

Geoff Brindley presents a well-constructed chapter outlining the extensive area of assessment. He focuses on defining the elusive quality of ability, measuring learner output, and changing curriculum development. In "Technology in standardized language assessments," Micheline Chalhoub-Deville describes current computer-based tests (CBT). She assesses the validity issues that challenge CBTs (most are also challenges for paper tests).

"Technological application in applied linguistics" is an excellent choice to follow the essays on assessment. Jill Burstein and Martin Chodorow consider automated essay analyses and their validity. Like the section on assessment, this is "must" reading for practitioners curious about how a machine could "successfully" grade essays.

In the conclusion to the volume, "Where do we go from here?," Robert Kaplan points out that the diversity of the contributions can indicate two things: that the field of AL really is not an "independent discipline," or that this is evidence of healthy and critical reflection on the scope of the field. He lists the "commonalities" applied linguists share and supplies a series of questions that provide an excellent framework for continued discussion.

Many of the chapters in this handbook are well worth reading. Nevertheless, because of the disjointed nature of the contributions as a whole, the intended audience is not clear. The volume is inappropriate as an introduction to the field because many of the contributions assume a significant amount of background knowledge. On the other hand, practitioners in the field will often find simply a summary of the past, present, and future trends. There is little consistency between sections nor between chapters within the sections. Some contributions are simple reviews of the literature and others actual research reports. Because of this, and because of the cost, it is likely that this book be used primarily as a library reference book to which professors can send their students for a particular chapter.

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DAVID C. S. LI (ed.), *Discourses in search of members: In honor of Ron Scollon*.
Baltimore: University Press of America, 2001. Pp. xv, 640. Hb \$75.00.

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Discourses in search of members is a festschrift presented to Ron Scollon on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday in May 1999. The volume is so titled, writes Li, in order to "reflect and unify all of Ron's research endeavors to date, namely, the dynamic, dialectical relationship between, on the one hand, how members of a

myriad of overlapping Discourses (to follow James Gee's convention) acquire legitimacy of their memberships, consciously or otherwise, and on the other hand, how such Discourses maintain their vitality and viability through self-perpetuating social practices of their members from day to day" (p. ix). The editor has reached his goal, compiling 25 contributions that address a number of related topics in four core sections: educational discourses, critical and media studies, intercultural/interdiscourse communication, and language learning and comparative poetics.

"Discourse" is defined and redefined from various academic perspectives. Viewed from the perspective of critical discourse analysis (CDA), which draws on critical social sciences and systemic functional linguistics, discourse is not a mere text but "semiotic elements of social practices" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999:38). To make this feature of discourse prominent, Gee capitalizes the term and defines "Discourse" as composed of distinctive ways of language expression coupled with distinctive ways of behaving and believing (81). Accordingly, an individual involved in verbal communication has to follow a certain mode of participation. The process by which an individual acquires his or her Discourse has two stages, one in earlier life ("primary Discourse"), and one in later life ("secondary Discourse"). Secondary Discourse is what Ron Scollon and his wife and collaborator, Suzanne B.K. Wong Scollon, call "secondary socialization," or education (Scollon & Scollon 1995:149), in which an individual learns how to acquire membership or identity in the discourse system. Under the subtitle of "Educational discourse," five contributions in the first part of the volume relate to membership in an educational setting. James Gee discusses discourses at school by providing a general, theoretical account, while Martin Cortazzi and Lixian Jin, in "Cultures of learning: The social construction of educational identities," approach this topic in a more specific way. They focus on students' perceptions of "good teachers," "good students," and "why students do not ask questions," and they observe how members of different discourse systems perceive each others' memberships in a multicultural setting. Basing their work on the notion that language, culture, learning, and identity are goals of education and at the same time a formative medium of education, the authors offer an insightful discussion on perceptions of cultures of learning.

In a world where education is often conducted in a multicultural situation, membership or identity in intercultural communication must become foregrounded. Accordingly, the third part of the volume – "Intercultural/interdiscourse communication" – includes six contributions that address the cultural practices of communication, of which three are to be reviewed here briefly. In "Moral norms in German-Chinese interaction," Susanne Günthner explores the dialogical construction of morality in informal interaction between Chinese and German academics, and concludes that Chinese speakers often refer to exemplary stories and proverbial sayings when they illustrate moral norms and values. Arja Piirainen-Marsh's contribution, "Identity in

multicultural broadcast talk," is concerned with ways in which practices of categorization and differentiation between relevant identity sets enter into the management of some key activities in multiparty, multicultural interactions broadcast on Finnish national television. By categorizing the interviewees through the use of explicit device for identifying, referring to, or describing them as members of collectivities, the author concludes, the host manages speakership and the development of topics on the show. Suzanne Scollon and Yuling Pan, in their discussion of the metaphor *Saa Taaigik* (Cantonese for a Chinese martial art, alternative to the boxing and battle metaphors in the West), argue that the conceptual metaphors are imbricated in the history of social practices of a society in which they have become codified as metaphors. They believe that these metaphors are articulated in language and used in socialization to build habitus and become cultural tools. Using data from business meetings, family dinners, and a meeting of tai chi friends, the authors provide an insightful discussion on the Chinese strategies for conflict resolution; they conclude that hierarchy is an important factor in Chinese interaction and forms a backdrop for social practices.

If the first and third parts of the volume can be said to address how members of a myriad of overlapping Discourses acquire legitimacy of membership, then the second part, with the subtitle "Critical and media studies," is obviously devoted to the exploration of how Discourse as a key sociolinguistic factor serves as a significant tool to help one access, consolidate, and in some cases manipulate power. The critical study of discourse, based on the notion that discourse is socially shaping while it is socially shaped, attempts to reveal the relationships of causality and determination between discursive practices and social and cultural structures (Fairclough 1995:131–2). This critical study of discourse readily finds its echo in media studies. In his comparative study of news production between sociological approach and culturalist tradition, Anthony Fung, by discussing what news is, explores the similarities and differences of the two schools. Particularly concerned with this feature of discourse is how objectivity is viewed in news production. Though the two schools both admit that there is bias in news production, the culturalists go a step further. They hold that this purported objectivity is a kind of ideology, transmitted through the news made by the journalists who work as "persons" within their culture and environment. Fung also relates his discussion to power by saying that news is a construction of reality, but reality is seen through different news frames set by those who possess ultimate power in society. In other words, news frames fix the reality that constitutes the culture. Another contribution, in which Gu Yueguo explores the "backdoor practice" in China, relates discourse more directly with social practice. Viewing the backdoor practice as an interactive process which is substantiated in discourse, the author summarizes four discourse strategies: test the water, implicature, bartering, and delaying. These

strategies are accomplished by way of discourse as the members of certain groups attain their goals in the backdoor practice. The way in which discourse intervenes with social practice is thus revealed to some extent.

Scollon has contributed greatly to Chinese studies. Like Gu, who found himself repeatedly murmuring “unbelievable” to himself as he read Scollon’s papers for the first time (Gu, 1998), many Chinese scholars feel in debt to this American linguist for his contributions to Chinese rhetoric and composition. Possibly out of this consideration comes the fourth part, in which four out of five contributions address language learning in association with Chinese. Eli Hinkel examines the impact of advanced L1 literacy (mostly Chinese) on L2 writing. Andy Kirkpatrick and Yan Yonglin examine the use of citation conventions and authorial voice in articles selected from three mainland Chinese academic journals. Gertrude Tinker Sachs tells how she becomes an integrated member of the Hong Kong society by learning Cantonese. David Li recalls the pragmatic dissonance that he experienced when respecting and instantiating sociopragmatic norms and cultural values of L2 would entail a violation of those in L1, and vice versa.

Academic though the volume is, with a selected list of Scollon’s publications and activities and an index, it does not fail to be a festschrift in the true sense. Among the contributors are the honoree’s former students, his former professor, and his colleagues, who, coming from various regions including Finland, Australia, Japan, China, the United Kingdom, and the United States, truly represent an international community. Layne A. Longfellow, Scollon’s professor at the University of Michigan in 1961, and also a go-between for Ron and Suzanne’s marriage, praises his student by saying that “he has surpassed me in many ways.” Helen Frost, a poet and Ron’s former student, writes in her own genre, “Ron Scollon’s work – his serious thinking and his engaging way of presenting it – is crucial for our time.” With its inclusion of these informal writings in the Prelude along with the academic articles, the volume provides the readers a true picture of a rare man “on both sides of the Pacific, China or Alaska (two places that couldn’t be more different!)” (4).

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