruction. James Collins's and Donna Eder's chapters scrutinize the usefulness of placing children into reading groups based on perceived ability. Both studies present evidence that supports Cook-Gumperz's argument that the context and the interaction between teacher and student have more to do with the success of reading instruction than with any preconceived benefit of grouping students together by perceived reading ability. James Collins & Sarah Michaels examine discourse style as it relates to a student's writing skills and then argue that it adds another layer of information a teacher can use in determining how best to teach writing. In addition, Collins & Michaels discuss the negative effects of "differential treatment" (p. 262) on students who are prejudged or assessed as being marginal or having marginal skills. Mary Catherine O'Connor reports on a study that looks at how discourse style or genre influences learners. In this study college students were asked to "think aloud" about analogy questions on the SAT, a test given to secondary school students to assess readiness for university. O'Connor found that the test assumes that all students understand the hidden discourse embedded in the test questions themselves, which is clearly not accurate. Students may do well or not do well on the test for a number of different reasons.

This volume demonstrates that the ideas and arguments that have informed the field of literacy education endure. The sociolinguistic data presented in each study are compelling, and the explanations are readable for the linguist and non-linguist alike.

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