edifying as an introductory reader, each chapter also includes discussion questions, some of which provoke more insight than others, as well as a thoughtfully chosen annotated bibliography. In sum, this book is destined to become a classic that will stand on the bookshelf of every LPP scholar alongside Cooper's (1989) and Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997) seminal texts.

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BOYD DAVIS, *Alzheimer talk, text and context: Enhancing communication*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

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In our carousel conversation, Chris gives me clues with his words, his syntax, and his discourse context. I listen and try to understand his discourse space. The researcher-observer might be tempted to think of this as a fascinating journey in linguistic terms. From an objective view, this is true, but the journey is harder this time because I don't have a partner to help me. Sometimes either the researcher or the wife must respond; that choice is not difficult. The researcher must step aside, wait a turn, and hope the carousel conversation starts again sometime in the future. (Brewer in Davis 2005:101)

The painter's canvas that had been nearly blank three decades ago now evidences vivid strokes in several areas. The background connecting all corners of the canvas has been lightly sketched out.... The only way to get closer to completing the painting ... is through continued collaborative research from multiple perspectives. (Hamilton in Davis 2005:243)

I picked up Boyd Davis's edited volume with some anxiety. I had let go of my Alzheimer's research for a number of painful reasons in graduate school and had, over the past 10 years, invented myself in the sociopolitics of language learning and teaching. When I spotted the volume at a book exhibit, I thought: Would I be able to connect to any of the work anymore? A lot of research ground gets covered in a decade; would I be able to pick up any of the conversational

threads? When a couple of months later the editor of *Language and Society* contacted me about possibly reviewing it, I took it as a sign beckoning and inviting me back to that space. Needless to say, I was delighted at the array of readings. The volume covers a range from personal accounts (by Jeutonne Brewer), to issues of identity, personhood maintenance, and gender (D. Shenk; E. B. Ryan K. Byrne, H. Spykerman & J. B.Orange; C. Pope & D. N. Ripich), to discourse markers, lexical variation, and bilingualism (Davis, M. Maclagan & P. Mason, Davis & C Bernstein, G. M. J. Nold), to concerns relating to caregiver training (K. Byrne & J. B. Orange; Ryan, Spykerman & A. P. Anas; N. Green; and L. Russell-Pinson & L. Moore) and metaphors by which language and Alzheimer's research can be described (H. E. Hamilton). Each of these areas laminates Alzheimer's talk with feeling and care, thus countering the sedimented psycholinguistic tropes that have typically written about Alzheimer discourse in clinical and cold ways.

A thread linking all of the pieces is the idea that Alzheimer discourse (AD) be understood in relation to contextual elements, be those gender, settings, previous turns, family roles, other languages, or caregivers. While the second section of the book (entitled "Text and context") specifically addresses caregiver concerns, and while the first focuses on "Talk and text," all of the readings have direct relevance to all kinds of caregivers, whether they are family members or people in senior centers. Shenk and Ryan et al.'s essays on identities and personhood address how recounting memories and personal narratives become ways by which patients retain a sense of self, and how interactional features serve the valuable function of validating the "patient's" sense of self. Partially tied to issues of identity is the piece by Pope & Ripich that addresses the importance of dispelling ethnic and racial stereotypes that caregivers in senior homes may have of patients. Based on interactions between black and white patients and caregivers, they underscore the importance of making intercultural communication a key part of caregiver training.

Chapters by Davis, Green, Davis & Bernstein, and Maclagan & Mason show how the use of particular discourse features counter certain psycholinguistic strains. While AD speech has been typically characterized as "empty," Davis & Bernstein, partially through their analysis of the word *thing*, point to ways in which the term performs particular socio-relational functions. Maclagan & Mason likewise point to speech variation across contexts and interlocuters, thereby raising questions about the assessments of psycholinguistic measures. Also addressed are topics relating to caregiver concerns (Byrne & Orange), specifically those relating to the value of "developing and testing empirically, theoretically sound comprehensive and individually tailored communication enhancement education" (185). Issues about how AD patients wrestle with reading and writing issues and ways in which particular reading-writing activities help preserve self-esteem and enhance memory are addressed by Ryan et al. and Russell-Pinson & Moore.

Most poignant of all is Jeutonne Brewer, who shed the researcher's cloak in her piece and chose instead to write as a caregiver wrestling with and watching her loved one battle the ravages of the ailment. Gone is the breaking down of language into discrete parts; absent is the analytic "researcher's" voice. What is palpable is one caregiver's anguish as she watches her partner struggle with the ailment. It was the language in this piece and the metaphors in Hamilton's essay (about how Alzheimer research has been dealt with) that moved my thinking to another plane and made me wonder: Is it perhaps time for those of us interested in the social aspects of aging to pay closer attention to our languaging about the disease? While we have needed to rebut psycholinguistic work by making nuanced arguments about the value of addressing interlocutors, settings, times, and caregivers, perhaps we can now begin to turn the critical lens on ourselves, assuming a self-reflexive position whereby we evaluate how we contribute to interactions with and images of AD patients. While I tried to do something like this 10 years ago in my book (Ramanathan 1997), I don't believe I had pushed myself far enough. Brewer's and Hamilton's pieces make me realize that our researching language sometimes falls desperately short and that this, along with the other discourse features that we analyze, needs critical examination as well.

Boyd Davis is to be congratulated on bringing these authors together into this book. It makes me want to be able to use it as a reader in a course, and doing that might mean that I would eventually find my way back to this research space.

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This book raises many questions. Depending on one's disciplinary perspective, this slim volume could be seen as uneven in its coverage and, as one reviewer has commented, its intended audience is not always clear (Chen 2006). Notwithstanding, it is an important book, on two levels. Its ostensible purpose is to present a contextualizing summary of language and aging, designed to tug readers away