

## Editor's Introduction

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This third volume in the Sociolinguistics in Deaf Communities series represents a departure from the previous format of a collection of papers. What is contained here is the work of one person, but it is a work that brings together the different concerns of sociolinguistics—from the structure and use of language, language policy and planning, and discourse to bilingualism, language contact, and language attitudes.

This is a book about the use of language in deaf education, an issue that, at its core, is essentially sociolinguistic in nature. It is a sociolinguistic issue because it involves the choice of language that will be used as the medium of instruction for Deaf children; it is sociolinguistic because it concerns the contact of distinct languages and the outcomes of this contact; and it is sociolinguistic because it has direct bearing on users of language, be they children, parents, administrators, or teachers. This volume provides a concise example of what we mean by “sociolinguistics in Deaf communities;” that is, a picture of the place where language structure and language users meet.

Dr. Claire Ramsey began the research reported here for a dissertation, the writing of which was supported by a fellowship from the Spencer Foundation. Her efforts were recognized as Dissertation of the Year in the University of California, Berkeley, Graduate School of Education (1993). The dissertation also received honors for scholarship from the International Reading Association in 1994 and was recognized as Dissertation of the Year by Division G (Social Context of Education) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). We are very fortunate to be able to offer it as a part of this series.

I am grateful to my old friend and colleague Dr. Claire Ramsey for contributing to the series and to the members of the editorial advisory board for their diligence in reviewing papers. And as always, I am grateful to Ivey Pittle Wallace, Managing Editor of Gallaudet University Press, for her continuing hard work and sense of humor.

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Washington, D.C.