

## REVIEWS

I found this an exhilarating book, written with energy and wit. Crawford maintains a consistently critical approach, identifying contradictions and ambiguities in popular theories of gender difference, and exposing conceptual and methodological weaknesses in language and gender research. The volume is well-structured and readable; it will prove very valuable in undergraduate and beginning postgraduate courses in language and gender or in women's studies, as well as offering much which should interest students of communication studies and social psychology.

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CEIL LUCAS (ed.), *Sociolinguistics in Deaf communities*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 1995. Pp. x, 341. Hb \$39.95.

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The study of deaf sign languages is relatively new. Stokoe's 1960 description of American Sign Language (ASL) challenged linguists' notion that language must be spoken. It is therefore not surprising that the preponderance of early research on deaf sign languages was concerned with demonstrating the similarities between signed and spoken languages. It is also not surprising that the preponderance of linguistic research has been on structural rather than sociolinguistic concerns.

Over the last few years, editor Ceil Lucas has been making sure that data-driven sociolinguistic studies of deaf sign language variation reach an interested audience (cf. Lucas 1989, Berko Gleason 1990). The present volume makes an important contribution for at least three reasons: (a) it contains mostly empirical studies; (b) it is internationally based, providing a means for cross-cultural comparison of sign languages; and (c) it provides a forum even for preliminary work.

The book is divided into five parts: "Variation," "Language contact," "Multilingualism," "Language policy and planning," and "Discourse analysis." Only one paper, written by Lucas, appears in the "Variation" section. The paper is framed by a thorough discussion of lexical variation studies on sign languages to date. Lucas examines the three ways to make the sign for *deaf* in ASL, i.e. ear-to-chin (citation form), contact-cheek, and chin-to-ear. Rather than analyzing her data according to Stokoe's classification system, where "signs are composed of three basic parts of parameters and . . . unlike the sequentially produced segments of spoken languages, these parts are produced simultaneously" (9), Lucas chooses to use and adapt the more recent Liddell & Johnson (1989) analysis of signs as sequentially produced in terms of hold and movement segments ("somewhat analogous to the consonants and vowels of spoken languages"). Lucas finds that the most important factor leading to a non-ear-to-chin form of the sign for *deaf* is the syntactic function of the sign itself: when *deaf* functions as an adjective, it favors variation away from the citation form. She also finds that "a preceding adverb and a following noun seem to disfavor the occurrence of chin-to-ear or contact cheek" versions (14). Although the study is preliminary, the precision with which Lucas studies the variation in one sign is commendable, and provides a good model for others interested in studying lexical variation in sign language.

Two articles appear in the "Language contact" section, one on initialized signs in Quebec Sign Language (LSQ), by Dominique Machabée, the other on the acquisition of expressive and receptive fingerspelling in ASL, in one young Deaf child, by Arlene Blumenthal-Kelly. Both papers look at the contact influence from the orthography of a spoken language, reproduced manually as fingerspelling or initialization of signs. Machabée's paper provides a very carefully constructed classification system for identifying initialized signs (which greatly enhances Battison's 1978 classification system). Although the presentation is not always as clear as it could be, the discussion is quite detailed, and is an excellent resource for the researcher interested in this issue. Machabée's analyses look at the role of form and meaning in understanding the usage of initialized signs in LSQ. Although several conclusions are made throughout the multi-faceted paper, the central conclusion is this: initialization is the outcome of contact with the orthography of a spoken language reproduced manually, and is used to create new signs. Blumenthal-Kelly's paper supports earlier studies of the acquisition of fingerspelling in ASL (cf. Padden & LeMaster 1985, Mayberry & Waters 1991). Since children acquiring ASL have shown the ability to understand and produce fingerspelling (as an aspect of literacy) at a very early age, Blumenthal-Kelly

advocates the incorporation of fingerspelling as early as possible with Deaf infants and young children.

Only one study appears under the heading "Multilingualism," a sociolinguistic description of the sign systems used in one Navajo family, by Jeffrey Davis and Samuel Supalla. Although preliminary, this study provides a glimpse of an extremely interesting language situation in which three sign systems are used: the Navajo alternate sign system, the home sign system developed for use among family members, and ASL. Anyone interested in issues of pidginization and creolization, linguistic descriptions of various sign systems and languages, ethnographic descriptions of language use, and descriptions of how Navajo people incorporate deafness into their culture will be interested in reading this and future work by these authors.

Three studies appear in the "Language policy and planning" section of this volume. "Politics and language: American Sign Language and English in Deaf education," by Stephen M. Nover, is a brilliant essay which documents the impact of the English-Only movement in deaf education. Central to Nover's argument is the notion that the auditory-based views of educators lead to an understanding of Hearing people as normal, and Deaf people as deficient (123). He documents historical patterns of domination in deaf education which led to a 1992 decision to ban ASL from US university deaf education teacher-training programs. Nover specifically reveals the structure of the Council on Education of the Deaf (CED) in terms of how its personnel and ideology have led to the current language-as-problem view of ASL in the classroom. He ends, however, with a more hopeful attitude toward language planning, and a recommendation for viewing ASL as language-as-resource. Mary Ann La Bue, "Language and learning in a Deaf education classroom," describes one teacher's language practices. The strength of this article lies in the transcriptions of simultaneously occurring spoken and signed text. It becomes quite clear that even the best-intentioned good signer may not be able to adequately communicate in both channels simultaneously. The third article in this section is perhaps one of the most important in this collection, "Communication and language use in Spanish-speaking families with Deaf children," by Barbara Gerner de García. The Spanish-speaking families in García's study are not only grappling with the issue of which channel of language to use (oral or visual/gestural), but also with the issue of which language to use (Spanish, English, ASL). This paper is important because it is perhaps the first to document the very real experience of linguistically diverse families who have deaf children, and because it provides concrete recommendations for how educators can respond to the needs of such families.

Three articles appear in the "Discourse analysis" section. First, Melanie Metzger looks at "Constructed dialogue and constructed action in American Sign Language." She finds (258) that ASL constructed dialogue is a form of constructed action, and that ASL uses the same categories of constructions as those identified by Tannen 1989. ASL constructed actions are also used as a parallel discourse

strategy. In the second article, Liza B. Martinez writes about "Turn-taking and eye gaze in sign conversations between Deaf Filipinos." This paper is too preliminary to make any strong claims about the role of Filipino ethnicity in signed turn-taking strategies, although Martinez suggests that men may sign more than women, and that certain uses of negative gaze may be unique to this group. The third article, by Kathy Jankowski, "Empowerment from within," is not on discourse analysis, but argues that people need to be whole and have a good sense of themselves in order to gain full participation in society.

Most of the papers in this volume present something new in the study of variation in sign languages and Deaf communities, whether it be restructured analyses or the subject matter itself. The majority of articles would be accessible and of interest to any scholar working on issues such as the English-Only movement, educational language policies, lexical and discourse analysis, pidginization and creolization, and the ways that Deaf people who use a visual/gestural language are incorporated into otherwise multilingual and multicultural families.

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PETER T. DANIELS & WILLIAM BRIGHT (eds.), *The world's writing systems*.  
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The very first words the editors address to the reader are "Why a book on the world's writing systems?" (xxxv). Their answer is that earlier works on writing systems "don't include information about how the scripts represent languages," whereas the 79 contributors to this encyclopedic survey were asked in every case for "a description of HOW THE SCRIPT ACTUALLY WORKS - how the sounds of a