More often than not, there are calls for multidisciplinary approaches to research, especially in academia. Accordingly, Rampton’s *Language in Late Modernity: Interaction in an Urban School* answers these calls. Just as its title suggests, this book examines classroom discourse and interactions amongst students and teachers in a multi-ethnic, urban school setting. Rather than focusing on ethnicity or gender (though he acknowledges gender in particular), he concentrates on social class. Taken place at Central High in London, it makes sense that he is examining social class being that British society has a history of being social class centered (p. 273). Initially, Rampton addresses the view of some that studies on classrooms tend to be boring but that the methods he uses for his classroom research counteracts those “controversial claims” (Rampton, 2006, p. 3). Labeling his research “linguistic ethnography”, the primary methods are from interactional and ethnographic sociolinguistics as relevant to late modern thinking and experience (p. 4). Rampton explains that, “the goal, in other words, has been theoretical reconstruction, not only recognizing the significance of these concerns identified in educational policy, sociolinguistics and sociology, but also reconfiguring them within more encompassing empirical accounts and analytic frameworks” (p. 388; his italics, he cites Burawoy et al., 1991).
This research is based on two subsets of data from a larger corpus of “a 1997-1999 project funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council” (p. 31). Four select students (2 girls and 2 boys, 2 Anglo, 1 South Asian, 1 African-Caribbean) were given radio-microphones to wear, recording themselves, other people (i.e. students and teachers), and other audible material (i.e. others’ conversations, music, singing, intercom sound system, etc.) they came in contact with throughout the school day. Rampton’s primary data collection was taken from those particular recordings. Additionally, the students were interviewed individually in order to get their commentary and explanations on previously recorded interactions. Classroom sessions were also audio-recorded. Besides the sociolinguistics analyses mentioned earlier, a cultural studies analysis was also used as a supplement because the former analysis “only gives a shallow view of class” (p. 331). Other analyses used are phonetics and phonology to help identify social class dialects (sociolects), sociolinguistic discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and theories of indexicality from linguistic anthropology.

This 400-page text is separated into five parts and composed of ten chapters, each ending in a summary. As this is not a book that is read in one setting, concluding summaries are a welcoming component so revisiting concepts from a previous chapter(s) can refresh the reader. In addition to the synopses, Rampton reviews terminology, discipline specific terminology, and acknowledges each chapter's limitations, making these summaries an excellent resource and model for student readers.

Part I consists of an introduction, giving background information on the research including history of educational policies in Britain, definitions of late modernity, methods and methodology used, fieldwork and data collection. Part II, Urban Classroom Discourse, looks at the demographics of Central High, with classrooms tending to be noisy with students (predominantly boys) over-talking and interrupting the teacher and other students, blurring out answers or remarks. This section illuminates the influence of popular culture (i.e. music, TV, etc.) in classroom interactions and how it is interspersed and made relevant to class discussion by students, even though on the outside it may seem disruptive or tangential. Part III, Performance of Deutsch, examines the German spoken by the students who are learning the language. Deutsch is improvised and acceptably used outside of German class in other classes with teachers. Although German class is highly ritualized and structured (remote memorization with no real
world use of the language) and appears to bore students, the use of Deutsch shows that they are interested in the language but not the way it is being taught. Part IV, *The Stylisation of Social Class*, looks at the use of social class in various disciplines and how it is viewed in the US and UK. The use of posh (high culture, p. 341) and Cockney (low culture, p. 341) by students is analyzed in relation to themselves or in reference to teachers and other students. It also illustrates how students use those dialects in order to distance themselves or relate to those being discussed or referenced. For example, when one student feels the teacher belittled her, she used posh when mocking the teacher. Part V, *Methodological Reflections*, shows the relevance of this study across disciplines. It also reflects back on the study looking at its strengths and weaknesses.

One of Rampton’s main findings is that despite the fact that many research projects focus on other social identities, especially race and ethnicity, social class is still important, especially in a highly class based society such as England (p. 273). He notes, “the most consequential point to emerge is of course, that it is a mistake to assume that social class identities have lost their significance in recent years” (p. 377). Yet, many of his participants have parents who come from other countries (e.g. colonies and former colonies of Britain) and speak English as a second language. Although Rampton admits that ethnicity intersects with class, his focus is solely on class. This is one of the central limitations of the text. I believe a focus on ethnicity/race, especially with the boy and girl who were South Asian and African-Caribbean respectively would have enhanced the analysis. In fact, examining this social variable with the other two students who were White would have been interesting because Central High is a school that is multi-ethnic reporting more than seventy home languages (p. 46). Although these two students are racially members of the majority in England, they most likely are the minority in school. When you look at just social class with participants who are of various ethnicities, the research only reveals one part of the story. Rampton did give select examples of students speaking in and/or mocking Creole and Bengali dialects when talking with each other, but I would have appreciated more attention to bi-/multi-lingualism in this data.

This book is highly recommended for all scholars, especially in Education, Linguistics, Sociology, Anthropology, and Psychology. Rampton demonstrates how those specific disciplines and the research and theories associated with them are relevant to his research, highlighting their
shortcomings and how they can supplement and inform each other in order to fully examine his data. What is even more surprising and appreciated is that free supplementary material on this study, referenced in the book, is found online. Ben Rampton does an excellent job in making sure his work is accessible and understandable to wide audiences of students and colleagues.