

Contents

Preface	viii
Acknowledgments	xii
Part one The state of the art	1
1 The state of the art and some definitions	3
1.1 Some potential confusions	4
1.2 A note on definitions of reading and literacy	10
1.3 The sociolinguistics of literacy	15
Part two The relations between spoken and written language	19
2 Spoken and written language: which is primary?	21
2.1 Confusion between spoken and written language	22
2.2 The priority of spoken language?	23
2.3 The chronological priority of spoken language	25
2.4 The social priority of written language	29
2.5 The logical relation between speech and writing	32
2.6 A case study of /h/ and <i>h</i>	35
2.7 Conclusions	40
3 Some principles of English spelling	43
3.1 A functional view of English spelling	44
3.2 Writing systems	46
3.3 Words, morphemes and morphological alternation	49
3.4 The unfortunate example of <i>ghoti</i>	51
3.5 <i>-ed</i> as a past tense marker	54
3.6 Spelling and learned words	60

Contents

3.7	Regularity in spelling	61
3.8	Spelling and foreign words	63
3.9	Incompatible demands on a spelling system	65
3.10	Some implications for teaching reading	66
3.11	Attitudes to spelling mistakes	68
4	Spelling and society	70
4.1	Why has English spelling never been reformed?	70
4.2	Checklist of criteria for writing systems	72
4.3	A case-study of Ponapean	74
4.4	A case-study of Haitian Creole	75
4.5	The requirements of typography and machine printing	77
4.6	The power of edited print	81
4.7	The wider writing community: cultural, political and economic	82
4.8	The wider writing community: religious	91
4.9	Conclusions	95
4.10	The ideal orthography	96
5	The functions of written language	97
5.1	Children's confusions over the purposes of written language	98
5.2	Different limitations and advantages	100
5.3	Recording and administrative functions	102
5.4	The intellectual functions of written language	103
5.5	The specialization of written language	108
5.6	Written text as edited language	110
5.7	The relation between speaking and reading aloud	112
5.8	Implications for teaching reading and writing	114
6	Transcriptions, orthographies and accents	116
6.1	Formal features of written and spoken language	116
6.2	Words in transcriptions and orthographies	117
6.3	Standard and non-standard English and accents	125
6.4	Accent differences	128
6.5	Non-standard English, accents, and reading ability	132
6.6	Conclusions	134
Part three	Explanations of reading failure	137
7	Initial literacy and explanations of educational failure	139
7.1	Possible sources of reading failure	140
7.2	Deprivation theory	143

7.3	The stages in the debate	145
7.4	Stage 1: deprivation theory	146
7.5	Stage 2: deprivation theory as fact	150
7.6	Stage 3: deprivation as myth	153
7.7	Stage 4: myth as fact	155
7.8	Conclusions	156
8	Summary and conclusions	160
8.1	Summary	160
8.2	Conclusions	162
8.3	Topics for investigation: literacy and classroom practices	162
	Appendix A Symbols used in transcriptions	165
	Appendix B Points and manners of articulation	167
	Suggestions for further reading	169
	Bibliography	171
	Name index	183
	Subject index	186