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Literacies and Language Education

Third Edition

Springer

Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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In this third, fully revised edition, the 10 volume Encyclopedia of Language and Education offers the newest developments, including an entirely new volume of research and scholarly content, essential to the field of language teaching and learning in the age of globalization. In the selection of topics and contributors, the Encyclopedia reflects the depth of disciplinary knowledge, breadth of interdisciplinary perspective, and diversity of sociogeographic experience in the language and education field.

Throughout, there is an inclusion of contributions from non-English speaking and non-western parts of the world, providing truly global coverage. Furthermore, the authors have sought to integrate these voices fully into the whole, rather than as special cases or international perspectives in separate sections.

The Encyclopedia is a necessary reference set for every university and college library in the world that serves a faculty or school of education, as well as being highly relevant to the fields of applied and socio-linguistics. The publication of this work charts the further deepening and broadening of the field of language and education since the publication of the first edition of the Encyclopedia in 1997 and the second edition in 2008.

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Literacies and Language Education

Third Edition

With 10 Figures

Springer

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Editor in Chief's Introduction to the "Encyclopedia of Language and Education"

This is one of ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* published by Springer. The *Encyclopedia* – now in this, its 3rd edition – is undoubtedly the benchmark reference text in its field. It was first published in 1997 under the general editorship of the late David Corson and comprised eight volumes, each focused on a single, substantive topic in language and education. These included: language policy and political issues in education, literacy, oral discourse and education, second language education, bilingual education, knowledge about language, language testing and assessment, and research methods in language and education.

In his introductory remarks, David made the case for the timeliness of an overarching, state-of-the-art review of the language and education field. He argued that the publication of the *Encyclopedia* reflected both the internationalism and interdisciplinarity of those engaged in the academic analysis of language and education, confirmed the maturity and cohesion of the field, and highlighted the significance of the questions addressed within its remit. Contributors across the 1st edition's eight volumes came from every continent and from over 40 countries. This perhaps explains the subsequent impact and reach of that 1st edition – although no one (except, perhaps, the publisher!) quite predicted its extent. The *Encyclopedia* was awarded a Choice Outstanding Academic Title award by the American Library Association and was read widely by scholars and students alike around the globe.

In 2008, the 2nd edition of the *Encyclopedia* was published under the general editorship of Nancy Hornberger. It grew to ten volumes as Nancy continued to build upon the reach and influence of the *Encyclopedia*. A particular priority in the 2nd edition was the continued expansion of contributing scholars from contexts outside of English-speaking and/or developed contexts, as well as the more effective thematic integration of their regional concerns across the *Encyclopedia* as a whole. The 2nd edition also foregrounded key developments in the language and education field over the previous decade, introducing two new volumes on language socialization and language ecology.

This 3rd edition continues both the legacy and significance of the previous editions of the *Encyclopedia*. A further decade on, it consolidates, reflects, and expands (upon) the key issues in the field of language education. As with its predecessors, it overviews in substantive contributions of approximately 5000 words each, the historical development, current developments and challenges, and

future directions, of a wide range of topics in language and education. The geographical focus and location of its authors, all chosen as experts in their respective topic areas, also continues to expand, as the *Encyclopedia* aims to provide the most representative international overview of the field to date.

To this end, some additional changes have been made. The emergence over the last decade of "superdiversity" as a topic of major concern in sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and language education is now a major thread across all volumes – exploring the implications for language and education of rapidly changing processes of migration and transmigration in this late capitalist, globalized world. This interest in superdiversity foregrounds the burgeoning and rapidly complexifying uses of language(s), along with their concomitant deconstruction and (re)modification, across the globe, particularly (but not exclusively) in large urban environments. The allied emergence of multilingualism as an essential area of study – challenging the long-held normative ascendancy of monolingualism in relation to language acquisition, use, teaching, and learning – is similarly highlighted throughout all ten volumes, as are their pedagogical consequences (most notably, perhaps, in relation to translanguaging). This "multilingual turn" is reflected, in particular, in changes in title to two existing volumes: *Bilingual and Multilingual Education* and *Language Awareness, Bilingualism and Multilingualism* (previously, *Bilingual Education* and *Language Awareness*, respectively).

As for the composition of the volumes, while ten volumes remain overall, the *Language Ecology* volume in the 2nd edition was not included in the current edition, although many of its chapter contributions have been reincorporated and/or reworked across other volumes, particularly in light of the more recent developments in superdiversity and multilingualism, as just outlined. (And, of course, the important contribution of the *Language Ecology* volume, with Angela Creese and the late Peter Martin as principal editors, remains available as part of the 2nd edition.) Instead, this current edition has included a new volume on *Language, Education and Technology*, with Steven Thorne as principal editor. While widely discussed across the various volumes in the 2nd edition, the prominence and rapidity of developments over the last decade in academic discussions that address technology, new media, virtual environments, and multimodality, along with their wider social and educational implications, simply demanded a dedicated volume.

And speaking of multimodality, a new, essential feature of the current edition of the *Encyclopedia* is its multiplatform format. You can access individual chapters from any volume electronically, you can read individual volumes electronically and/or in print, and, of course, for libraries, the ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia* still constitute an indispensible overarching electronic and/or print resource.

As you might expect, bringing together ten volumes and over 325 individual chapter contributions has been a monumental task, which began for me at least in 2013 when, at Nancy Hornberger's invitation, Springer first approached me about the editor-in-chief role. All that has been accomplished since would simply not have occurred, however, without support from a range of key sources. First, to Nancy Hornberger, who, having somehow convinced me to take on the role, graciously agreed to be consulting editor for the 3rd edition of the *Encyclopedia*, providing advice, guidance, and review support throughout.

The international and interdisciplinary strengths of the *Encyclopedia* continue to be foregrounded in the wider topic and review expertise of its editorial advisory board, with several members having had direct associations with previous editions of the *Encyclopedia* in various capacities. My thanks to Suresh Canagarajah, William Cope, Viv Edwards, Rainer Enrique Hamel, Eli Hinkel, Francis Hult, Nkonko Kamwangamalu, Gregory Kamwendo, Claire Kramsch, Constant Leung, Li Wei, Luis Enrique Lopez, Marilyn Martin-Jones, Bonny Norton, Tope Omoniyi, Alastair Pennycook, Bernard Spolsky, Lionel Wee, and Jane Zuengler for their academic and collegial support here.

The role of volume editor is, of course, a central one in shaping, updating, revising and, in some cases, resituating specific topic areas. The 3rd edition of the *Encyclopedia* is a mix of existing volume editors from the previous edition (Cenoz, Duff, King, Shohamy, Street, and Van Deusen-Scholl), new principal volume editors (García, Kim, Lin, McCarty, and Thorne, Wortham), and new coeditors (Lai and Or). As principal editor of *Language Policy and Political Issues in Education*, Teresa McCarty brings to the volume her longstanding interests in language policy, language education, and linguistic anthropology, arising from her work in Native American language education and Indigenous education internationally. For *Literacies and Language Education*, Brian Street brings a background in social and cultural anthropology, and critical literacy, drawing on his work in Britain, Iran, and around the globe. As principal editors of *Discourse and Education*, Stanton Wortham has research expertise in discourse analysis, linguistic anthropology, identity and learning, narrative self-construction, and the new Latino diaspora, while Deoksoon Kim's research has focused on language learning and literacy education, and instructional technology in second language learning and teacher education. For *Second and Foreign Language Education*, Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl has academic interests in linguistics and sociolinguistics and has worked primarily in the Netherlands and the United States. As principal editors of *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, Ofelia García and Angel Lin bring to the volume their internationally recognized expertise in bilingual and multilingual education, including their pioneering contributions to translanguaging, along with their own work in North America and Southeast Asia. Jasone Cenoz and Durk Gorter, principal editors of *Language Awareness, Bilingualism and Multilingualism*, bring to their volume their international expertise in language awareness, bilingual and multilingual education, linguistic landscape, and translanguaging, along with their work in the Basque Country and the Netherlands. The principal editor of *Language Testing and Assessment*, Elana Shohamy, is an applied linguist with interests in critical language policy, language testing and measurement, and linguistic landscape research, with her own work focused primarily on Israel and the United States. For *Language Socialization*, Patricia Duff has interests in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics and has worked primarily in North America, East Asia, and Central Europe. For *Language, Education and Technology*, Steven Thorne's research interests include second language acquisition, new media and online gaming environments, and theoretical and empirical investigations of language, interactivity, and development, with his work focused primarily in the United States and Europe. And

for *Research Methods in Language and Education*, principal editor, Kendall King, has research interests in sociolinguistics and educational linguistics, particularly with respect to Indigenous language education, with work in Ecuador, Sweden, and the United States. Finally, as editor-in-chief, I bring my interdisciplinary background in the sociology of language, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and educational linguistics, with particular interests in language policy, Indigenous language education, and bilingual education, along with my own work in New Zealand, North America, and the UK/Europe.

In addition to the above, my thanks go to Yi-Ju Lai, coeditor with Kendall King, and Iair Or, coeditor with Elana Shohamy. Also, to Lincoln Dam, who as editorial assistant was an essential support to me as editor-in-chief and who worked closely with volume editors and Springer staff throughout the process to ensure both its timeliness and its smooth functioning (at least, to the degree possible, given the complexities involved in this multiyear project). And, of course, my thanks too to the approximately 400 chapter contributors, who have provided the substantive content across the ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia* and who hail from every continent in the world and from over 50 countries.

What this all indicates is that the *Encyclopedia* is, without doubt, not only a major academic endeavor, dependent on the academic expertise and good will of all its contributors, but also still demonstrably at the cutting edge of developments in the field of language and education. It is an essential reference for every university and college library around the world that serves a faculty or school of education and is an important allied reference for those working in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. The *Encyclopedia* also continues to aim to speak to a prospective readership that is avowedly multinational and to do so as unambiguously as possible. Its ten volumes highlight its comprehensiveness, while the individual volumes provide the discrete, in-depth analysis necessary for exploring specific topic areas. These state-of-the art volumes also thus offer highly authoritative course textbooks in the areas suggested by their titles.

This 3rd edition of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* continues to showcase the central role of language as both vehicle and mediator of educational processes, along with the pedagogical implications therein. This is all the more important, given the rapid demographic and technological changes we face in this increasingly globalized world and, inevitably, by extension, in education. But the cutting edge contributions within this *Encyclopedia* also, crucially, always situate these developments within their historical context, providing a necessary *diachronic* analytical framework with which to examine *critically* the language and education field. Maintaining this sense of historicity and critical reflexivity, while embracing the latest developments in our field, is indeed precisely what sets this *Encyclopedia* apart.

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Volume Editors' Introduction to "Literacies and Language Education"

In this introduction to *Literacies and Language Education*, We attempt to survey briefly some of the new directions evident in literacy studies. We begin with an outline of the current theoretical frameworks, in particular work in New Literacy Studies, in multimodality, and in theories of technology and artifact, before considering some of the educational responses evident in different countries as they come to terms with the challenges posed by new literacies. We also make some suggestions as to why it is that policy in some countries – notably the USA and UK – seems to be facing in the opposite direction to that which this research base tells us is needed.

Many of the chapters in this volume also work from this perspective. The volume is divided into three parts: The first part of 11 chapters, entitled *Literacies and Social Theory*, puts work in the field into theoretical perspective; the second part, entitled *Literacies and Social Institutions*, includes a further 12 chapters that consider the issues raised with attention specifically to the issues of "language," classroom literacy, and family literacy in relation to a number of social and cultural contexts, such as in Nepal, Brazil, Australia, and the USA. In the third part, *Living Literacies – Social and Cultural Experience*, a further 8 chapters cover many of these issues across a number of different countries, Africa, USA, Latin America, and the UK.

The first part comprises chapters which cover topics such as technology, globalization, reading, critical literacy, gender, etc. Many of these issues are referred to in the subsequent parts, where authors go into more detail on social institutions and social and cultural experiences. Part 1, following the introductory piece on "New Literacies, New Times: Developments in Literacy Studies" written by the first editor, moves into specific accounts, beginning with "Critical Race Theory" by Arlene Willis. She locates this perspective in historical debates under the heading of "Early Developments," noting how the notion of "Critical Race Theory" (CRT) emerged among legal scholars in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s "in response to the slow and deliberate enforcement of civil rights legislation and antidiscrimination law in the USA." The theoretical orientation and movement emerged later when legal scholars sought to "re-examine the terms by which race and racism have been negotiated in American consciousness, and to recover and revitalize the radical tradition of race-consciousness among African-Americans and other peoples of color." This involved "oppositional scholarship," emphasizing that CRT "challenges the universality of white experience and judgment as the

authoritative standard that binds people of color, and normatively measures, directs, controls, and regulates the terms of proper thought, expression, presentment, and behavior." A key field here is that of education, where scholars who embrace CRT "call for race, racism, and power to be squarely addressed, beyond the emphatic fallacy that abounds in education." This involved theorizing, methodologies, and "analyses to comprehend and explain the realities of the lives and experiences of people of color living in racialized societies," an appropriate location for readers beginning to engage with a volume on *Literacies and Social Theory* in the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*.

Appropriately enough, the next chapter is entitled "Literacy Myths" in which Harvey Graff and John Duffy refer to the "belief, articulated in educational, civic, religious, and other settings, contemporary and historical, that the acquisition of literacy is a necessary precursor to and invariably results in economic development, democratic practice, cognitive enhancement, and upward social mobility." Literacy, so defined, Graff and Harvey point out, in a view that is central to the whole volume "has been invested with immeasurable and indeed almost ineffable qualities, purportedly conferring on practitioners a predilection toward social order, an elevated moral sense, and a metaphorical "state of grace,"" assumptions that have run through the public and scholarly debates in the field. Indeed, they argue, such presumptions "have a venerable historical lineage and have been expressed, in different forms, from antiquity through the Renaissance and the Reformation, and again throughout the era of the Enlightenment, during which literacy was linked to progress, order, transformation, and control." The summary of these presumptions provided by Graff and Duffy offers the reader a background on which to make their own contemporary judgments about the role and importance of literacy in contemporary society: "Associated with these beliefs is the conviction that the benefits ascribed to literacy cannot be attained in other ways, nor can they be attributed to other factors, whether economic, political, cultural, or individual. Rather, literacy stands alone as the independent and critical variable." Taken together, these attitudes constitute what Graff first termed "the Literacy Myth." Many researchers and commentators have since adopted this usage, a theme that Street signaled in the opening chapter of the volume and that many authors address as they attempt to locate their account of literacy in fields such as education, in continents such as Africa and Asia, and in debates about globalization and new technology. In a statement that underpins many of the accounts to follow, Graff and Duffy argue that "Such attitudes about literacy represent a 'myth' because they exist apart from and beyond empirical evidence that might clarify the actual functions, meanings, and effects of reading and writing. Like all myths, the Literacy Myth is not so much a falsehood but an expression of the ideology of those who sanction it and are invested in its outcomes."

Working from these underpinning theoretical and methodological perspectives, we can then consider the rest of the chapters in this part, covering technology, reading and learning, gender, and critical literacy. The next chapter indeed addresses "Literacy and Internet Technologies." Kevin Leander and Cynthia Lewis link the debates so far with the contemporary concern with how literacy is related to new technologies. They explain that "Increasing access to and usage of

Internet-networked tools around the world continue to shape and change literacy practices within social and educational contexts." It is these evolving literacies, rather than the tools themselves, that ground and motivate their discussion in this chapter as they "highlight historical innovations in Internet technologies and outline major contributions foundational to understanding the changing nature of literacy: multimodality, sociality, and critical digital literacies." They link these "technologies" to such social issues as "transnational identities, literacy ecologies, and gaming as fields-in-progress within the increasingly mobile and interconnected world," themes that again underpin many of the chapters in this volume (see also Thorne and May's volume in the *Encyclopedia*). This debate, then, includes "critical social issues, including the digital divide and the ways in which the Internet continues to drive and problematize the definitions and boundaries of education, communication, and literacy." Helpfully for readers at this stage of the *Encyclopedia*, they "consider future directions for the field, including emerging implications for research, definitions of literacy, conceptions of teaching in its relation to learning, new applications/practices, statistical images of Internet access, and celebrated projects and research studies." These themes, they suggest, can help to "illustrate the contemporary wired literacy landscapes of the world."

An issue that will run through all of the debates and that we have already signaled is how all of these issues can be related to contemporary approaches to education. In a chapter entitled "BICS and CALP: Empirical and Theoretical Status of the Distinction," Jim Cummins offers an attempt to clarify the complex concepts involved in many accounts of learning. The distinction between *basic interpersonal communicative skills* (BICS) and *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP) was, in fact, introduced by Cummins "in order to draw educators' attention to the timelines and challenges that second language learners encounter as they attempt to catch up to their peers in academic aspects of the school language" (see also Cummins in Garcia, Lin, and May's volume in the *Encyclopedia*). He goes on to explain the terms more fully: "BICS refers to conversational fluency in a language while CALP refers to students' ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school." In this chapter, Cummins describes "the origins, rationale, and evolution of the distinction together with its empirical foundations" and he then discusses "its relationship to similar theoretical constructs that have been proposed in different contexts and for different purposes," a perspective that helps link this chapter with the wider debates about literacy that scholars are addressing in this volume. For instance, Cummins helpfully discusses the relationship of the distinction between BICS and CALP to the emerging field of New Literacy Studies (NLS) that a number of authors address in this volume.

A further piece on "reading" is provided by John Edwards under the title "Reading Attitudes, Interests, Practices." While most of the chapters in this volume might be seen as rooted in social practice theories of literacy, Edwards reminds us of the important role that the social psychology of reading offers. This perspective, he suggests, "remains a relatively small part of a vast literature largely concerned with skills acquisition and development." As he argues, this is "curious for two reasons.

First, it is obvious that both teachers and researchers do not want merely to facilitate reading ability – they hope to form and maintain reading habits. Second, there are regular laments – such as grumblings over the inadequacies of the younger generation – about low levels of reading, poor attitudes, lack of enthusiasm and so on. Indeed, surveys often suggest a gulf between reading ability and reading practices; in many contemporary societies, the essential problem seems to be *aliteracy* rather than *illiteracy*." On both counts, then, Edwards argues, "questions of what people read, how much they read, and the purposes and effects of their reading surely assume central importance." Edwards, then, provides an alternative view of what is involved in reading and literacy that can help put the chapters in the volume into broader perspective. He links this account to some of the broader international debates that a number of authors, such as Graff and Duffy, refer to; for instance, as Edwards puts it "Although the proportion of illiterate people has been in steady decline for some time, an increase in absolute numbers means that one-third of the world's population can still neither read nor write." Edwards refines the statistical account by adding in the notion of "functional literacy," used to refer to the problems faced by many in "developed" societies, where "socially meaningful ability goes beyond elementary skills." For instance, "several surveys have suggested that, in Europe and North America, as much as a quarter of the population may have difficulty with mundane but important tasks like understanding road signs or product-warning labels" or, another way of putting this and that we might watch out for in subsequent chapters, is that "in many modern societies, *aliteracy* is as much an issue as functional literacy. It is certainly more compelling in a social-psychological sense, because the question here is why some of those who *can* read *don't* read. The term may be new but the phenomenon is old." As a social psychologist, Edwards recognizes the social variability in analytic concepts associated with literacy and does not just reduce it to formal skills, as many organizations and especially those associated with schooling still tend to do.

This leaves four further chapters in the first part, which elaborate a number of the key social issues associated with literacy that these earlier chapters have signaled, and that chapters in later parts also pick up, such as gender, globalization, and critical literacy. Gemma Moss, for instance, tackles head on the issues associated with "Gender and Literacy." Her chapter reviews the ways in which gender and literacy have been linked in educational contexts and the different patterns of intervention this has led to. In particular, she highlights "the switch in the literature from a focus on the formation of (girls') gendered identities to a focus on (boys') gendered patterns of attainment within the literacy curriculum." And she links "the emergence of boys in literacy as a policy problem . . . to the current dominance of performance-management cultures within governments, and the accompanying processes of large-scale education reform which they have led to around the globe." As she states, "often such interventions are designed with the aim of securing maximum homogeneity in outcomes from education." This she suggests "provides a new context in which to consider the range of social explanations for inequalities in educational performance, their currency, and the challenges this new more managerial landscape in education poses for a feminist politics." To address these issues, she provides a

number of complex headings that we can bear in mind as we read other chapters, such as "Feminism, Gender, and Literacy," cross referring to a number of other chapters in this volume, such as Robinson-Pant's. The elaborate and complex headings indicated here bring out the complexity and refinement of the field that are central to the volume as a whole.

Indeed, in this spirit, Peter Freebody from Australia, in his chapter entitled "Critical Literacy Education: The Supremely Educational Event," outlines "how historians, linguists, anthropologists, sociologists, and educators have contributed in various ways to the study and practice of 'critical literacy education' (CLE)." CLE, he explains, "is a project aimed at integrating knowledge about literacy into an analysis of power-in-action, and knowledge about power into an analysis of texts-in-action." He summarizes "CLE efforts [as having] individuals and communities understand more fully their current contexts, their histories, and how they, particularly those traditionally not well served by current ways of teaching literacy in school, may take more productive part in enhancing their societies." Freebody concludes that "these goals are best pursued through deeper understandings of texts, the social practices they help to shape, and the social relations those practices build and sustain," an approach that is also central to this volume.

A further chapter along these lines, by Yvonne Foley, similarly argues that "Historically, the term 'literacy' was defined as the ability to read and write. However, this limited definition of literacy has been challenged through the emergence of social theories, where it was recognised that literacy is more complex than traditional perspectives allow." Again she cites New Literacy Studies (NLS) as a view of "literacy as a set of socially and culturally situated practices, rather than simply as a range of technical academic skills that operate at an individual level." This shift in perspective, she explains, "has embraced the plural and discursive nature of literacy and integrates ways of *being and doing* in the world." For instance, "Critical approaches to literacy recognise the link between meaning making, power and identity." While there are a number of orientations associated with critical literacy, all share the perspective that "human action is mediated by language and other symbol systems within particular cultural contexts. Language therefore plays a key role in how we make sense of the world in which we live."

This theme of the importance of underlying theory and method related to key ideological and social issues runs through the volume and is also prominent in the next chapter, by Kwesi Prah, entitled "Language, Literacy, and Knowledge Production in Africa." The contribution assesses the state of language and literacy studies in Africa as Prah "traces the extent and record of African scripts and debates issues of literacy development in African societies." He poses questions that are relevant to many of the chapters that follow, such as those "regarding the challenges ahead in literacy enhancement on the continent."

Finally, in this part, Viniti Vaish makes the link between the theoretical accounts we have been reviewing and the broad social issue of "Biliteracy and Globalization." Vaish sees the "confluence of biliteracy and globalization as somewhat uncharted water," although many of the themes she addresses we will now be more familiar with from the previous chapters. For instance, she asks the question "What text types

and practices does one find at the lifeworlds of this confluence and what implications do they have for the bilingual classroom? Who are the main players at this meeting place of texts (as in biliteracy) and processes (as in globalization): markets, policymakers, teacher practitioners or finally the consumers and producers of languages? What does a biliterate text in our globalizing world look like both inside and outside the classroom?" Vaish's chapter explores some of the answers to these questions and also lays the ground for subsequent parts. As with other authors, she locates her account in the historical development of ideas, citing key authors such as Hornberger. Vaish's particular contribution is to draw upon data from two countries where she conducted research – India and Singapore. Such data can help us to follow through the complex theoretical concepts that we have been exposed to in Part 1 and also prepares us nicely for the elaborations to be found in the next parts.

In Part 2, *Literacies and Social Institutions*, we will find another 12 chapters with particular reference to how literacy in general and reading in particular are constructed in classroom contexts with attention also to the issues of "language" that were particularly signaled in the final chapters of Part 1. The second part of this part also draws on a number of social and cultural contexts, such as in Nepal, Brazil, Australia, and the USA. The first chapter in this part is by Mary Lea and addresses the concept of academic literacies. She locates the concept in its historical context in debates about writing at university, notably in the UK and the USA. The term "academic literacies," she explains, "provides a way of understanding student writing, which highlights the relationship between language and learning in higher education. It draws upon applied linguistics and social anthropology for its theoretical framing and its orientation towards the social, cultural and contextualized nature of writing in the university. The work on academic literacies sits broadly within a body of research called New Literacy Studies, which takes a social and cultural approach to writing, in contrast to more cognitive perspectives." Lea explains, as with other chapters in this volume, that "the use of the plural form, "literacies," signals a concern with social and cultural practices around reading and writing in particular contexts, rather than individual cognitive activity." Research findings suggest that in order to understand more about student writing it is necessary to start from the position that literacy is not a unitary skill that can be transferred with ease from context to context. The research points instead to "the requirement for students to switch between many different types of written text, as they encounter new modules or courses and the writing demands of different disciplinary genres, departments and academic staff." Lea also draws attention to the methodological issues involved in this field, where "ethnographic-type qualitative case study" has provided a way of looking at students' and faculty experiences of writing for assessment, and the gaps between their expectations of the requirements of writing. In foregrounding the relationship between writing and learning (a concept addressed explicitly in the subsequent chapter by Alan Rogers), writing is conceptualized in terms of epistemology – rather than cognitive skill – and what counts as knowledge in the different contexts of the academy.

Lea then provides a brief history and context for how the notion of "academic literacies" has developed, including "freshman composition" courses in the USA and

the College Composition movement there. These became established in the USA from the 1960s, while, in the United Kingdom (UK) and other countries with similar educational traditions, there was little systematic attention paid to student writing in higher education before the mid-1980s. However, toward the end of the 1980s, Lea and Street introduced new theoretical frames concerning literacies as social practices to a field that was, at the time in the UK, still predominantly influenced by psychological accounts of student learning. One particularly significant aspect of this approach is related to the ongoing attention being paid in tertiary education to the use of reflective writing, particularly in professional and vocational courses. A number of researchers are examining the nature of the writing that is required in these contexts, both foregrounding and problematizing the supposedly self-evident relationship between "reflective practice and reflective writing."

Next and also as part of the broader conceptual issue, Alan Rogers addresses the issue of how to understand "learning." In the chapter entitled "Learning: Embedded, Situated, and Unconscious," he suggests that "the current interest in 'lifelong learning' has directed attention to 'informal learning' – that learning that takes place throughout life *outside* of formal and non-formal educational and training programmes." However, he suggests that this terrain is "contested and uncertain, and there is confusion around descriptors, with cross-over terms being used by different fields of study." He uses this chapter to examine three contemporary debates in discussions of learning – embedded learning, situated learning, and unconscious learning – to see what light they throw on formal and informal learning. Since all learning, he concludes, "is firmly embedded in the social and emotional context in which the learning takes place, embedded learning also occurs unobserved in formal learning contexts, the so-called 'hidden curriculum' in which some things are learnt which are not directly intended by the teachers or trainers, including the beliefs, values, prejudices and norms of those who constructed the learning programme." Two kinds of learning, deliberative and natural, shade imperceptibly into one another in a continuum of learning. Both include elements of *embedded* learning, *situated* learning, and *unconscious* learning. Anthropologists have long seen this when exploring how nonindustrial societies help members to learn the ways of their culture.

Also building on the academic literacies and international dimensions of literacy, Constant Leung links these themes to second language learning. In his chapter entitled "Second Language Academic Literacies: Converging Understandings," he looks at how schools and universities in many parts of the world are expected to serve ethnically and linguistically diverse students. "Scholarly discussions on language and literacy education have, however, tended to maintain either a first language or a second language stance in some mutually insulating way." This intellectual divide was perhaps fostered by the educational and intellectual climate that prevailed in an earlier historical period. In the past 30 years or so, public educational institutions have been made progressively more conscious of the need and the obligation to serve diverse student populations under the aegis of marketization of educational provision for international students, and/or social integration for all students, irrespective of their language backgrounds. It is recognized that

many linguistic minority students find the use of their second language for academic purposes problematic. The ability to communicate informally for social purposes in a second language, even at high levels of lexico-grammatical accuracy and pragmatic familiarity, does not automatically translate into effective academic language use, particularly in relation to reading and writing. A good deal of discussion in second language curriculum and pedagogy is focussed on this "problem." Leung also helps the reader by unpacking some of the issues associated with the key terms signaled in this field, such as "second language pedagogy" and "academic literacy," "language" and "literacy/literacies," "language lexico-grammar system," and "English for Academic Purposes" (EAP). And, of course, the term "language" itself, he suggests, needs unpacking and he sees it "in the context of this chapter 'in relation to observed socio-cultural and pragmatic conventions in discourse'".

Vivian L. Gadsden then links these broader debates to the theme of "Family Literacy." She sees family literacy as "a critical part of discussions on children, parents, and family learning," which she relates to "broad discussions of literacy in and out of school" of the kind we have been considering. Such a view, she argues, "encompasses a wide array of literacy practices and relationships between children and parents, among adults, and within families" and while for many the term may be interpreted as a single concept, she sees the focus on literacy "as a multidimensional concept in which families and literacy are studied in tandem to inform and deepen our understanding of the intersections between the two areas of inquiry." She seeks, then, "to understand families learning literacy in context – e.g., homes and communities, the relationships that foster learning in these contexts, and the role of the family itself in creating and sustaining literacy learning and engagement." As with other authors in this volume, she addresses issues involved in "conceptualizations of literacy as cultural and social practices, socio-contextual factors, and social change versus discrete skills that assume universality of interests, needs, and backgrounds of learners." She uses a range of appropriate sources to review the issue of family literacy "over the past 50 years; the persistence of tensions and problems; and the possibilities that are emerging within and across language and literacy theory, research, and practice."

Anna Robinson-Pant in a chapter entitled "Women, Literacy, and Development: An Overview" notes that the debates about women's literacy have been seen as "the key to development," which "has informed government and international development agency policy and programmes around the world." For instance, "in the poorest countries, there has continued to be a significant gap between male and female literacy rates: UIS (2013) notes that 64% of the 774 million illiterate adults are women. Within basic adult education, policy makers have focused on increasing women's as opposed to men's access to literacy, through programmes designed particularly around women's reproductive role." Over the decades, researchers have been concerned to find statistical evidence indicating positive connections between female literacy rates, health indicators such as decreased child mortality and fertility rates, and economic participation.

However, in the 1980s there was a shift to a Gender and Development (GAD) approach which meant that the impact of literacy programmes was no longer

measured only in relation to women. Men were also brought into the picture and there was a "growing understanding that the linkages between girls' schooling (as well as women's literacy) were in fact more complex than previously believed," a theme already signaled by Gadsden in her chapter on "Family Literacy." The more holistic approach to adult education in general has drawn attention to the importance of supportive development and employment policies. Anna Robinson-Pant's move to a broader view of "Women, Literacy, and Development" is part of a series of new and more wide-ranging issues being addressed in the literacy field. For instance, "there has been long recognition of the need for improved access to services such as credit, health care facilities and agricultural extension, if women are to be able to use the knowledge and skills learnt in literacy courses; and the current policy shift towards education and sustainable development points to the need to strengthen inter-sectoral linkages and promote a more holistic approach." The latter view she highlights has begun to be adopted by UNESCO. She concludes: "As well as the need to explore the links between women's literacy and the economy, there is an increasing interest in how societal discourses shape literacy and development programmes," which include attention to "the resourcing and the status of women's literacy programmes."

And in the spirit of international debate and tensions in the field, Nayr Ibrahim makes the linking overview point with regard to "Developing Literacy, and Identities, in Multiple Languages." Her account of this theme involves recognizing how "[m]ajor socio-cultural and socio-political developments in the last century have spread languages, literacies and identities throughout the world and accelerated the advent of complex multilingual societies in the 21st century." One effect of this has been that "adults are confronted with alternative literacy practises in various social contexts, where different languages and ways of meaning are learnt and new identities are forged." But in addition, this historical move has also affected new generations, as "children are born into multiple language contact situations, in binational families and multilingual communities." This, then, has affected identities and ways of living in "multiple and concurrent worlds." Ibrahim, as with other contributors to this volume, makes the link between these social changes and the issue of ideology and what she terms "linguistic power struggles." These involve "individuals' rights for self-expression in their languages versus the coercive power of the majority language; access, or not, to different literacies; the need to negotiate identities in these contested spaces." In her chapter, then, she "traces the growing importance of identity in the development of literacy in multiple languages, over the last 60 years." This journey, "not linear but overlapping and recursive, spotlights the shift from a monoglossic to a heteroglossic approach in research and practise, foregrounding the everyday practise of local, situated as well as transnational literacies, and recognising and valorising the ensuing hybrid language identities."

A number of chapters then address the issues raised above in relation to specific national and cultural contexts, ranging from Brazil, to Nepal, Australia, the USA, and Africa. For instance, Maria Lucia Castanheira from Brazil looks at Portuguese-speaking African students in that country. She focuses on the experience of students from Angola and their advisors in a graduate program in a Brazilian public

university, using this as a case study for highlighting the broader issue of examining the situated nature of academic writing and the issues involved in how university tutors and students navigate across contexts. She locates this account in the international context of "academic literacies" research and then provides detailed research-based accounts of students from Angolan backgrounds and of their tutors' comments. A group of Angola university teachers who came recently to Brazil to enhance their academic literacy practices provide a case study of the issues involved in this field and a comparative basis for further study across countries and cultures. The Angolan teachers, who then became students in Brazil, had schooling experience at home during a period of civil war in refugee camps and local schools. They applied to UFMG in Brazil to develop studies in various educational fields: e.g., language and education, history of education, educational psychology, math education, and science education. A case study such as this, she concludes, focusing on Portuguese-speaking African students in Brazil as an example of academic literacy for minority but same language speakers, can help generate comparative studies that enable us to draw larger conclusions regarding the social and linguistic issues involved in students entering higher education, of the kind signaled by the academic literacies approach.

Bryan Maddox, in a chapter on Nepal, also links the local context to the broader debates we have seen, in this case regarding "Community Literacy." By this Maddox means "the idea that local meanings and uses of literacy should inform the design and implementation of programmes and that literacy programmes should respond and be flexible to people's expressed needs." The *Community Literacy Project* in Nepal was informed by the sociocultural model of literacy developed within the sociolinguistic and ethnographic studies of literacy, of the kind we have seen above. This perspective assumes that literacy programmes can provide a public space for debate over local "situated" meanings of literacy and provide practical mechanisms to help people to learn and use literacy in real life situations. Maddox discusses some of the tensions between the articulation of "local" meanings of literacy within the wider national and international discourses of development and some of the creative responses that emerged. For instance, "the concept of localised provision was influenced by wider processes of change occurring within Nepal during that time and by broader changes in development discourse and priorities. The national context was in the process of rapid social change, involving a radical democratisation of communication media including literacy practices, as silent majorities claimed a voice in these processes of change, which included more decentralised and democratic access to radio broadcasting and TV and the promotion of language policy and practice in education, media and governance that recognised linguistic diversity within the country." He concludes by linking this local account to the wider debates about power and inequality that the field of literacy now addresses. Literacy and language, for instance, are "part of ongoing aspects of inequality and social injustice, which the State and donor community have been either unable, or unwilling to effectively tackle." He concludes: "as Paulo Freire has reminded us, literacy is essentially a political project . . . that challenges us to change the social and cultural norms, patterns and relations" – a theme that runs throughout this volume.

Also drawing on the concept of "Community Literacy," Trevor Cairney's chapter on Australia is entitled "Community Literacy Practices and Education: Australia." He begins by taking on the "narrow" definition of "literacy" that has been operational in many contexts and instead wants to point out, along with many scholars in this volume and in the tradition of literacy as social practice, that "literacy is embedded in all of life and that institutional and formal literacy can never be truly separated from the literacy practices of the world beyond school." As he points out, this idea has developed especially in the last 20 years, during which "we have developed a richer understanding of what this might mean for literacy practices sanctioned, supported and used within schooling." Earlier discussions of the importance of community literacy by administrators, schools, and teachers were generally framed by a recognition that the literacy experiences of home and community have a significant impact on literacy success at school. But most interest has been in how families and their literacy practices serve school agendas, with interest being driven by limited definitions of literacy and, at times, deficit views of learning. This restricted view of the relationship between literacy practices in and out of school has limited many attempts to build stronger relationships between schools and their communities. As Cairney states, and as many authors in this volume also concur, "our students are never simply in school or out of school, for their identities move with them and their practices are carried with them across contexts."

The shift that Cairney notes in the perceived place of "community literacy practices" involved researchers beginning to examine the literacy practices of home and school more closely and noting increasingly that the way teachers shape classroom discourse can be limited in scope and not reflective of the diversity of student language and culture. He lists three related areas of inquiry that have since begun to inform home and community literacy research: multimodality; critical theory; and ethnographic perspectives. Cairney concludes by arguing that all three of these areas of study help us to understand how children from varied cultural and linguistic groups continue to have difficulty in achieving school success. Many students struggle to cope with dominant pedagogical approaches that are based on a "narrow understanding of school knowledge and literacy, which are defined and defended as what one needs to know and how one needs to know it in order to be successful in school and society."

Maintaining the interest in literacies in and out of school, Kathy Schulz and Glynda Hull write a chapter entitled "Literacies In and Out of School in the United States." As with other contributions, they see research on literacy practices as "separated into two strands": (a) "school-based research," which they argue "has focused on reading and writing in formal classrooms, often by examining teaching methods, curricula, learning, and assessment, its goal being to improve students"; and (b) "out-of-school research" which "has documented the myriad literacy practices that occur in a range of institutions and social spaces with an interest in expanding conceptions of what counts as literacy. Important theoretical and conceptual advances in literacy studies have come from research within the second strand." However, they point out, "a divide still exists between the engagement claimed for many youth in terms of their out-of-school literacy practices in contrast with their

school-based reading and writing." So, bringing these themes together, Schultz and Hull "sketch the major theoretical traditions that have shaped research on the relationships and borders of literacy in and out of school." These include, as we have seen, "the ethnography of communication and recent perspectives from cultural geography." Research on literacy out of school, they point out, "continues to be an important and necessary corrective to unidimensional understandings of texts, processes, and contexts," again challenging the dominant narrow view of literacy and learning that many institutions still adhere to. They argue that "the persisting challenge in an age of accountability and testing, narrowing conceptions of literacy, and growing socioeconomic disparities, is how to bridge out-of-school and in-school worlds in ways that make discernable, positive differences in youth's present circumstances and social futures," a key theme for the whole of this volume. Indeed, like many of the contributors to this volume, Schultz and Hull conclude by suggesting ways in which we can still detail "differences in linguistic and social practices and celebrating diverse literacies." It will be for the reader, having perused all of these chapters in the volume, to decide whether such a positive view is still sustainable.

David Bloome, another well know researcher in the USA, along with his colleague, SangHee Ryu, offers a chapter entitled "Literacies in the Classroom" that does indeed reinforce this positive perspective. They see the phrase "literacies in the classroom" as broader than it might at first appear, "indexing a series of debates, discussions, and explorations of how written language is implicated in social, cultural and political ideologies that have implications for what constitutes knowledge, knowing, and rationality, for the relationship of classroom and non-classroom contexts, and for how people relate to social institutions. From the perspective of these deeper levels," then, "the surface level conception of 'literacies in classrooms' is itself an ideological imposition, albeit one that has become naturalized." Bloome and Ryu "discuss some of the issues raised by this deeper level of defining 'literacies in the classroom'." In doing so, they work through a number of key issues in language and learning in such a context. They begin with the notion of "*Pedagogization of Literacy Practices*. One of the key issues in locating literacy practices and events in classrooms concerns the centrality of pedagogy in defining literacy practices and events." They then consider "The relationship of literacy practices outside the classroom to literacy practices inside the classroom." They move on to examine "Knowledge, knowing, rationality, globalization and literacies in the classroom" and then proceed to consideration of *"*the state and power relations" with respect to literacies in the classroom. Bloome and Ryu conclude with a positive view of how teachers and students deal with such an "extensive apparatus of governmentality." What they observe is the buy-in of many educators, students, and others, in their daily lives in the classroom, as teachers and students engage in what might be called a series of "tactics" that allow them to engage in illicit literacy practices. They may engage students in literacy practices for exploring their own communities, families, and histories (cf. the chapters on "Community Literacies," previously discussed), reconstituting what counts as knowledge and personhood, side-stepping state-mandated language policies, mediating the official

knowledge of school texts, mediating official and unofficial literacy practices among other tactics – an interesting list of ways of getting around the narrow views of literacy and learning that might appear to be dominant.

And appropriately again, this part concludes with a chapter entitled "The Politics of the Teaching of Reading" that brings together many of the themes we have been following in Part 2 under the heading *Literacies and Social Institutions*.

Finally, Part 3 is entitled *Living Literacies: Social and Cultural Experience* and allows for close descriptions across different countries and contexts signaling many of the concepts and debates raised in the earlier parts. A further eight chapters cover many of these issues across a number of different countries: Africa, USA, Latin America, and the UK.

We begin with an overview of the field by Jabari Mahiri **"Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth." He locates this in a brief historical perspective**:

> A period of approximately 40 years from the mid-1970s through 2015 frames this chapter's discussion of literacy practices in the lives of global youth. It reaches back to the 1970s to connect the emergence of two intertwining forces that have significantly influenced the literacy practices and perspectives of youth and young adults throughout the world – the rise of the Internet and the rise of global hip-hop culture... Due to the Internet and other technological influences as well as influences from hip-hop culture, this generation and the Post-Millennial generation that followed it reflect a distinct shift in the forms and functions of literacy – a shift from a static concept of literacy to dynamic one of multiple literacies.

The chapter, then, "delineates a number of considerations regarding this shift." These include conceptions of literacy prior to the Millennial generation and how literacy scholars have significantly revised these conceptions in the 1980s, as we have seen highlighted in a number of other chapters, especially concerning notions of literacy as social practice. The chapter then shows how these developments too have been transformed by scholarship in the present century. Finally, "it addresses some of the challenges and future directions for research on literacy practices of global youth as they turn from reading the world on pages to viewing and participating in it on screen." This new experience has involved scholars exploring the workings and implications of novel literacy practices connected to and often enabled through the Internet and other digital technologies. As Mahiri sees it, "their work reveals how Millennial and Post-Millennial youth and young adults engage in and make sense of their worlds very differently from earlier generations. A key feature of this age is that digital media has greatly increased the mobility and accessibility of texts and signs while magnifying and simplifying processes for their production and dissemination," a theme that again is key to this volume as we find ourselves engaging with these new movements and meanings (see also Thorne and May's volume in the *Encyclopedia*).

The remaining seven chapters in this part address these issues in specific cultural and national contexts. Marcia Farr keeps open the cultural and ethnolinguistic issues we have been addressing, as she considers literacy practices in a US city in a chapter entitled "Literacies and Ethnolinguistic Diversity: Chicago." Chicago, she points out, "is in many ways an archetypal U.S. city; it is now a global city, its traditional

industrial economy having changed into an information and service-based economy." As a global city, Chicago is linked to other places in the world economically, culturally, and linguistically. Since its inception, of course, Chicago has been linked to other places in the world through its large immigrant populations, but the rapid pace of more recent globalization processes, primarily in transportation and communication, has intensified these connections, along with the change in the economy. Such intensified globalization leads, in some metropolitan areas, to complex migrant communities comprised of populations from all over the world, a phenomenon labeled "Superdiversity" (see also Higgins in McCarty and May's volume in the *Encyclopedia*). Although some neighborhoods in Chicago comprise heterogeneous populations, in general, Chicago's neighborhoods are still ethnically based. Even most Mexicans and Puerto Ricans (the two largest Spanish-speaking groups in Chicago) live in generally separate areas, although the sheer number of Mexicans leads some to reside in other neighborhoods.

Following this contextualization, Farr then links her account to that we have just seen by Mahiri, as she analyzes the "contemporary globalization processes" currently being experienced, which include issues of "transnational communication, especially via mass media like satellite television." One aspect of this shift as it affects global youth is "the development of a global monoculture, e.g., among youth worldwide who emulate African American musical and verbal style, thus spreading English literacy in song lyrics. Yet global movements toward sameness simultaneously complement the marked differentiation of ethnic, class and other identities at local levels." At the same time, she points out that the research she has conducted in Chicago communities "has shown the resilience of ethnolinguistic identities as well as the languages and scripts that index them. Such ethnolinguistic identities encompass oral and written verbal styles commonly associated with various identities." We have, then, both global influence and change at the same time as local identities and cultures, both of which affect the kind of literacy practices that youth engage with, a key theme in the field of literacy at this point.

Moving to South America but maintaining a similar interest in diversity, Inge Sichra writes about "Language Diversity and Indigenous Literacy in the Andes." This area, she reminds us, stretches out along the entire South American continent and is a cultural not just a physical descriptor. "The Andean space, as traditionally referred to in social studies, especially in relation to languages and cultures present there before the conquerors arrived, is restricted to the Incan Empire's sphere of influence." She focuses, then, on "Andean languages that have managed to survive Spanish language rule, which seeks to maintain certain functional spaces in national societies." An interesting literacy issue here is that "indigenous languages had some sort of graphic or notational, albeit not alphabetical, system" and that for some time this led to Andeans being called "illiterate," a term that has frequently emerged in attempts to characterize different features of literacy practice. Today, the emphasis has shifted from deficit to identity as the speakers "increasingly hoist Andean languages as symbols of ethnic and political vindication in an attempt to secure prestigious and public spheres for these languages." From this perspective, Sichra suggests, "literacy acquires or could acquire a driving role in the social participation

of sectors traditionally marginalized by these countries' societies – in other words, it could be an empowerment mechanism for the individual, the community and the group," a theme that recurs in many national contexts around the world. Sichra, then, "focuses on the literacy of languages characterized by their orality, with a focus on Spanish literacy," recognizing ways in which "literacy comprises concrete social practices with certain purposes that depend on previous political and ideological factors." In order to address these issues, Sichra provides a brief historical context for these practices in the Andes, notably: the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century; the complex changes in Quechua and Aimara in the eighteenth century; and, more recently, the growing acknowledgment of diversity of Andean languages "as a consequence of currents of political confrontation with authoritarian regimes, established from Ecuador to Argentina from the 1960s to the 1980s . . . as well as a result of the acceleration of the globalization phenomenon." So, we can see the link between languages and social and later ethnic vindication movements which "questioned the state's homogenizing and unifying nature, and its aims at building nations based on one language and one culture." The Andean data, then, provide a key insight into the debates raised here regarding language identification, political institutions, and cultural identities.

Then we move to Africa for the next two chapters. Firstly, there is a general account of the continent entitled "Literacy and Multilingualism in Africa" by Kasper Juffermans and Ashraf Abdelhay. Interestingly, Juffermans and Abdelhay point out that "with the exception of South Africa," on which there is a chapter next, "Africa is not at the forefront of discussions in socio- and educational linguistics." They argue that "this marginality is greatly undeserved" and further point out that "African sociolinguistic realities are among the world's most complex and [that] there is much to gain if it could inform literacy and multilingualism research more generally," which their chapter makes an important contribution toward. Indeed, they recognize that things are changing and "in fact, this peripherality has recently been a productive source for a radical revision of some of the metropolitan epistemologies about multilingualism and literacy," which they address. African contexts, in fact, "present some of the world's most diverse, linguistically creative and vital multilingual situations, but also feature in the world's poorest literacy rates and are routinely said to lack a literate tradition altogether." This chapter, then, like many in the volume "offers counter-evidence for this deceptive view." Juffermans and Abdelhay do this "by reviewing Africa's literacy traditions and script inventions, but also point at problems and difficulties in African multilingualism and literacies." They outline "two relatively young fields of practice and/or study that have begun to make major contributions to literacy and multilingualism in Africa: digital literacy and linguistic landscape." A key issue they address in challenging dominant stereotypes is that "with the exception of North Africa and only very few sub-Saharan countries, the overwhelming majority of African populations are highly multilingual." In urban and rural areas alike, people speaking (and identifying with) three or more languages as part of their everyday lives are much more likely to be encountered than monolingual or even bilingual people. Multilingualism is so self-evident in much of Africa that the word "bilingual" tends to be reserved for people in command of two former

colonial languages, irrespective of their repertoire in African languages. Metrolingualism or sociolinguistic superdiversity as a phenomenon is hardly spectacular when compared to African sociolinguistic realities. Large parts of rural Africa are characterized by similar patterns of intense diversity, sometimes thought to be exclusive for metropolitan areas. In the chapter, they provide headings on "African Digital Literacy" and "African Linguistic Landscapes" and in the light of such rich accounts of what is actually going on they ask "how long it will take for language in education to open up to these more dynamic and more African language practices?"

Then we move to South Africa, where Mastin Prinsloo presents a selected overview of research projects there, which investigate alternative ways of conceptualizing literacy learning and perhaps address some of the questions raised by Juffermans and Abdelhay. Prinsloo starts with the complex framing that recognizes "literacy is constructed as a multiple semiotic practice, used, inserted and transformed by agentive human beings across local and global sites, contexts and spaces, discourses, languages and genres." In these multiple forms of crossings, according to Prinsloo and many of the sources he cites, "the relationship between learning in everyday lives and school learning, and what might be an effective relationship between them, is explored." In doing so, he "attempts to reconfigure taken for granted assumptions about what constitutes rich locations for literacy and learning," of which, of course South Africa is one and indeed, as the previous authors noted, so is the continent as a whole. Prinsloo provides an interesting update on educational policy in South Africa as a number of important initiatives took place in the area of literacy research. The post-apartheid South African government, for instance, set out to adjust the assessment framework for education and training and a concern for literacy and adult basic education was included. As Prinsloo observes, "[a] major contribution to re-thinking literacy education within a social practice perspective in South Africa and influencing research traditions, was the path-breaking *Social Uses of Literacy* by Prinsloo and Breier (1996), a collection of ethnographic case studies on the reading and writing practices of ordinary people in the Western Cape, who had little or no schooling." Such publications can help readers to follow through many of the chapters in this volume as researchers move on beyond the narrow skills based view of literacy to acknowledge that educational practice needs to take account of the social and cultural context. Prinsloo, then, is able to point forward to positive "future directions" in the field. "As researchers in the New Literacy Studies have powerfully demonstrated, literacy learning is part of much broader chains of sustainability." He concludes by asserting strongly the importance of recognizing such a view with respect to "a developing country like South Africa, which straddles first and third world economies simultaneously." It is important in this context to "'get everyone on board' to raise public awareness around the value and importance of literacy in sustaining democracy and human rights."

As part of the global dimension of such literacy research, the next chapter looks at what has been happening in the USA as people who went there as slaves from Africa began to engage in education and literacy practices. Elaine Richardson, in a chapter entitled "Africa American Literacies," shows how this title "refers to the concept that

African American cultural identities, social locations, and social practices influence ways that members of this discourse group make meaning and assert themselves sociopolitically in all communicative contexts." In the present era, as the reader will by now recognize fully, such a definition goes beyond print and language in a narrow sense "to include African American traditional contexts as well as the contemporary context, wherein African Americans enact creative multimodal meaning making." As we saw in relation to Africa, and also in countries around the world as new literacy practices emerge, "the term African American literacies encapsulates socio-cultural approaches to African American literacy education advanced by the various subfields: including sociolinguistics, critical pedagogy, reading, rhetoric and com-position, and New Literacies Studies." In this context, with a long migration history, there has been a classic shift from "earlier prejudice and stereotypes about culture and literacy, to more recent awareness of diversity and literacy as social practice." "Americans of African descent had been enslaved and marginalized within Ameri-can society, the early scholarly thinking about Black language and culture reflected the common prejudices of the time: Blacks were culturally and intellectually infe-rior." Since the 1940s, however, "scholars presented . . . the history and development of what is currently referred to by mainstream linguists as 'vernacular' language, with many language educators advocating inclusion of African American language and literacy histories, structures, and discourse practices in critical conversation with those of the dominant culture." Literacy education, then, is seen as being more "socially just by repositioning students as knowledge-making agents of social change." Again, we might ask how far these progressive ideas about literacy and education are actually being realized in practice – a key question that this volume continues to raise.

Also in the Americas, but this time in the south, Judy Kalman writes a piece entitled "Literacies in Latin America," which addresses many of the themes we have already seen but also signals specific features of this region. She sees it as "a heterogeneous region with deep cultural, social, economic and linguistic differ-ences." In terms of how it is labeled, she points out that "International agencies such as the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) refer to the region as Latin America and the Caribbean in order to include not only the land mass stretching from Mexico to Argentina but also the small English, Spanish, and French-speaking islands as well."

In relation to a theme that has run through the volume, of the problems with measurement of literacy rates, she argues that "despite region wide efforts to expand access to schooling, the illiteracy rate for people 15 years of age or older is still 9%" (Infante and Letier, 2013). That said, she also points out, in keeping with the qualitative perspective of this volume, that "this measurement varies from country to country, given the difficulties for agreeing on what constitutes literacy." As Kalman explains, "[d]isparities in class, race, language, and ethnicity shape literacy and illiteracy in Latin America" and indeed the measurements of wealth are seen to coincide to some extent with those of literacy. For example, "in Honduras and the Dominican Republic, the poorest 20% of the population earns only an average of 5% of total income while the richest 20% earns an average of 47% of the wealth" while

"in these same countries, the illiteracy rate is 7.8% and 6.6% respectfully" (CEPAL, 2012). There are also cultural issues at stake, such as the fact that "indigenous peoples are more likely to be illiterate than other groups, as illustrated by Guatemala's illiteracy rate of 14% and Ecuador's 11.4%." There is also a gender issue, where for instance in this part of the world "indigenous women are more likely to be illiterate than indigenous men and although illiteracy in urban centers tends to be 6%, it is twice that in rural areas (UNESCO, 2006)." Kalman concludes with a helpful summary of such complexity: "Any discussion of literacy in Latin America, then, needs to contemplate its socioeconomic disparities, issues of gender and locality and the role of schooling in the dissemination of reading and writing, and education policies promoted by international agencies."

And finally, we move to the UK where Eve Gregory uses the title "City Literacies" to investigate many of the questions raised above as we look at the ways in which literacy practices are being enacted in cities. While framing her account in terms of the broader debates regarding "superdiversity," taking account of migration and movement between countries of the kind we have seen frequently in this volume, she focuses on specific examples of "individuals growing up and becoming literate at the beginning and the end of the twentieth century in London, one of the largest and most ethnically diverse cities in the world." Gregory "summarises problems in this field and finally points to possible future directions for the research on literacies in cities during the coming decades of the twenty-first century." She argues that "[t]hroughout time, we see the contrasts and contradictions between studies documenting informal literacies taking place in homes and communities which show a wealth of skills, knowledge and inventiveness in cities, and reports relating to school literacy which laments poor performance of city children in classroom tests." And her conclusion is an apt way to end the volume: "Even the most rural environment can often be connected via satellite or internet to a wealth of literacies, both oral and written, in numerous languages. Nevertheless, cities still remain a hub of literacy. Through facilitating face-to-face interaction for people of all nations and backgrounds they will always provide a haven for the development of new and dynamic literacies."

London   Brian V. Street

Acknowledgment

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About the Editors

Brian Street is Professor Emeritus of Language in Education at King's College, London University and Visiting Professor of Education in the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania. Over the past 25 years, he has undertaken anthropological field research and been consultant to projects in countries, of both the North and South, and has a commitment to linking ethnographic-style research on the cultural dimension of language and literacy with contemporary practice in education and in development. He has been involved in writing/editing, mostly in collaboration with colleagues, 30+ books and has published over 120 scholarly articles. He is probably best known for *Literacy in Theory and Practice* (C.U.P. 1985), his edited collection *Cross-Cultural Approaches to Literacy* (CUP, 1993), and he brought out a selection of his papers with Longman under the title *Social Literacies* (1995), which was cited in his receipt of the David S. Russell Award for distinguished research by the National Council for Teaching of English in the USA. In 2008, he was awarded the Distinguished Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award by NRC (USA). He is involved in research projects on academic literacies, coauthored with Mary Lea "Student Writing in Higher Education: An Academic Literacies Approach" in *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 23, No. 2. pp. 157–172 (recently listed as one of the most cited articles in the Journal), as well as numerous more recent papers and presentations in different parts of the world. As part of a commitment to linking ethnographic-style research on the cultural dimension of literacy with contemporary practice in education and development, he has published a number of works, including editing *Literacy and Development: Ethnographic Perspectives* (Routledge, 2000; shortlisted for the BAAL Book Prize, 2002) and coauthored with Alan Rogers *Adult Literacy and International Development: Stories from the Field* (2012 NIACE), with whom he is involved in an

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Part I

Literacies and Social Theory

New Literacies, New Times: Developments in Literacy Studies

Brian V. Street

Abstract

This chapter attempts to survey briefly some of the new directions evident in literacy studies. I begin with an outline of the current theoretical frameworks in particular work in New Literacy studies, in multimodality, and in theories of technology and artifact before considering some of the educational responses evident in different countries as they come to terms with the challenges posed by new literacies. I also make some suggestions as to why it is that policy in some countries – notably the USA and UK – seems to be facing in the opposite direction to that which this research base tells us is needed.

Contents

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Early Developments: Literacies Across Cultural Contexts

New Literacy Studies (NLS)

What has come to be termed new literacy studies (NLS) refers to a body of work that for the last 20 years has approached the study of literacy not as an issue of measurement or of skills but as social practices that vary from one context to another. A better term, perhaps, to capture this approach is literacy as social practice (LSP). (In policy circles, however, dominant voices still tend to characterize local people as "illiterate" – currently media in the UK are full of such accounts (cf. Street 1997) as are the international reports from OECD such as PISA and PIAAC) – while on the ground ethnographic and literacy-sensitive observation indicates a rich variety of practices (Barton and Hamilton 1998; Heath 1983; Robinson-Pant 2005). When literacy campaigns are set up to bring literacy to the illiterate – "light into darkness", as it is frequently characterized – those adopting the more ethnographic and culturally sensitive perspective of NLS/LSP firstly ask what local literacy practices are there and how do they relate to the literacy practices of the campaigners (see chapters in this Volume of this encyclopedia; and Rogers and Street 2012). In many cases, the latter fails to take; few people attend classes and those who do drop out (cf., Abadzi 2003) precisely because they are being required to learn the literacy practices of an outside and often alien group. Even though in the long run many local people do want to change their literacy practices and take on some of those associated with western or urban society, a crude imposition of the latter that marginalizes and denies local experience is, from an NLS/LSP perspective, likely to alienate even those who were initially motivated.

Research, then, has a task to do in making visible the complexity of local, everyday, community literacy practices and challenging dominant stereotypes and myopia. Much of the work in this ethnographic tradition (Barton and Hamilton 2000; Collins 1995; Gee 2014; Heath 1993; Street 1993) has focused on the everyday meanings and uses of literacy in specific cultural contexts and linked directly to how we understand the work of literacy programs, which themselves then become subject to ethnographic enquiry (Robinson-Pant 2005; Rogers 2005).

In trying to characterize these new approaches to understanding and defining literacy, I have referred to a distinction between an autonomous model and an ideological model of literacy (Street 1984). The autonomous model of literacy works from the assumption that literacy in itself, autonomously, will have effects on other social and cognitive practices. The autonomous model, I argue, disguises the cultural and ideological assumptions that underpin it and that can then be presented as though they are neutral and universal. Research in the social practice approach challenges this view and suggests that in practice dominant approaches based on the autonomous model are simply imposing Western (or urban) conceptions of literacy onto other cultures (Street 2001). The alternative, ideological model of literacy offers a more culturally sensitive view of literacy practices as they vary from one context to another. This model starts from different premises

than the autonomous model. It posits instead that literacy is a social practice, not simply a technical and neutral skill, and that it is always embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles. The ways in which people address reading and writing are themselves rooted in conceptions of knowledge, identity, and being. Literacy, in this sense, is always contested, both its meanings and its practices, hence particular versions of it are always ideological; they are always rooted in a particular worldview often accompanied by a desire, conscious, or unconscious, for that view of literacy to dominate and to marginalize others (Gee 1990). The autonomous model is, then, itself a classic example of how such an ideological approach works. The argument about social literacies (Street 1995) suggests that engaging with literacy is always a social act, even from the outset. The ways in which teachers or facilitators and their students interact is already a social practice that affects the nature of the literacy learned and the ideas about literacy held by the participants, especially new learners and their positions in relations of power. It is not valid to suggest that literacy can be given neutrally and then its social effects only experienced or added on afterwards.

For these reasons, as well as the failure of many traditional literacy programs (Abadzi 1996; Street 1999), academics, researchers, and practitioners working in literacy in different parts of the world have come to the conclusion that the autonomous model of literacy, on which much of the practice and programs have been based, was not an appropriate intellectual tool, either for understanding the diversity of reading and writing around the world or for designing the practical programs this diversity required, which may fit better within an ideological model (Aikman 1999; Doronilla 1996; Heath 1983; Hornberger 1997, 2002; Kalman 1999; King 1994; Robinson-Pant 2008; Wagner 2011). The question this approach raises for policy makers and program designers is, then, not simply that of the impact of literacy, to be measured in terms of a neutral developmental index, but rather of how local people take hold of the new communicative practices being introduced to them, as Kulick and Stroud's (1993) ethnographic description of missionaries bringing literacy to New Guinea villagers makes clear. Literacy, in this sense, is then already part of a power relationship and how people take hold of it is contingent on social and cultural practices and not just on pedagogic and cognitive factors. These relationships and contingencies raise questions that need to be addressed in any literacy program: What is the power relation between the participants? What are the resources? Where are people going if they take on one form of literacy rather than another literacy? How do recipients challenge the dominant conceptions of literacy?

Before addressing educational responses to these new perspectives, I would like to signal two other theoretical frameworks that are helpful in considering the issues associated with literacy practices in the new conditions in which they operate in the contemporary context. One perspective known as multimodality is particularly associated with the work of Günter Kress in the UK and concerns technology and cultural artifacts.

Work in Progress

Multimodality

Kress (2003) argues that educational systems in particular and Western societies more broadly have overemphasized the significance of writing and speech as the central, salient modes of representation. It has been assumed that language is the primary site for meaning making and that therefore educational systems should concentrate on speech and writing in training new generations. The work of Kress and his colleagues (cf., Jewitt 2006; Kress and van Leeuwen 1996; Kress et al. 2005) has attempted to redress this emphasis in favor of recognition of how other modes –visual, gestural, kinesthetic, three-dimensional – play their role in key communicative practices. As he and I say in the Foreword to a book significantly entitled, *Travel Notes from the New Literacy Studies: Case Studies of Practice* (Pahl and Rowsell 2006):

> So one major emphasis in work on Multimodality is to develop a "language of description" for these modes that enables us to see their characteristic forms, their affordances and the distinctive ways in which they interact with each other. [Just as] those in the field of New Literacy Studies (NLS) have attempted to provide a language of description for viewing literacy as a social practice in its social environments [so, in Multimodality] there is an intent to change many emphases of the past – especially in educational contexts of the most varied kinds-from literacy as a static skill and to describe instead the multiple literacy practices as they vary across cultures and contexts (Kress and Street 2006, p. viii).

> Kress explicitly links his theoretical and research interest in the nature of signs and the shift towards more multimodal understandings, ... He argues that there is now a burning need to link "issues in representation and communication with the profound changes in the social, cultural, economic and technological world, issues for which there are as yet no answers" (Kress and Street 2006, p. ix).

The kinds of questions this approach opens up for those interested in education and its role in these new times include: What *is* a mode, how do modes interact, how can we best describe the relationship between modes, does the distinction made in literacy studies between events and practices help address these issues (Street 2000), and how do we avoid becoming the agents producing the new constraints of newly described and imposed grammars? These questions are different from those often being asked in schools, as we shall see later, but they may be more relevant to the age we live in than the kinds of questions that arise from the autonomous model of literacy. On analogy with literacy studies, then, those working with different modes may need likewise to develop an ideological model of multimodality. It is in this sense that I am suggesting the present chapter is concerned with the kinds of questions we ask and the way we frame them rather than, at this stage, to posit definitive answers. If we can begin to find answers that will serve us for educational purposes then, I argue, they will arise from having posed the questions in this way.

There is one further set of questions and of new concepts that I would like to address before looking at the ways in which educationalists are responding to the demands of new times. These I characterize as artifacts in our cultural activity.

Globalization, Technology, and Literacy

One response to the growing role of technologies of communication in our lives is to overstate their ability to determine our social and cultural activity. This tradition has been evident in earlier approaches to literacy, where overemphasis on the technology of literacy (cf., Goody 1977) has led to assumption about the ability of literacy in itself, as an autonomous force, to have effects, such as the raising of cognitive abilities, the generation of social and economic development, and the shift to modernity. All of these features of the autonomous model were rooted in assumptions about technological determinism that the ideological model and new social practice approaches to literacy have challenged and discredited. And yet, we now find the same array of distorting lenses being put on as we ask, what are the consequences of the present generation of new technologies, those associated in particular with the Internet and with digital forms of communication? While these forms evidently do have affordances in Kress's (2003) sense, it would be misleading and unhelpful to read from the technology into the effects without first positing the social mediating factors that give meaning to such technologies. How, then, can we take sufficient account of the technological dimension of new literacies without sliding in to such determinism? A range of literature from different intellectual traditions has begun to provide answers which, I suggest, if linked with the frameworks provided by new literacy studies (NLS), literacy as social practice (LSP), and by multimodality (M-M) may begin to help us see the new literacies in a fuller and more rounded way (see Schultz and Hull, "▶ Literacies In and Out of School in the United States"; Leander and Lewis, "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies"; and Mahiri, "▶ Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth", for rich attempts to address exactly these issues; cf also Rowsell et al. 2012; Souza 2013; Street et al. 2014).

Artifacts and "Figured Worlds"

One such way of seeing is put forward by Bartlett and Holland (2002) who, like Kress, link their account to the social dimension of literacy practices already being developed in new literacy studies. They "propose to strengthen a practice theoretical approach to literacy studies by specifying the space of literacy practice, examining in particular the locally operant figured world of literacy identities in practice, and artefacts" (p. 12). Drawing upon Holland's earlier work on figured worlds, they ask us to think about technology and artifacts as resources for seeing and representing the world, for figuring our identities in cultural worlds that, as Brandt and Clinton (2002) reminded us, may exist before we enter them:

> Figured worlds are invoked, animated, contested, and enacted through artefacts, activities, and identities in practice. Cultural worlds are continuously figured in practice through the use of cultural artefacts, or objects inscribed by the collective attribution of meaning. An artefact can assume a material aspect (which may be as transient as a spoken word or as durable as a book) and/or an ideal or conceptual aspect. These objects are constructed as a part of and in relation to recognized activities. Artefacts meaningful to the figured world of

literacy might include blackboards or textbooks (in the classroom), reading assessment scales, road-signs or signing ceremonies (in public space). Such artefacts "open up" figured worlds; they are the means by which figured worlds are evoked, grown into individually and collectively developed. . . . Cultural artefacts are essential to the making and remaking of human actors (Bartlett and Holland 2002, pp. 12–13).

If, then, we think of artifacts as tools of self-management and as ways of figuring who we are and what is going on, then when we enter, say, a classroom we will see the artifacts available there – blackboards or textbooks – as not only functional but also symbolic in their ability to evoke the habitus of that social environment and its relationship to the contextual "field" (cf Grenfell et al. 2012 for an account of how literacy studies can be enriched by calling on Bourdieu's theories). The work of the classroom, its establishment of particular kinds of social relationships amongst participants – the role of teacher, the assumptions about being a learner, the rights to speaking and writing inscribed in situ – is partly done through artifacts. Not only do we enact all of these social practices through personal, human interaction but we also call upon objects that we, or others, have placed there to help stabilize and assure us of what kind of social practice is required. Brandt and Clinton (2002) make this point very clearly with respect to another such social space of literacy practice, a bank:

> . . . if you enter a bank to arrange for a loan, your interaction with the loan officer is framed by a number of objects, beginning with the building itself; the furniture, and so on, proceeding to forms, files, documents, contract, calculator, computer, data bases, the presence of which enables you to interact as loan applicant to loan officer in a focused way. The objects help to stabilize a piece of reality so that even if the two of you engage in friendly banter about some other subject there is still no confusion about what the two of you are doing. Things hold you in place (Brandt and Clinton 2002, pp. 344–345).

One might apply similar analysis to the classroom and consider how the objects there help stabilize pedagogic interaction so that, for instance, even if teacher and pupils talk socially about last night's game or about some local gossip as part of their binding and stabilizing social relations, they all know the frame within which this social discourse takes place. The objects help assure them, as in the bank, that the underlying framing discourse is that of teaching and learning within specific institutional settings, within a particular "field" as Bourdieu would describe it. Brandt and Clinton (2002) link this local use of objects to their interest in such broader, global features of the literacy field, using the bank example in ways that again we might extend to schooling:

> Moreover, these same objects-forms, files, contract, calculator, computer, data base-aggregate your loan transaction for use in other settings; you become part of somebody else's calculations-at the local bank, in a regional clearinghouse, maybe eventually (we hope not) in bankruptcy court, etc. Eventually, perhaps, your transaction, aggregated, enters into decisions by a distant stockholder or makes its way into a debate on the floor of the U.S. Senate. . . . the interest rates, the disclosure language, the reporting mechanisms, the counting machines all will transform this local literacy event into somebody else's meaning

and send it into somebody else's setting where the meanings of the original context will not matter. Objects especially provide for and speak to connections beyond the here and now. . . . Our objects are us but more than us, bigger than we are; as they accumulate human investments in them over time, they can and do push back at us as "social facts" independent and to be reckoned with. We find this an accurate description of literacy in its historical, material, and especially technological manifestations (pp. 337–356).

Similarly in the classroom, the artifacts, including those of literacy, signify not only immediate and local purposes but also bring in messages from outside. The equivalent to the clearinghouse and the floor of the Senate may be the local educational authorities and the national ministries as well as broader, even more global notions of the role of education in new times, exactly the theme with which we are here concerned. These accounts of literacy as artifacts and the references to habitus, field, practice, and discourse can, then, provide us with a language of description, as Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) call for, in articulating and clarifying what is going on in new literacy practices and how they are linked to new social practices on the global stage. The language of phonics and of decoding, which is currently put forward as dominant in UK educational policy (cf Moss 2014), may be helpful in helping children learn immediate aspects of the letter code (cf., Adams 1993; Snow et al. 1998) but cannot provide much help in locating such activity in the broader frames that are continually impinging on our local practices.

Problems and Difficulties: Implications for Education

A recent summary of the literature in the field of new literacy studies and the responses to it that we have been discussing here provides a helpful link between these academic studies and their application, or take up, in educational circles. Reder and Davila (2005) comment

> As . . . theories of context and literacy continue to develop, it is important that they connect with issues of educational policy and practice. Ethnographically-based literacy studies have inspired many teachers and literacy practitioners with their accounts of the diversity of learners, literacy practices, and contexts and with their insights about the ideological content of school-based literacy. But such literacy studies are open to criticism that they have not developed a practical alternative pedagogy for literacy . . . Teachers may be convinced by the insights of NLS, but they must work within the increasingly narrow constraints of the school system . . . while sociolinguists argue that varieties of literacy are structurally equal and practice theorists decry the arbitrary dominance of one form of literacy over another, practitioners must decide whether and how to teach dominant literacies without becoming complicit in the reproduction of power (2005, pp. 170–187).

This is a major challenge for literacy educators, whether teaching in K-12 schools or adult education programs, as contributors to this volume make evident. Better theories about how contexts shape literacy practices should help teachers to see the literacy events in their classrooms and programs in relation to the multiple contexts in which they are situated, including the local classroom context and the broader and more

distant contexts of home, community, and beyond. Insights derived from such research and the theory building it would drive can help educators to develop new models of language and literacy education with applications to improved curricula and programs.

Educational Responses

How, then, have schools responded to both these insights and the social changes that accompany them? Amongst the many studies of the links between ICT and literacy, Abbott's (2002) study for the UK: National Centre for Language and Literacy; in the UK, and Jim Gee's (2004) work on video games and what they teach, provide models for future research and practice. One rather negative example of how schools are responding is provided by Leander (2005), another of the leading researchers in this field. He describes a US high school that appeared to adapt to the new technologies by making available wireless access to the Internet and giving laptops to all of its pupils. The difficulties such a strategy can cause, as traditional pedagogies clash with new frames of reference and new literacy practices, provides a case study for many such encounters:

> Ever since it had implemented its laptop program, Ridgeview struggled with a number of contradictions between traditional schooling and ubiquitous Internet access. As one teacher put it, "We have opened Pandora's box." Even as Ridgeview had heavily invested in providing Internet access to its students, it has also structured, over three years' time, an array of implicit and explicit means of closing this access. In short, Ridgeview was a contradiction of social spaces: on the one hand it presented itself and technically structured itself to be an "open" wired social space for 21st Century girls, while on the other hand, official school practices and discourses domesticated, or pedagogized (Street and Street 1991), potential openings of space-time provided by the wireless network. In official school practice, the wireless network was "rewired" or closed off and anchored in ways that reproduce traditional school space-time (Leander 2005, p. 1).

He wants to make it clear that it is not his intent to simply offer a researcher critique of teachers. It is not that researchers understand what is needed and schools are behind the times. The Ridgeview example precisely shows that schools are indeed aware of the needs of new technology for their pupils. What the example brings out is the complexity of working with the contradictions such approaches entail. Drawing upon the kinds of theorizing developed in the earlier part of this paper, Leander tries to understand and explain those contradictions. He notes how artifacts located in specific time-space contexts may bring with them associations and identities that figure other worlds than those with which many participants are familiar. And then, as the writers who refer to the notions of habitus and field signaled above make clear, those participants draw upon cultural and epistemological values with which they are familiar to handle these new worlds. It is these conflicting worlds and the tensions between habitus and field (cf Grenfell et al. 2012) that create the contradictions we see in this example and the many others like it with which readers will be familiar. (see also Leander and Lewis, "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies", and Schultz and

Hull, "▶ Literacies In and Out of School in the United States", For further applications of these ideas in the US context, see McCarty 2005). The present chapter, like Leander's and the others cited here, is about trying to understand and describe these issues rather than claiming already to have answers. In this case, the questions circle around the meanings of new technologies in time-space contexts accustomed to other values and practices. How will change come about?

These approaches to literacy and learning present a dilemma for those in policy circles, such as the "No Child Left Behind" framework in the USA (see critiques in Larson 2007). *David Bloome* and SangHee Ryu in a Chapter on "▶ Literacies in the Classroom" in this volume answer some of the questions raised in a more social practices view of education and literacy by devoting a section to considering literacy practices outside of the classroom and their relationships to those inside, on the grounds that "students have lives outside of the classroom that may affect how they engage in literacy practices and literacy events in the classroom." Here issues of language diversity and indeed of "globalization," the significance of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds is signaled, as in many of the chapters in this volume, as key issues in understanding the particularly literacies associated with educational institutions. Similarly, in the UK responses by researchers and practitioners in the "social" field, such as Marsh (2004), to the narrow formulations of the national literacy strategy expose the limitations of the official strategy on learning literacy in that country in contrast with what rich and detailed accounts of social literacies might tell us:

> ... the National Literacy Strategy Framework privileges particular types of texts and producers of texts. All references to producers of texts use the words "writer", "author" or "poet", and there is no mention of producers, directors or creators. It could be argued that the term "author" is used in a generic sense to include authorship of televisual and media texts, but the word is most frequently used in conjunction with terms that relate to the written word. This privileging of the written word is clearly stated in supporting documentation. The *Teachers' Notes on Shared and Guided Reading and Writing at KS2* (Department For Education And Employment [DfEE] 1998b) suggest that, ... Media texts are not mentioned at all in the key stage 1 orders [ages 5–7] [and only marginally] at key stage 2 [ages 8–10]. ... [There] is a clear prioritisation of print-based texts, with media texts used merely to support children's understanding of the former (pp. 249–262).

Marsh calls upon much of the literature cited here, such as Kress, NLS, etc., to propose an alternative approach to the literacy curriculum. She asks, like Bloome and Ryu and others in the USA: "How might we identify the kind of popular, "socio-cultural literacy practices" evident in children's everyday lives and build upon themes in developing educational curriculum and pedagogy?"

New Directions

In this chapter, I have suggested that the ethnographic approach adopted by many researchers and practitioners in the New Literacy studies and in literacy as social

practice could fruitfully link with work in the field of multimodality and of new technologies to inform policy and practice in education that could help us see and then build upon such practices. The development of an ideological model of multimodality may enable those working in these fields, with different modes and with new technologies, to build on the insights developed in the literacy field, starting with the rejection of an autonomous model that might otherwise lead to mode or technical determinism. Drawing upon the rich insights by researchers and practitioners signaled earlier and evident in the chapters in this volume, we might begin to see how we could learn and teach the new (and the old) literacies we will need for the developing century.

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T. McCarty and L.Liu: Ethnography of Language Policy. In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Critical Race Theory

Arlette Ingram Willis

Abstract

Critical Race Theory (CRT) distinguishes itself from other forms of critical theorizing by unapologetically focusing on race. Herein is a brief and selective history of the founding of CRT, a description of major contributions to the field, and a discussion of its application in U. S. education research over the last 20 years. In addition, there is an explication of its connections to literacy research that examines its application and use in analysis, methods, pedagogy, and theory. A review of extant literature reveals that CRT literacy research can help to demystify and reveal the blockages that disrupt literacy progress by: (a) unveiling the construction of race as biological and the privileging of whiteness, (b) challenging institutional and systemic racism within policies and laws that use citizenship/immigration status to deny access and opportunity for literacy; (c) addressing unspoken racist assumptions that underpin demands for standardized literacy testing (emphasis on individual merit and the insistence of the dominant culture's language); (d) critiquing the use of coded language that supports "colorblind" rhetorical stances toward race (cultural imperialism, economic and social oppression, ethnic and cultural devaluation, and social and political marginalization); and (e) providing an examination of the laws and policies as well as traditions and customs that determine citizenship status, class, and racial categories of inclusion/exclusion. Moreover, there is an examination of CRT literacy research in progress and a discussion of problems and difficulties. The entry concludes with a description of multiple pathways available for future directions of CRT literacy scholarship.

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Contents

Early Developments

Critical race theory (CRT) emerged among legal scholars in the late 1960s and early 1970s in response to the slow and deliberate enforcement of civil rights legislation in the USA. Derrick Bell (1995a, 1995b) is recognized as the intellectual founder of CRT, and his personal and professional journey as an opponent of racism helped to inform his thinking. Crenshaw et al. (1995a) describe CRT'S evolution as a chain of events, beginning with protests by Harvard law students over the University's response to Bell's teaching of his Alternative Course in 1981, a course designed to interrogate race and the law in the USA. Next, they point to Delgado's article that reviewed and critiqued US civil rights and antidiscrimination law. Then, came Crenshaw's organization of the critical race theory workshop during the 1987 critical legal studies (CLS) conference, where the theoretical orientation and movement emerged when legal scholars sought to "reexamine the terms by which race and racism have been negotiated in American consciousness, and to recover and revitalize the radical tradition of race-consciousness among African-Americans and other peoples of color" (1995b, p. xiv). Calmore (1995) articulates that CRT is situated within oppositional scholarship, emphasizing that it "challenges the universality of white experience and judgment as the authoritative standard that binds people of color, and normatively measures, directs, controls, and regulates the terms of proper thought, expression, presentment, and behavior" (p. 318). Other early adherents in the USA include Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Alan D. Freeman, Neil Gotando, Angela Harris, Cheryl I. Harris, Charles R. Lawrence, III, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia J. Williams.

Lawrence et al. (1993) identify six defining elements that capture basic themes in CRT legal scholarship: (1) recognizes that racism is endemic to American life, (2) expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, color blindness, and meritocracy, (3) challenges ahistoricism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law, (4) insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing law and society, (5) is interdisciplinary and eclectic, and (6) works toward the end of

eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression (p. 6). Their work extends beyond theorizing to working to change society through political activism.

Crenshaw et al. (1995a) write that CRT does not draw from a singular doctrine or methodology; instead it adopts an interdisciplinary approach that is informed by Black feminist theory, critical theory, CLS, feminism, liberalism, Marxism/neo-Marxism, neopragmatism, postmodernism, and poststructuralism. CRT scholarship is premised on two foundational ideas: The first is to understand how a regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in the USA and in particular, to examine the relationship between that social structure and professed ideals such as the "rule of law" and "equal protection." The second is a desire not merely to understand the vexed bond between law and racial power but to change it (p. xiv). They posit that race is "'real' in the sense that there is a material dimension and weight to the experience of being 'raced' in American society" (p. xxvi). CRT centers on race, yet acknowledges intersectionality or multiple forms of oppression – class, ethnicity, gender, immigration rights, language, nationality, sexual orientation, and sovereignty – exists and are experienced among people of color. Delgado's (1995) review of US civil rights scholarship reveals that white scholars (1) exclude the scholarship of minority scholars and focused on one another's work; (2) share a limited ideological and perceptual understanding of the lives of people of color; (3) depend on their limited understandings of the lives of people of color, historically and contemporaneously to situate racial problems and solutions; (4) suggest solutions that fail to account for the past oppressions and did little to ameliorate the present for people of color; and (5) support and sustain notions of white racial superiority (pp. 47–51). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) have summarized the hallmarks of CRT as follows: belief that racism is normal or ordinary, not aberrational; interest convergence or material determinism; race as a social construction, intersectionality and anti-essentialism, and voice or counternarratives.

Major Contributions

Education scholars that embrace CRT call for race, racism, and power to be squarely addressed, beyond the emphatic fallacy that abounds in education. Their work uses CRT theorizing, methodologies, and analyses to comprehend and explain the realities of the lives and experiences of people of color living in racialized societies. In educational research, CRT is located in theoretical essays, historical analysis of the intersection of laws and education, reviews of research, and identity and pedagogical studies. Several scholars anchor CRT within education research: Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995); Tate (1996, 1997); Lynn (1999); Solórzano et al. (2000); and Solórzano and Yosso (2002). Tate's (1997) comprehensive review, for example, describes the history and major themes of CRT, draws implications for education from legal scholarship, and extends the goal of CRT to eliminate all forms of

oppression in education (p. 234). He also envisions applications of CRT's themes and methods in his recommendations for education research. Solórzano et al. (2000) articulate the role of CRT in education arguing for the "[c]entrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination, the challenge to dominant ideology, the commitment to social justice, the centrality of experiential knowledge, and the transdisciplinary perspective" (p. 63). Collectively, these scholars argue that critical theorizing must be disemboweled from Eurocentric perspectives if it is to be useful in education. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) also outline CRT methodology as theoretically grounded research that:

> a. foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process; b. challenges the traditional research paradigm, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of people of color; c. offers a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination; d. focuses on the racialized, gendered, and classed experiences of students of color; e. uses the interdisciplinary knowledge base of ethnic studies, women's studies, sociology, history, humanities, and the law to better understand the experiences of students of color. (p. 24)

Crenshaw et al. (1995a) in their text, Critical Race Theory: The key writings that formed the movement, declare that CRT does not draw from a singular doctrine or methodology; instead it adopts an interdisciplinary approach that is informed by Black feminist theory, critical theory, CLS, feminism, liberalism, Marxism/neo-Marxism, poststructuralism, postmodernism, and neopragmatism. Solórzano (1997, 1998) and Yosso (2005) acknowledge CRT's interdisciplinary approach to help to demystify historical and contemporary privileged assumptions, paradigms, and institutional traditions, structures, and practices of racism and oppression in education research and praxis.

Education research contains a plethora of CRT research and innovation over the last two decades; however, literacy research has not kept apace. **The nexus of CRT and literacy is a contested terrain in large part because CRT centers on issues of race, whereas much of literacy research remains moored in traditions that continue to position itself as acultural, colorblind, and natural (see chapter "▶ Critical-Literacy Education: "The Supremely Educational Event" by Freebody, this volume), or what Bonilla-Silva (2015) calls a racial grammar that supports (white) racial dominance (p. 80)**. In literacy research, Willis (forthcoming) reviews the extant literature (2010–2015) and observes that there are few published studies that embrace CRT in mainstream literacy journals. CRT, however, has been applied across a broad spectrum of literacy research: literature for children and youth (Koss 2015; Schieble 2012) English classroom discussions (Borshiem-Black 2015; Godley and Loretto (2013); in-service teacher education (Wetzel and Rogers 2015); and preservice teacher education (Haddix 2010; Mosley and Rogers 2011; Sealey-Ruiz and Greene 2015). There appears to be a narrow band of selective foci (counternarratives and cultural capital) amongst studies published in alternative broadly themed education journals as well as some CRT areas avoided (interest convergence or material determinism, literacy laws and policy, and critical whiteness studies) in most journals. Within CRT literacy research most studies do not

adequately examine the epistemological and theoretical foundations nor do they undertake anti-essentialism, intersectional analysis, multiple consciousnesses, or multi-perspectivalism.

Work in Progress

Literacy scholars have adopted and adapted CRT: (a) to reveal how historic and contemporary literacy policies and laws, theories and practices, traditions and customs are used to sustain and support underlying fundamental racist assumptions about abilities, cultures, languages, literacies, and knowledges among people of color; (b) as a theoretical lens to illustrate how race has been depicted in historical and contemporary educational theorizing centered on whiteness as natural, normal, and preferred and nonwhiteness as exotic, abnormal, and undesirable; and (c) to challenge the positioning of literacy as acultural and colorblind as well as literacy research as biological and normative that ignores inequities in access and opportunities, while privileging whiteness, middle-classness, and English. Literacy scholars also draw on CRT theorizing and methods to demonstrate the power and potential of voice or counternarratives to inform and transform understandings of race and racism as a social construct and lived reality. As stories centered on lived and imaginative experiences, counternarratives challenge master narratives that portray whiteness as natural, normal, and invisible. In addition, counternarratives acknowledge intersectionality in the lives of people of color, which helps to clarify how multidimensional identities are formed and needful for survival within communities and societies.

CRT scholars use storytelling to analyze and dispel myths, assumptions, and unfounded beliefs about people of color (Delgado and Stefancic 2000, p. xvii). They produce stories told from the position of people of color living under racial oppression that contradict or oppose the assumptions and beliefs held by many whites about people of color. Inherent in the narrative forms are voice; that is, the ability of a group to articulate their experience in ways unique to them (Delgado and Stefancic 2001). This body of research explicates the multiple consciousnesses and multiple literacies that people of color use in their lives and most importantly validates that people of color are "holders and creators of knowledge" (Delgado Bernal 2002, p. 108). Haddix (2012) employs CRT within literacy teacher education where race is understood as a social construction and perceptions of language use are challenged. Patel (2012) also draws on CRT in her description of the lives and status among racially minoritized newcomer youths, permitting the participants to share their transcultural journeys drawing on their cultures, languages, and knowledges as they move in the USA. In addition, Sealy-Ruiz (2013) examines the counternarratives of Black mothers who re-enter higher education where their voices, interests, and experiences are central; however, she extends her work by adding including the intersectionality within participants' lives. Another example of intersectionality, that moves beyond black/white binaries, has been undertaken by Chang (2013) in his longitudinal study of multi-ethnic youth's engagement with

literacy; DeNicolo et al. (2015) share the empowered voices of third grade Latina/o children using testimony; Malsbary (2014) in an examination of race-language under English-only language policies in a multiracial and multilinguistic high school; and (San Pedro 2015) describes acts of resistance and silencing of nondominant language and culture (San Pedro 2015). Morrell (2014) also offers a commentary of South Carolina's Reading Initiative that draws from CRT and invokes Yosso's (2005) notion of cultural capital in a critique of lost opportunities to engage local community knowledges, literacies, and voices.

Drawing on the CRT belief that racism is normal or ordinary in US society serves as a theoretical grounding of studies that examine race within classroom dialogue (Quay 2014), instructional reading practices (Compton-Lilly 2011), and school library programs (Kumasi 2012). This handful of literacy studies use CRT theoretical perspectives and methods to attend to the literacy lives of participants of color. Collectively, the studies attend to how race and privilege pervade equitable literacy access and opportunity; move beyond unacknowledged racist assumptions; develop understandings of the nexus of race, racism, intersectionality, power, and literacy; and encourage a more proactive advocacy role for researchers.

Problems and Difficulties

From the onset CRT has been beset with critics that have attacked theorizing about the intersection of the law and race. General themes emerged that include (1) challenges to the use of narratives or storytelling as nonobjective and nongeneralizable, (2) questions about whether "playing the race card" is being too negative, and (3) objections to alleged essentialism and exceptionalism. Duncan (2005), for example, has summarized critiques of CRT as used by qualitative researchers noting: race and racism are the primary foci, a lack of objectivity, not a unique theory or method, a reliance on counternarratives and voice as sacrosanct, and class differences between academics' lives that appear to essentialize the lives of oppressed peoples. Thus, the legitimacy of CRT is questioned in law, education, and literacy scholarship because it challenges the basic assumptions that have been used to define and normalize language as reflective of Eurocentric beliefs and values. Brookfield (2003) puts it this way: CRT threatens to disrupt power and the dominance of majoritarian "unproblematic Eurocentrism. … [that] reflects the racial membership of 'official' knowledge producers in the field" (p. 497). CRT exposes how race (as a social construct and lived experience) is central to understanding the deep relationship within privileged paradigms.

There are myriad literacy studies that use critical lenses to explore issues of equity and social injustice, but few have explicitly adopted a race-consciousness and applied CRT theoretical lenses to methods or analyses. Shapiro (2014), for example, engages CRT scholarship but does not draw upon it in her analyses or conclusions. Likewise, Compton-Lilly et al. (2012) acknowledge CRT's epistemology but do not

specifically offer linkages between CRT and family literacy in their review. The omission of the interests, perspectives, and voices of scholars of color, participants, and subjects remains static in much of literacy research.

There are literacy scholars who, more often that not, have failed to respectfully acknowledge seminal CRT theoretical work by scholars of color, while simultaneously highlighting and foregrounding secondary and tertiary theorizing of white scholars – thus re-centering and re-privileging whiteness as a lens for understanding the intersection of race and literacy. Scholars of color have long decried the lack of acknowledgement of their epistemological and ideological positioning by White scholars who claim intellectual superiority, as noted by Anna Julia (Haywood) Cooper (1892), among others. Curry (2008) also notes in US educational research there is a history of erasure, "*it is only through white thinkers that black thoughts can be understood or philosophical*" (p. 44). Intellectual arrogance that does not acknowledge the sociohistorical contexts that gave rise to CRT nor its founders permits an erasure of the struggle for racial equity and repositions whiteness as the dominant and desired lens for literacy research. For example, literacy research is dominated by studies that identify participants by race/ethnicity, gender, class, language, and immigrant status. In some cases, white researchers who self-identify their class, ethnicity, gender, race, and sexual orientation seldom deconstruct how identity markers are socially constructed and how their self-proclaimed identities, as well as their white privilege, shapes their research, perception of participants, interpretations, and recommendations (Mosley (2011), Shapiro (2014), and Van de Kleut (2011)). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) submit by so doing these researchers position themselves and their roles as transparent, relying on "the ability of whiteness to disguise itself and become invisible" (p. 156). In contradistinction to CRT theorizing that calls for acknowledging race as visible, tangible, and omnipresent although racism can be overt, dysconscious, or unconscious. For instance, some literacy research engages discussions of race but not from a critical stance or seeks to adopt a critical stance without acknowledging race as a social construct. Careful introspection is needed by all literacy theorists, researchers, and editors to disrupt the use of unacknowledged racist assumptions that underpin the use of deficit, negative, stereotypical language, and portrayals of minoritized communities, families, participants, and subjects. Bonilla-Silva (2015) notes that descriptions are "never neutral or innocent" (p. 85). He goes on to warn against soft racism and attempts to reframe the present as postracial.

Missing too among much literacy scholarship are adequate discussions that address economic and social inequities, historically and in contemporary contexts that give rise to unequal access and opportunities for literacy learning: homelessness, immigrant and citizenship status, and poverty. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) caution: "objective truth, like merit, does not exist, at least in social science and politics. In these realms, truth is a social construct crafted to suit the purposes of the dominant group" (p. 92). CRT literacy researchers must thus make clear the history and continued use of "scientific methods" that are steeped in eugenicists' racist assumptions undergird ideologies of individualism, merit, and standardization and call for immediate change within literacy scholarship.

Many literacy researchers characterize race as a variable, identity, pathology, and cause célébre but seldom as a framework for research. The problematic usage of race as a descriptor in literacy research reinforces deficit language use and unflattering images of people of color, their culture, language, and communities. Equally troubling are the use of color imagery (associated with skin color), code words, and euphemisms that consistently compare and contrast students of color to whites. Some literacy researchers claim the words are race-neutral or colorblind and merely used to identify students and student performance. CRT literacy research should dismantle this master narrative; discourse of color imagery, code words, and euphemisms; and build a new narrative that presents an authentic portrayal of literacy among individuals, families, and communities of minoritized peoples.

In sum, the use of CRT among literacy researchers is similar to Delgado's (1995) description of the evolution of civil rights scholarship in the USA that reveals that some white scholars (1) exclude the scholarship of minority scholars and focused on one another's work; (2) share a limited ideological and perceptual understanding of the lives of people of color; (3) depend on their limited understandings of the lives of people of color, historically and contemporaneously to situate racial problems and solutions; (4) suggest solutions that failed to account for the past oppressions and did little to ameliorate the present for people of color; and (5) support and sustain notions of white racial superiority (pp. 47–51).

Future Directions

While acknowledging the onset of CRT in education research began in the USA over 20 years, Taylor et al. (2016) observe scholarship is "strongest in North America and the UK, but also has a growing presence in Europe, Central and South America, South Africa and Australia" (p. xiv). Further, Bonilla-Silva (2015) observes that there are world systems of racism that should be considered when CRT is adopted/adapted beyond the USA. Sociohistoric understandings of how issues of economics/materialism, language, power, and race intersect are needed for in-depth and nuanced analyses. International engagement with a country's sociohistoric moorings can range from Ferreira's (2012) acknowledgement of dominant ideologies and power to produce racist images in the media to Santamaria et al. (2015) co-application of Kaupapa Maori and CRT methods in an Aotearoa New Zealand study of principals' affecting informed change and improved academic achievement to Arias (forthcoming) use of CRT and racial frames in Colombia. What is consistent across nations are how dominant groups – some within and others without – have worked to define race and who has access to goods and services including education and literacy. Wiener (2012) drawing on notions of power, frames CRT within an evolving international focus where the: "power of a dominant racial group to shape racial identities, knowledges, ideologies, and, thus, life chances and experiences of an oppressed racial group through coercion, violence, and ideology" (p. 332). She

also asserts the need for "an explicit and global focus on 'whiteness' …and links between race, citizenship, and nationalism, through critical examinations of the opportunity."

Multiple pathways are available for CRT literacy scholarship that address the intersection of race and literacy, historically and during contemporaneously, within and across countries, nations, and regions (Lozano-Lerma 2013); reconceptualization of cultural/ethnic/racial languages and literacies use and the imposition of dominant/official languages and literacies (Arias forthcoming; Kubota 2015; Silva 2014); and transformative literacy pedagogies and curricular content (Arias forthcoming; Silva 2014; Van de Kleut 2011). Scholars recognize that each country needs to address the intersection of race and literacy within its distinctive contexts (economic, cultural, historic, linguistic, social, and political) and complexities (antiracism, apartheid, and indigenous rights). Central and South American countries (where historically race has been "invisible" or officially nonexistent according to government laws and policies) have evaded the notion of racial differences preferring racialessness and the myth of racial democracy. According to Hernandez (2013) these ideas are losing traction as scholars address and critique racial, as well as economic, differences.

CRT literacy scholarship can examine the languages and literatures available in families, communities, and schools as well as the cultural and ethnic ways of knowing used within families and communities; then apply CRT lenses to understand why they are replaced with dominant culture, language, and literatures in society and schooling. In addition, using CRT literacy scholarship can unmask features on standardized literacy tests to question whose literature is taught/not taught and how the literature is presented; which languages and dialects of languages are accepted and preferred; and which visual images are used, and how they are used to represent race and minoritized and oppressed people. Significantly, posing questions that challenge preconceived notions about the beliefs, values, knowledge, and ways of making meaning held those in power as well as the oppressed. A CRT framework reveals the importance of literacy as multi: cultural, dimensional, faceted, linguistic, perspectival, and textual. CRT literacy scholars also can approach and envisage CRT's emancipatory and transformative power with an emphasis on racial/cultural and experiential knowledge through creativity and narratives.

Applications of CRT, internationally and nationally, must move beyond black/white binaries where understandings of global, and, in-country social constructions of race and assumptions can be disrupted by literacy scholarship. Critiques of CRT articulate its failure to adequately engage Marxist notions of social inequity (Darder and Torres 2004); address racism beyond historic and contemporary Black/White racism in the USA (May and Sleeter 2010); and effectively include all US racial groups' experiences with racism (Leonardo 2012) while expanding "intermediate racial categories" (Bonilla-Silva 2015, p. 82).

CRT can help to demystify and reveal the blockages that disrupt literacy progress by: (a) unveiling the construction of race as biological and the privileging of

whiteness, (b) challenging institutional and systemic racism within policies and laws that use citizenship/immigration to deny access and opportunity for literacy; (c) addressing unspoken racist assumptions that underpin demands for standardized literacy tests, the emphasis on individual merit, the insistence of the dominant culture's language; (d) critiquing the use of coded language that supports "colorblind" rhetorical stances toward race, cultural imperialism, economic and social oppression, ethnic and cultural devaluation, and social and political marginalization; and (e) providing an examination of the laws and policies and traditions and customs that determine citizenship status, class, and racial categories of inclusion/exclusion.

CRT is continually evolving as should literacy research's embrace of transformations. Notably there have been an increased number of literacy publications that engage CRT (2011–2015). Critical race pedagogy (CRP), for example, was proposed by Lynn (1999, 2004) and refined in 2013 (Lynn, Jennings, and Hughes). CRT Literacy scholarship in the USA has not engaged CRP, nor has literacy scholarship adequately considered critical hip hop pedagogy (Alim 2007a, b; Akom 2009). However, there appears to be a wider international appreciation of the possibilities to empower learners drawing on critical hip hop pedagogies (Alim 2011; Alim et al. (2009). The creative use of multiple literary forms for counternarratives remains untapped. CRT literacy scholarship also is ripe with opportunities to apply extensions of CRT from AsiaCrit, LatCrit, TribalCrit, critical race feminisms, and Queer-crit perspectives. Additionally, CRT lends itself to transdisciplinarity and there is room to engage with scholars from cultural anthropology, economics, law, literary theory, psychology, and religion among other disciplines in an effort to aggressively and forcefully address hegemonic influences that control access as well the use of educational reforms, laws, and policies to diminish opportunity.

To use CRT in literacy research means that we must "re-imagine the role that race – as a structural not just individual problem – has played in our thinking about success and failure. We need to begin to see the relationship between success and community; between failure and the absence of community" (Guinier 2004). To do less is to continue to privilege an ideology of whiteness in literacy research. Race, as a social construct and part of the lived experiences of people of color, in the USA and beyond, has taken center stage through the ubiquity and power of social media. For example, the 2015 word of year cited by Merriam Webster was #BlackLivesMatter – an idea that garnered international support through Instagram and Twitter; to the racialization of people fleeing economic, political, and social unrest in their countries as they broach European shores and borders, yet education and literacy researchers lag behind. Collectively we must challenge race-based applications and understanding of citizenship status, homelessness, immigration, and poverty and how these life circumstances affect literacy learning and lend greater advocacy and leadership from within the literacy field.

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Literacy Myths

Harvey J. Graff and John Duffy

Abstract

Literacy Myth refers to the belief, articulated in educational, civic, religious, and other settings, contemporary and historical, that the acquisition of literacy is a necessary precursor to and invariably results in economic development, democratic practice, and upward social mobility. These stand among many qualities with which literacy has been invested. Taken together, these attitudes constitute "the Literacy Myth."

Keywords

Definitions of literacy • Democracy • Literacy and development • Literacy in history • Literacy lessons • Literacy myth • Measurement of literacy

Contents

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Introduction

Literacy myth refers to the belief, articulated in educational, civic, religious, and other settings, contemporary and historical, that the acquisition of literacy is a necessary precursor to and invariably results in economic development, democratic practice, cognitive enhancement, and upward social mobility (Graff 1979, 1987). Despite many unsuccessful attempts to measure it (Inkeles and Smith 1974), literacy in this formulation has been invested with immeasurable and indeed almost ineffable qualities, purportedly conferring on practitioners a predilection toward social order, an elevated moral sense, and a metaphorical "state of grace" (Scribner 1984). Such presumptions have a venerable historical lineage and have been expressed, in different forms, from antiquity through the Renaissance and the Reformation and again throughout the era of the Enlightenment, during which literacy was linked to progress, order, transformation, and control. Associated with these beliefs is the conviction that the benefits ascribed to literacy cannot be attained in other ways nor can they be attributed to other factors, whether economic, political, cultural, or individual. Rather, literacy stands alone as the independent and critical variable. Taken together, these attitudes constitute what Graff (1979, 1987) has called "the literacy myth."

Many researchers and commentators have adopted this usage. Contemporary expressions of the literacy myth are evident in cities' sponsorship of book reading, celebrity appeals on behalf of reading campaigns, and promotions by various organizations linking the acquisition of literacy to self-esteem, parenting skills, and social mobility, among others. Individuals are seen to be "at risk," if they fail to master literacy skills presumed to be necessary, although functions and levels of requisite skills continue to shift (Resnick and Resnick 1977; Brandt 2001). In stark, indicting versions of the myth, failures to learn to read and write are individual failures. Those who learn to read and write well are considered successful, whereas those who do not develop these skills are seen as less intelligent, lazy, or in some other way deficient (St. Clair and Sadlin 2004). These and other versions of the literacy myth shape public and expert opinions, including policy makers in elementary and adult education, and those working in development work internationally.

Such attitudes about literacy represent a "myth" because they exist apart from and beyond empirical evidence that might clarify the actual functions, meanings, and effects of reading and writing. Like all myths, the literacy myth is not so much a falsehood but an expression of the ideology of those who sanction it and are invested in its outcomes (see, e.g., Goody 1986, 1987; Goody and Watt 1968; Havelock 1963, 1976, 1986; Olson 1977, 1994) (for contrasting perspectives, see Akinasso 1981; Collins and Blot 2003; Graff 1995a; Graff and Street 1997). For this reason, the literacy myth is powerful and resistant to revision.

This chapter examines the scope of the literacy myth, considering its varieties, its meanings, and its implications for policy makers in education and other fields who would use literacy in the service of large-scale social and economic transformations. To argue that literacy has been accorded the status of myth is not to discount the importance of reading and writing or to suggest that these are irrelevant in the contemporary world. That is clearly not the case. However, we may contrast the literacy myth and its seamless connections of literacy and individual and collective advancement, with the more complex and often contradictory lessons that are consistent with historical and recent literacy development and practice.

Definition and Measurement Issues

Problems inherent in the "literacy myth" begin with confusions over the meanings of the word "literacy" and efforts to measure it. Literacy has been defined in various ways, many offering imprecise and yet nonetheless progressively grander conceptions and expectations of what it means to read and write and what might follow from that practice. For example, literacy has been defined as in terms of standardized test scores such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test or the Armed Forces Qualifying Tests; the completion of a specified grade level in school; and a generalized form of knowledge (Pattison 1984) such as "computer literacy," "financial literacy," and "civic literacy," neologisms as facile as they are inexact. In other contexts, literacy may be conflated with its desired ends, as when it is represented as "an agent of change," a formulation that confuses relationships of cause and effect.

The vagueness of such definitions allows for conceptions of literacy that go beyond what has been examined empirically, thus investing literacy with the status of myth. Since mythos is grounded in narrative and since narratives are fundamentally expressions of values, literacy has been contrasted in its mythic form with a series of opposing values that have resulted in reductive dichotomies such as "oral-literate," "literate-preliterate," "literate-illiterate," and other binaries that caricature major social changes. In such hierarchical structures, the "oral," "preliterate," and "illiterate" serve as the marked and subordinate terms, whereas "literate" and "literacy" assume the status of superior terms (Duffy 2000). Such hierarchies reinforce the presumed benefits of literacy and so contribute to the power of the myth (for detailed examples, see Finnegan 1973, 1988; Goody 1986, 1987; Havelock 1963, 1976, 1986; Ong 1967, 1977, 1982).

We define literacy here not in terms of values, mentalities, generalized knowledge, or decontextualized quantitative measures. Rather, literacy is defined as basic or primary levels of reading and writing and their analogs across different media, activities made possible by a technology or set of techniques for decoding and reproducing printed materials, such as alphabets, syllabaries, pictographs, and other systems, which themselves are created and used in specific historical and material contexts (see Graff 1987, pp. 3–4). Only by grounding definitions of literacy in specific, qualified, and historical particulars can we avoid conferring on it the status of myth.

Early Developments: Historical Perspectives

In contrast with its presumed transformative "consequences," literacy historically has been characterized by tensions, continuities, and contradictions. In classical Greece, where the addition of characters representing vowel sounds to Semitic syllabaries is seen by some as the origin of the first modern alphabet (Gelb 1963), literacy contributed to the Greek development of philosophy, history, and democracy (Harris 1989; Havelock 1963, 1986). Yet literacy in classical Athens was a conservative technology, used to record the cultural memories of an oral civilization in a society based on slavery. Though achievements in the development of popular literacy in fifth-century Rome were substantial, they resulted neither in democratization nor the development of a popular intellectual tradition (Graff 1987). Neither did the invention of the printing press in fifteenth-century Europe lead to swift or universal changes in prevailing social, political, and economic relationships. These came more slowly.

By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe and North America, literacy was seen as a potentially destabilizing force, threatening the established social order. Conservative elites feared that the widespread acquisition of reading and writing skills by the masses – workers, servants, and slaves – would make them unfit for manual labor and unwilling to accept their subordinate status. Education for the popular classes was often discouraged, in fear it might lead to discontent, strife, and rebellion. In some settings, reading and writing instruction was legally withheld, as was the case with slaves in the south USA. Implicit in these views was the suspicion that literacy was a precondition of intellectual, cultural, and social transformation, by which individuals might redefine themselves and challenge existing social conditions.

The reactionary view of literacy was largely trumped in the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century by reformers. These reformers grasped the potential of schooling and literacy as a means for maintaining social control. In their view, education – whether in public or private institutions – was a means through which to instill discipline and prepare the working class for their places in an increasingly urban, industrial society. This meant that literacy lessons in the schools were offered not for their own sake, as a means for promoting intellectual and personal growth, but were instead taught as part of a larger project of instilling generally secular moral values and faith in commercial and industrial capitalism. The destabilizing potential of literacy remained, but it was moderated by education that emphasized discipline, good conduct, and deference to authority. In this way reformers seized on literacy as a central strategy for maintaining social control.

The roots of this perspective are found in religious groups and secular reformers who competed to uplift and save the souls of the poor and who also competed to influence expanding school systems. Religion, especially but not only Protestantism after the Reformation, was the impetus for learning to read. The Bible served as both the repository of spiritual salvation and an important primer for new readers.

Building on the foundation of the Enlightenment, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of a synthesis of major influences on social thought – idealism, scientism, evolutionism, positivism, materialism, and progressivism – that encouraged belief in the eventual if not inevitable improvement of

human beings and society. Literacy was seen to be intrinsic to these advances, a technology through which faith in the progress of civilization and human improvement might be validated. The preferred venue for managing literacy was mass popular education.

This association of literacy with ideology, values, and a stable social order provides a historical basis of the literacy myth.

Major Elements of the Myth

The Myth of Decline

In contemporary popular discourse, literacy is represented as an unqualified good, a marker of progress, and a metaphorical light making clear the pathway to progress and happiness. The opposing value of "illiteracy," in contrast, is associated with ignorance, incompetence, and darkness. Advertisements run by the National Center for Family Literacy in the USA, for example, show an adult and a smiling child accompanied by a text that reads in part: "Because I can read. . . I can understand. . . live my life without fear, without shame." Given such sentiments, it is hardly surprising that discussions of literacy would be characterized by persistent fears of its decline. Indeed, much of the contemporary discourse on literacy evokes what John Nerone (1988, Introduction, Communication 11,1 qtd. in Graff 1995a, xvii), has called "a sense of the apocalypse." In this discourse, the decline of literacy is taken as an omnipresent given and signifies generally the end of individual advancement, social progress, and the health of the democracy. Such associations represent a powerful variant of the literacy myth.

The narrative of decline extends beyond literacy to encompass the state of education generally, both higher and lower, as well as the state of society, morality, and economic productivity. In the USA, the decline of tests scores in reading assessments is said to represent one "crisis," the rise in reading "disabilities" another, and the movement away from sound reading and writing pedagogy yet another (McQuillan 1998; see also Graff 1995a). Where the evidence does not support a decline in literacy rates among the general population, there is a perceived crisis over the kinds of literacy that are or are not practiced – for example, the crisis of declining numbers of peoples reading "good" literature, said to represent a threat to the ideals of participatory democracy (see, e.g., National Endowment for the Arts 2004).

That the myth of decline is largely unsupported by empirical evidence has done little to reduce its potency in contemporary discourse. Rather, the myth is argued by anecdote, often rooted in nostalgia for the past. Moreover, protestations over the decline of literacy are often a prologue for a more sustained argument for a "back-to-basics" movement in schools. If literacy has declined, it is because schools have strayed from teaching the fundamentals of reading, arithmetic, and other subjects defined, indistinctly, as "the basics." However, as Resnick and Resnick (1977) illustrate, expectations concerning literacy have changed sharply over time, as standards have been applied to large populations that were once applied only to a

limited few. It may prove difficult to go back to basics, Resnick and Resnick have written, if "there is no simple path to which we can return" (p. 385).

The myth of decline also neglects the changing modes of communication and in particular the increasing importance of media that are not wholly reliant on print. Developments in computer technology and the Internet have combined to change the experience of what it means to read, with print becoming but one element in a complex interplay of text, images, graphics, sound, and hyperlinks. The bias toward what Marcia Farr (1993) called "essayist literacy," or formal discursive writing characterized by strict conventions of form, style, and tone, both resists and fails to comprehend such changes. Such resistance and failures also have historical antecedents; changes in the technologies of communication have always been accompanied by apprehensions of loss. Plato's notorious distrust of writing was itself a rejection of a technology that threatened the primacy of dialectic in favor of a graphical mode of communication (see, e.g., Havelock 1963).

The myth of decline, then, is an expression of an ideology in which a particular form of literacy is seen to represent a world that is at once stable, ordered, and free of dramatic social change. More than nostalgia for a nonexistent past, the myth of decline articulates a conception of the present and the future, one in which specific forms of literacy practice exemplify an ideological commitment to a status quo that may have already past.

The Myth of the Alphabet

Perhaps the strongest claims concerning literacy have been those attributed to the alphabet, whose invention in classical Greece was said to herald a great leap forward in the progress of human evolution. The "alphabetized word" was said to release human beings from the trance of tribalism and bring about the development of logic, philosophy, history, and democracy. To its proponents, the development of alphabetic literacy brought about profound changes in the very structure of human cognition, as the written word, liberated by its material nature from the "tyranny of the present" (Goody and Watt 1968), could be objectified, manipulated, preserved, and transmitted across time and distances, leading to the development of abstract thought. Pictographs, hieroglyphs, and other forms of representing speech were seen as prior and inferior to alphabetic literacy, which could more easily represent concepts – justice, law, and individualism – and thus engendered the beginnings of philosophical thought.

The bias toward the alphabet resulted in what its proponents called a "great divide" (Goody and Watt 1968; see also Havelock 1963, 1976, 1986; Olson 1994, 1977), with rational, historical, individualistic, literate peoples on one side and "nonlogical," mythical, communal, oral peoples on the other. Among other things, such conceptions led to serious misunderstandings of non-Western writing systems, such as those of the Chinese and the Japanese, which were erroneously thought to be inferior to the Western alphabet (Finnegan 1973, 1988; Gough 1968; Street 1984, 1995).

In the most extreme versions of the myth, the alphabet was seen to represent the beginnings of civilized society.

In the nineteenth century, the myth of the alphabet was an element of the broader narrative of Western history and worked to ratify the educational, moral, and political experiences of colonial Western powers with the cultures of the colonized, especially those that did not practice literacy. To the extent that the alphabet was identified with civilization, its dissemination to nonliterate, nonindustrial, supposedly "primitive" cultures was intrinsic to the larger project and rhetoric of colonial expansion. These attitudes were not confined to colonial contexts but applied, as well, to minority populations in schools, workplaces, and communities, all of which might be "improved" by learning the literacy practices of the dominant group. In this way literacy, and alphabetic literacy in particular, has served as what Finnegan (1994) called the "mythical charter" of the dominant social and political order. The great debates of the past two centuries over reading pedagogy and instructional methods – for example, phonics, phonetics, "look-see" methods, and others – continue to reflect questions about the uses and powers of alphabets. In contemporary debates, they reflected divisions over order and morality as well as pedagogy (Graff 1979).

Work in Progress

Literacy and Economic Development

The assumed link between literacy and economic success is one of the cornerstones of Western modernization theories. Literacy or at least a minimal amount of education is presumed to be necessary and sufficient for overcoming poverty and surmounting limitations rooted in racial, ethnic, gender, and religious differences. Implicit in this formulation is the belief that individual achievement may reduce the effects of social and structural inequalities and that economic success or failure corresponds at least in part to the quality of personal effort.

On a collective scale, literacy is thought to be a necessary precondition of modernization, a cause and correlate of economic growth, productivity, industrialization, per capita wealth, gross national product, and technological advances, among other advances (Graff 1979, 1987; Levine 1986). Literacy in this view becomes a commodity to be exported by the developed areas to so-called developing nations, enabling individuals and nations to participate in the ongoing processes of globalization and partake of their presumed rewards.

Despite such expectations, there is little evidence that increasing or high levels of literacy result directly in major economic advances. Indeed, historical scholarship suggests that in the short run, at least, industrialization may be incidental to literacy development or vice versa or even work to the detriment of opportunities for schooling. Literacy among the workforce was not a precondition to early industrialization in England and North America, for example. Schofield (1973) found that the literacy rates of textile, metal, and transport workers declined in the late

eighteenth century, as these occupations did not require advanced reading and writing skills. Additionally, the demand for child labor disrupted education, as children in the factories had fewer opportunities to attend school. Industrial development may have depended on the inventiveness or innovativeness of a relative few and thus stimulated their literacy development. It may equally have been disruptive to the lives of many other individuals, their families, their customary work and relationships, and their environments including arrangements for schooling (Furet and Ozouf 1983; Graff 1979; Levine 1980).

It is possible that in nineteenth-century England and elsewhere, to a significant extent, training in literacy was not so much for the purpose of developing skills to promote social, cultural, or economic advancement as it was "training in being trained" (Graff 1979, p. 230, paraphrasing R. Dore, 1967, *Education in Tokugawa Japan*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, p. 292). Schooling and literacy education were the first steps in reordering the values and customs of rural populations entering the Industrial Age, instilling in them the industry, thrift, order, and punctuality required for the successful operation of the factory and a new social order beyond it. Literacy was not primarily or by itself a vehicle for economic advancement but rather a means of inculcating values and behaviors in the general population that made large-scale economic development possible.

Recent scholarship does not support the assumption that literacy leads directly to economic advancement. Brandt (2001), for example, found that the value of literacy to individuals in the twentieth-century USA was influenced by more general social, political, and technological transformations that sometimes elevated the importance of literacy skills but at times undercut or undervalued them. Farmers, teachers, and others in Brandt's study, for example, found that literacy skills learned in the early part of the century were made less valuable or even obsolete by technological, institutional, and economic transformations of the latter part of the century. New forms of literacy training, specific to the needs of changing workplaces and communities, were required to advance or simply maintain one's former status. Literacy, in sum, did not change society. Rather, literacy itself was changed – its forms, uses, and meanings – in response to its environment. Such observations make clear that the contribution of literacy and schooling to economic development merits further detailed study and that the presumptions of the literacy myth demand even more careful qualification.

Problems and Difficulties

Democracy, Literacy, and the Social Order

One of the central tenets of the democratic state is that an educated, informed, and participatory voting public is necessary for the functioning of democracy. In this perspective, one must be able to read and write to understand the issues of the day and think critically about the choices required in a democracy. While that formulation is undoubtedly true, it is also incomplete. It requires the further recognition that

literacy and education are necessary but not sufficient conditions of a functioning democracy, which also relies on participation, debate, and a diversity of viewpoints. Although literacy and education can and have been used of stimulate democratic discourse and practices, it is equally true that literacy has been used to foster political repression and maintain inequitable social conditions.

History helps us to understand such tensions. Nineteenth-century schoolbooks stressed the doctrines of order, harmony, and progress while ignoring or justifying social conflicts and inequities (Graff 1987, p. 326). Beyond the economic imperatives discussed previously, the purpose of literacy in these contexts was self-consciously conservative, a means for imposing morality, reducing criminality, lessening diversity, and encouraging deference to the established social order, especially in difficult times of change. Literacy was not a means for promoting democracy but rather an instrument for imposing social control. Yet literacy could be and was appropriated by groups and organizations promoting radical social change, for example, among Chartists in nineteenth-century Great Britain and skilled labor organizers more widely. In the shop, meeting hall, and street, oral and written media came together. National literacy campaigns such as those in Cuba and Nicaragua also reflect the dialectical tensions of the literacy myth. Such movements propel literacy workers to action, raise literacy rates significantly, and allow for individual and group development. But literacy remains under the direction of political ideology and doctrine (Arnove and Graff 1987). Only in the literacy myth does literacy operate as an independent variable.

The functioning of a mature democracy depends on political structures and economic conditions that make participation possible for citizens. Literacy and education are important to the extent that they emphasize critical thinking, open debate, and tolerance for opposing views. Literacy by itself is not a cause for freedom and a guarantee of a working democracy. It is instead one of the many important variables that influence the lives of citizens and their relationship to their governments.

Future Directions

Lessons of the Literacy Myth

Myths can be expressions of collective desires, of the many and the few, of their differential agency and power. Perhaps the literacy myth expresses a hope that literacy alone is enough to end poverty, elevate human dignity, and ensure a just and democratic world. A less benign reading is that the literacy myth is a means through which to obscure the causes of social and economic inequities in Western society at least by attributing them to the literacy or illiteracy of different peoples. In such a reading, literacy is a symptom and a symbol. Either way, the consequences of accepting uncritically the literacy myth are continuing to misunderstand the nature of literacy, its development, uses, and potentials to foster or inhibit social and economic development.

One critical lesson is that literacy is not an independent variable, as in the myth. It is instead historically founded and grounded, a product of the histories in which it is

entangled and interwoven and which give literacy its meanings. Ignorance of the historical record, in which crucial concepts, notions, arrangements, and expectations about literacy have been fashioned, severely limits understanding. Related to this, second, we must grasp the fundamental complexity of literacy, the extent to which it is a product of the intersection of multiple economic, political, cultural, and other factors. This realization mandates rejecting the simple binaries of "literate-illiterate," "oral-written," and others that have been used to postulate a "great divide." These constructs have been used to sort individuals and cultures in ways that are as damaging as they are conceptually inadequate. The legacies of literacy point instead to connections, relationships, and interactions.

In the literacy myth, reading and writing are a universal good and ideologically neutral. However, in a third lesson, the history of literacy and schooling demonstrates that no mode or means of learning is neutral. Literacy is a product of the specific circumstances of its acquisition, practice, and uses and so reflects the ideologies that guide these. School literacy, in particular, is neither unbiased nor the expression of universal norms of reading and writing; it reflects the structures of authority that govern schools and their societies.

Finally, despite the apparent simplicity of the literacy myth, the historical record points to a much richer and diverse record. It underscores the multiple paths to literacy learning, the extraordinary range of instructors, institutions, and other environments, of beginning "texts" and of the diversity of motivations for learning to read and write. While mass public schooling today presents the most common route for individuals learning to read and write, the diversity of learners, including adult learners, everywhere, demands flexible understandings and pedagogies for literacy development. There is no single road to developing literacy. Different societies and cultures have taken different paths toward rising levels of literacy. This suggests that the presumed "consequences" of literacy – individual, economic, and democratic – will always be conditioned by the particulars of time, situation, and the historical moment.

Such reflections offer a more complex narrative than that of the literacy myth. They may also point toward new and different ways of understanding, using, and benefiting from the broad and still developing potentials that literacy may offer individuals and societies (Graff 1995a, b).

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Homberger. N: Researching the Continua of Biliteracy. In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Literacy and Internet Technologies

Kevin M. Leander, Cassandra Scharber, and Cynthia Lewis

> *"What I hope for you . . . [is] that you think of technology as a verb, not a noun; that poetry drives you, not hardware."* – Red Burns

Abstract

Increasing access to and usage of Internet-networked tools around the world continue to shape and change literacy practices within social and educational contexts. It is these evolving literacies, rather than the tools themselves, that ground and motivate our discussion in this chapter. We highlight historical innovations in Internet technologies and outline major contributions foundational to understanding the changing nature of literacy: multimodality, sociality, and critical digital literacies. Next, we explore the concepts of transnational identities, literacy ecologies, and gaming as fields in progress within the increasingly mobile and interconnected world. We then turn to critical social issues, including the digital divide and the ways in which the Internet continues to drive and problematize the definitions and boundaries of education, communication, and literacy. Finally, we consider future directions for the field, including emerging

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implications for research, definitions of literacy, conceptions of teaching in its relation to learning, new applications/practices, statistical images of Internet access, and celebrated projects and research studies, all of which illustrate the contemporary wired literacy landscapes of the world.

Contents

Introduction

Hashtag. Digital divide. Gamification. Selfie. Unfriend. Social networking. These technology-laden words recently added to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2014) illustrate the increasingly online nature of our lives (http://www.merriam-webster.com/new-words/2014-update.htm). Since the previous edition of this encyclopedia, the technological world has exponentially accelerated and multiplied. For example, iPads, first released by Apple only 5 years ago in January 2010, are the dominant tablet used in K12 US schools with more than 75,000 educational apps available for teachers and students. In addition, social media platforms are used actively by large numbers of people around the world (2014) (e.g., Facebook, 1.35 billion; Instagram, 300 million; Snapchat, 300 million; Twitter, 232 million; WhatsApp, 600 million). The United Nations' International Telecommunication Union (ITU) estimates that there were almost 3 billion global Internet users and 2.3 billion mobile Internet users at the end of 2014. While these numbers help provide illustrations of the increasing access to and usage of Internet-networked tools around the world, it is the ways in which these tools are shaping and changing how we connect and interact with each other that are more significant. Due to the constantly changing technological world, our literacy practices are also evolving within social/personal and educational/professional contexts. It is these new literacies, rather than the tools themselves, that ground and motivate our interests in this discussion.

A review of research in literacy and Internet technologies, broadly speaking, reveals as much about the current theoretical and ideological paradigms operating in any time period as it does about technology's relationship to literacy. Thus, prior to the beginning of our discussion, it seems important to bracket our own concerns and investments about literacy and Internet technologies. First, our treatment of technology is particularly invested in interactive and networked computing media, in contrast to stand-alone and noninteractive media. Second, we are chiefly concerned with literacy learning as not merely involving encoding and decoding, but rather participating in particular sociocultural practices and discourses leading to one's competent handling of texts. Third, our understanding of relations between literacy and Internet technologies destabilizes conventional understandings of literacy as fundamentally concerned with alphabetic print. While print remains important to practices involving literacy and Internet technologies, print functions increasingly along with other semiotic modalities in order to make meaning, including sound, icons, graphics, and video.

In addition to bracketing literacy–technology relations as networked, as sociocultural, and as multimodal, our discussion is focused on how networked technologies fundamentally change the relationships of literacy to social relations, including one's relations to one's own identity. For example, while purpose and audience have very long histories in rhetoric, assumptions and configurations of purpose and audience are transformed through dynamic use of Internet communication, and purpose and audience may be continuously remixed through chains of distribution and exchange (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001). Moreover, social relations, through texts that may have worldwide distribution, are articulated through the local and global in new ways. We describe how such formations are beginning to be practiced and researched within literacy studies, in and out of school contexts, and future directions that such work might take.

Early Developments

The prehistory of the Internet is disputed and multifaceted, as it mirrors the relationship of the Internet's prehistory to literacy practices. For instance, if we decide to focus on the development of graphical World Wide Web browsers (e.g., NCSA Mosaic in 1993), which led to the rapid public explosion of Internet activity, then we would bracket out earlier literacy environments opened up by local area networks (LANs), modems, and the like. Yet, the picture is still more complicated than the technological story permits. For instance, an important date noted in the history of multiuser dungeons (MUDs) is the writing of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings (1937), a fantasy world that "formed the basis for most early gaming systems" (Burka 1995). Over 40 years later (1978), the first MUD was developed at Essex University, where the acronym was associated with "Multiple Undergraduate Destroyer" due to its popularity among college students (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MUD). Thus, a decade and a half before the early web browsers, gamers were engaging in a text-driven world that combined elements of role-playing games with social interaction.

An extended history of literacy and Internet technologies, as they are related to education, would certainly include early practices in these pre-Internet environments.

Additionally, Minitel was launched in France in 1982 and quickly became a highly successful online service on which customers could make purchases, chat, check stock prices, make train reservations, access databases, and participate in other information and communication practices. As early as 1986, widespread access to Minitel (or Teletel) terminals resulted in several forms of educational practice in homes, schools, and university settings, including homework help lines, databases with model answers to national examination questions, and online registration for university courses (Guihot 1989).

In the USA, Seymour Papert, a renowned MIT mathematician and education scholar, published the book, *Mindstorms: Children, Computers, and Powerful Ideas* (1980), launching the movement of using computers in tandem with constructionist and constructivist approaches for learning. Papert encouraged and researched using Logo, a computer programming language, as a way to nurture mathematical concepts and problem-solving in children. In addition, an early paper, "Microcomputer Communication Networks for Education" (Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition 1982), describes the use of "non-real-time" messaging, in which teachers and students could write messages on microcomputers during the day and then send them overnight by telephone lines, saving the high cost and scheduling problems associated with real-time messaging. This group of developers described a pilot network connecting a classroom in San Diego with a classroom in rural Alaska, using Apple II computers. Early research interests included studying the complexity of discourse structures of multiple threads in online communication. They also initiated what is likely to be one of the earliest teacher education courses on literacy and information and communications technology (ICT), "Interactive Media for Education," offered at the University of California, San Diego, in 1982.

Two other areas of early work most relevant to literacy and Internet technologies include studies of reading hypertext and multimedia. Much of this work reflects the cognitive traditions that informed it in the 1980s to early 1990s. Today, online reading (its practices, definitions, forms, texts, and assessments) continues to intrigue and challenge educators as well as researchers (Coiro 2012; Leu et al. 2013).

Major Contributions

We have organized our discussion to focus on major contributions in three categories that are foundational to understanding the changing nature of literacy in relation to Internet technologies: multimodality, sociality, and critical digital literacies.

Multimodality

Although literacy has always been multimodal, contemporary literacy practices rely on an increasingly complex range of modalities. Conceptual work on technology has

considered the relationship between the visual and linguistic modes, noting the shift to complex images and simpler texts that contain fewer embedded clauses (Kress 2003). Communication technologies often blur distinctions between speech and writing, depending on aural modalities in unprecedented ways.

Many scholars have argued that reading and writing practices change with these changes in textual form and function (e.g., Knobel and Lankshear 2007; New London Group 1996). They point out that Internet technologies require readers and writers to make meaning laterally across modes, sampling the multimodal resources available to them and interpreting an array of surface features and combinations of texts, genres, and modes. Thus, reading practices associated with print (often described as linear or deep) can be viewed as one way of reading, rather than the only way to be a competent reader (Kress 2003). Moreover, as the "logic of the image" replaces the "logic of writing," there will be "far-reaching effects on the organization of communication, not just on the screen but also on the page, and on the mode of writing" (Kress and Jewett 2003, p. 16). Despite several decades of work in the area of "new" literacies, we know relatively little about how to work with and produce modally complex texts. Rowsell (2013) addresses this problem with a detailed focus on eight modes and their implications for meaning-making and production.

A good example of the shifting multimodal nature of literacy is Snapchat. To date, there are over 50 million users of Snapchat, typically between 13–23 years old with the median age being 18 (Colao 2014). Snapchat users are estimated to share between 400–700 million pictures and videos per day (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snapchat). Essentially, a photo-based, and now video-based, application, Snapchat allows users to take photos (called snaps), record 15-s videos, or send a 24-h peek into lives (knitted together snaps from one day called stories). Users add text, doodles, and filters and then send these "snaps," "stories," or videos to selected recipients. The magical part about Snapchat is that the media disappears and self-destructs – senders decide to give recipients between 1–10 s to view a snap before it disappears forever from phones and the actual servers themselves. Videos can only be viewed once – no replays. Snapchat represents another key dimension of multi-modality – not only does each mode construct meaning in different ways but the temporal and spatial affordances of the media shapes the meaning of the multimodal experience. In this case, the media's short life adds to the excitement, creativity, and intimacy of the users' experience. Snapchat is also a prime example of the increasing social nature of contemporary literacy practices.

Sociality

New technologies shape and are shaped by social relations and practices. Since they are socially mediated, particular kinds of Internet technologies afford particular types of social relations. Distinctions between offline and online worlds fall away as people shift seamlessly from digital to face-to-face contexts (Leander and McKim 2003). Once a technology becomes commonplace, people tend not to think of it as

technological. As Herring (2004) points out, young people with Internet access naturalize particular kinds of Internet technologies, such as texting, as an ordinary part of their lives. Bolter and Grusin (2000) use the term "remediate" to describe the process by which new technologies incorporate elements of established technologies. Instant messaging (IM) incorporated elements of phone exchanges and note passing, for instance, but its status as a new technology has already evolved into more mobile forms of chat and texting. It is not the computer or the Internet itself that is central to literacy, but the way that these tools of technology shape social relations and practices.

Internet technologies have been found to hold potential for the development of new social linguistic identities and relationships (Lam and Warriner 2012; McClean 2010; Burnette and Merchant 2014). In an early study of adolescents' uses of instant messaging, Lewis and Fabos (2005) found that participants manipulated the tone, voice, word choice, and subject matter of their messages to fit their social communication needs. They designed their practice to enhance social relationships and statuses across contexts, circulated texts across buddies, combated unwanted messages, assumed alternative identities, and overcame restrictions to their online communication. These functions revealed that the technological and social affordances of IM gave rise to a performative and multivoiced social subject. Digital technologies can foster affinity group connections related to common interests and shared norms over common class and race affiliations (Gee 2002). Others, however, point to the potential for online communication to perpetuate, even exacerbate, inequitable social relations and limiting social roles (Warschauer 2002).

New problems and issues for research on sociality, literacy, and Internet technologies emerge as new technologies rapidly develop, as becomes clear by considering the popularity and complexities of collaborative, cloud-based spaces. An exemplary example is Wikipedia, a free, multilingual, web-based encyclopedia project consisting of over 34 million pages that are created and updated primarily by volunteers. Born in 2001, Wikipedia's content is openly editable, which allows this online encyclopedia to continually morph, grow, and update along with world's changes. Importantly, more than 73,000 editor collectives make these changes from around the world. Wikipedia's English Wikipedia is one of more than 200 Wikipedias and contains over 4.6 million articles (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia). While Wikipedia has its flaws (e.g., the gender bias present in its editors – only 13% female), conceptually it illustrates the global, networked, collaborative nature of information and people (with 500 million unique visitors per month). Educationally, Wikipedia and wikis themselves have weathered both praise and scorn, with many teachers banning Wikipedia as a credible research reference and others using wikis to engage in collective knowledge building, writing, and meaning-making (Chandler-Olcott 2009). In fact, today cloud-based, collective writing is fast becoming a norm with Google Drive and Dropbox making documents accessible, sharable, and editable by multiple users from any Internet-connected computer. Collectively accessed, sharable, and editable video-based spaces (i.e., Google Hangouts and Skype) also contribute to the increasingly social and multimodal nature of literacies used within education, home, and work spaces.

Critical Digital Literacies

The concepts of "digital literacies" and "critical literacies" are themselves not new, but the fusion of these two concepts into a separate, distinct concept referred to as "critical digital literacies" (CDL) is swiftly coming of age in education and research arenas. Hallmarked by shifts in authority and power from and between teachers and students, CDL is enacted through participatory learning where a co-learner/co-facilitator relationship is fostered between teachers and students (Ávila and Zacher Pandya 2012). This more fluid relationship is enhanced and enacted through engaging with digital media; "we want students to be empowered to travel across both formal and informal learning environments; we also want them to define themselves, and be defined, as proficient and capable. Traveling with both critical and digital tools can make one powerful indeed" (Ávilia and Zacher Pandya 2012, p. 2). When learners are positioned as consumers, designers, and interrogators of language, media, and power, learners can "identify and work within [these] understandings. . .[and] move from awareness to action" (Hagood 2012, p. 223). For example, Dixon-Román and Gomez (2012) make the argument that is only through investigating the multiplicity of forms and ideologies of Cuban youth cultures that the future of the country can be understood. In particular, youth engaging in media-rich hop hop and reggaetón play/practices participate in critical and transformative dialogue that provides windows to the country's social, cultural, and economic pasts as well as to its future.

CDL is also expressed as "critical engagement" (Wohlwend and Lewis 2011), "pedagogies of possibilities" (Jocson 2012), and "narratives of hope and critique" (Berry and Cavallaro 2014), all referring to affect an agency as central components of critical digital literacy. Lemke (2015) describes an "amplifying" effect when students interact with media texts, wherein meanings multiply or exceed any of the separate component parts of the text, such as language or image. Similarly, Ellsworth (2004) finds that media texts set "representations into motion across emergent contexts and into event potentials" resulting in "new alignments" and "unexpected intensities" (p. 127).

Works in Progress

In the following consideration of works in progress, we feature research that is addressed toward understanding literacy and Internet technologies as related to an increasingly mobile and interconnected world.

Transnational Identities

Scholars are increasingly combining research related to immigrant youth with research on global media and transnational movements (e.g., Dahlberg and Bagga-Gupta 2014). Lam (2014) has found that Chinese immigrant youth use social media

to mobilize transnational identities across geopolitical borders within economies of exchange related to theories of social and cultural capital. Digital communication also can create cosmopolitan connections across widely diverse cultures that "upholds local commitments and takes into consideration larger arenas of concern" (Hull and Stornaiuolo 2010, p. 331). In Space2Cre8, a social network space, adolescents from different hemispheres with vastly different daily lives shared their values, realities, and concerns through digital arts-based artifacts. On the other hand, newer work is beginning to look at how the social practices of diverse ethnic groups create digital networks that are distinct and cannot be grouped into an imagined single vision of connected learning (de Haan et al. 2014). As these scholars demonstrate, digital literacy merges the producer and consumer roles, situating youth as agents who create, critique, rearticulate, and juxtapose as they consume popular forms of transmediated global culture.

Literacy Ecologies

Whereas the digital revolution and resulting divide were initially about access to these technological tools above all else (Warschauer and Matuchniak 2010), the current revolution is one of *participation*, where youth must have access to both the technology and the literacies (technical and cultural) to create, evaluate, and contribute to society (Jenkins 2009). This type of participatory culture is viewed as the basis for contemporary learning, civic engagement, and communication (Kafai and Peppler 2011; Soep 2014). Low-income youth often lag behind more well-resourced youth who regularly create digital content to participate in local and global meaning-making and communication; however, there are many programs that navigate this participation gap, including the celebrated media production company called Youth Radio (https://youthradio.org) that trains youth in news, radio, and video production (Soep and Chávez 2010).

Connected learning (Ito et al. 2013) focuses on learning "pathways" that move across formal and informal settings to transform the very nature of learning (and by extension, literacy) – what it means, how it occurs, and where it takes place (Peppler 2013). Such learning has been described as interactive, improvisational, participatory, and social (Jenkins 2009), reflecting new epistemologies and pedagogies for learning that occur in a wide array of settings. The Digital Youth Network (http://digitalyouthnetwork.org) is an example of a Chicago-based connected learning network consisting of over 22 learning spaces (Barron et al. 2014).

Institutions that support engaged learning must build bridges as well as cross institutional knowledge so they can collectively better support youth (Ito et al. 2013; Sefton-Green 2012; Shernoff 2013). These robust literacy ecologies will anchor and extend learning for the foreseeable future. Importantly, Ito et al. (2013) caution that without "a proactive reform agenda that begins with questions of equity, leverages both in-school and out-of-school learning, and embraces the opportunities new media offer for learning, we risk a growth in educational alienation by our most vulnerable populations" (p. 7).

One broad national initiative grounded in the concept of connected learning is the Learning Labs in Museums and Libraries program that is financially supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the MacArthur Foundation http://www.imls.gov/about/learning_labs.aspx. In 2011, 24 lab sites were supported by grant dollars to plan and design labs within library and museum spaces (not schools), including one unique site in Minnesota that is a joint partnership between a city's public library and its parks and recreation program (i.e., Createch Studio: http://www.urbanlibraries.org/createch-studio-pages-313.php). All labs honor the learning that occurs in these youth-centered, digitally infused lab spaces, commonly referred to as *Hanging Out, Messing Around, Geeking Out* (HOMAGO) (Ito et al. 2010). Even the design of these new learning labs is emerging as a form of new literacy practice involving multiple modalities and embodied learning (Leander and Hollett 2013).

Gaming

Gaming remains an area of continued interest for educators and researchers alike due to the potential of games to increase engagement, creativity, and authentic learning (NMC Horizon Report 2014). Video games are fast becoming a pastime of choice among many youth across the globe, involving multimediated experiences in which participants take on new identities, fight battles, go on collaborative virtual missions, take on new textual and visual identities, built art objects, and create new forms of sociality. One of the world's most popular video games with 100+ million players is Minecraft, a multiplatform game whose hallmark is its open-ended gameplay – there are no specific goals or challenges, so players can choose how they want to engage in the game. Minecraft's graphics are old school – its allure to players is the nature of the game itself; there are no instructions about how to play, so exploration, creativity, and experimentation are the keys to playing (learning). This learning also extends outside of the game itself, through collaboration with other gamers via the Minecraft wiki (http://minecraft.gamepedia.com) and forum (http://www.minecraftforum.net). Educators and researchers continue to have interest in understanding and harnessing the power of gameplay for educational arenas. Gee (2003, 2005) has authored a widely read and provocative early work on video games as venues of learning and literacy, drawing on a wide swath of current learning theories to develop 36 learning principles informing video gameplay as learning activity. Unlike much of contemporary schooling, with its division of knowledge into isolated bits, Gee argues that video games are semiotic domains that one slowly learns and can master. Steinkuehler et al. (2012) recently published an edited book on games and learning containing contributions from a wide array of worlds including academic, design, education, and industry.

New and ongoing work in game development demonstrates an important intersection between changing literacy ecologies and game design, in particular as games begin to blend online and offline, physical and digital tools and forms of mediation. Location-based technologies are increasingly being used to create interactive

environments in (and out of) classrooms, especially through augmented reality environments. Klopfer and Squire (2008) designed "Environmental Detectives," "a multiplayer, handheld augmented reality simulation game designed to support learning" in science. As an augmented reality game, students used personal digital assistants that would augment the physical world by providing a virtual layer of data accessed through the device: the data on the handheld was connected to the physical location. Similarly, Dunleavy and colleagues' "Alien Contact!" (2009) established an augmented world for students to explore as they interviewed virtual characters, collected digital items, and solved a variety of math, language, arts, and science puzzles. Such an environment allowed the researchers to investigate the ways in which teachers and students described their learning and teaching experiences in an augmented reality space.

Problems and Difficulties

In the mid-1990s, the Internet began its foray into schools, and in the digital decades that have followed, the Internet continues to drive, and at times problematize, the definitions and boundaries of education and communication, and therefore, what counts as literacy. While standardized testing in the USA tends to support and assess traditional reading and writing skills, there are other standards that outline best practices for K12 teaching, learning, and leading with technology in education. The International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) standards (http://www.iste.org/standards) are available for students, teachers, administrators, technology coaches, and computer science educators. Collectively, these standards articulate the literate practices demanded in the world today through providing direction for educational practices that better reflect the digital world. The *National Standards for English Language Arts* (2012) (http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira) are broad enough that they do not limit definitions of text to print only, thereby leaving room for expanded notions of reading and writing so that teachers and students can embrace, analyze, and construct digital texts. Taking things one step further, the current English curriculum in Australia is specifically designed so that students must be competent in digital multimodal literacy. Unsworth and Thomas (Eds., 2014) urge primary and secondary teachers and scholars to embrace new forms of narrative entwined with media through sharing practical as well as theoretical examples/ideas for the construction, sharing, and critique of multimedia narratives including *Inanimate Alice* and *Macbeth*.

Teaching strategies for intertextual reading in online environments is important, yet teachers often feel that they lack the knowledge to do so (Coiro and Castek 2010). Literacy that incorporates Internet technologies is generally left up to teachers who themselves have not been trained to read across genres and modes. Moreover, Internet technologies present the additional challenge of interactivity as part of the reading process. Although all reading involves readers interacting with texts, interactive reading is intensified online as a material feature of the reading process. Readers make decisions about text construction and organization through selection

of links and modes, among other elements of website design. In so doing, readers can be viewed as participants in the critical processes of production and analysis.

Writing instruction also needs to change in the wake of Internet technologies. In a recent PEW survey, the majority of surveyed teachers appreciate the value in utilizing digital technologies as means to facilitate writing, often "encouraging teens to write more often in more formats than may have been the case in prior generations" (Purcell et al. 2013, p. 2). The multimodality and sociality of the technology landscape have resulted in ongoing changes in writing processes and identity representations. The writing process for many digital writers does not occur as a set of stages – even recursive ones. Nonetheless, most schools and teacher education programs remain wedded to the stages of the writing process as they were established for pen and paper. Voice is another writing concept that is in flux as researchers and educators begin to understand how it functions in online writing environments. Often presented in schools as something unitary and authentic, voice in digital writing can be purposefully unstable, shifting moment to moment for many different audiences. Students would benefit from learning strategies to negotiate the performance of self in writing online for multiple audiences. Audiences in online writing are rarely the remote academic audiences of school assignments. Communicating and collaborating more often across space in real time mean that "remote" audiences become more immediate in online writing. Students need to be prepared to make effective rhetorical choices given such changes.

Finally, another ever-persistent problem in the field of education and literacy is the digital divide. This problem originally described the differences in *access* to technology between low-, middle-, and high-income people. Today, this problem is not just technological, but it is also concerned with and complicated by social and contextual factors – geographic, economic, racial, ethnic, educational, and gender demographics (Warschauer and Matuchniak 2010). For example, in 2012, while almost all of American adults had some form of Internet access (fixed or mobile), almost one-third of American homes did not have a broadband Internet connection; only 60% of rural communities had broadband connection; and 68% of White people had home broadband compared to 45% of Hispanic people (U.S. Department of Commerce 2014). Globally, while over 80% of people in Germany, France, the UK, the USA, and Canada had Internet connection in 2014, only 19% of people in India and 2% of people in Ethiopia had connection (http://www.internetlivestats.com). To obscure the divide further, it is the ways in which Internet-connected media are *used* within educational settings as well as within daily lives that continue to complicate the digital divide as well as shape contemporary definitions of literacy. Today, honing the differential abilities to use new media to critically evaluate information, analyze and interpret data, attack complex problems, test innovative solutions, manage multifaceted projects, collaborate with others in knowledge production, and communicate effectively to diverse audiences – in essence, to carry out the kinds of expert thinking and complex communication that are at the heart of the new economy (Levy and Murnane 2004) – is the most critical pedagogical and social challenge for literacy educators and researchers.

Future Directions

In a recent Pew survey (Rainie et al. 2014), over 1000 experts shared ideas about future "Internet activities and applications that might emerge in the age of gigabit connectivity." Three themes emerged as directly connected to the future/synergies between literacy and education. First, online collaboration will become more "vivid," more immersive, and much easier. Next, education sectors were named as being greatly impacted by new Internet applications. One scientist believes that "the school day will disaggregate into a number of learning sessions, some at home, some in the neighborhood, some in pairs, and some in larger groups, with different kinds of facilitators." Finally, the digital divides (old and new) will continue to persist and could be magnified. Considered together, these ideas about future Internet-related activities due to high-speed Internet connectivity will impact the types and natures of literacies used within educational contexts as well as the ways in which these literacies are honored and honed.

Coding is the latest literacy to begin weaving itself into common educational practices. Computer coding programs and research projects are just launching, both within and outside the USA (e.g., ScratchJr project @ MIT Media Lab; www.code. org; the Hour of Code initiative; www.girlswhocode.com). There is also a movement to include computer science and coding opportunities within the US K12 schools; seventeen states currently count computer science classes as math or science (not elective) credits toward graduation. Grounding the coding literacy movement is the belief that students need to learn how things work, not simply specific software or hardware. Tensions about what counts as literacy and learning in contemporary and future educational contexts will continue to challenge educators as well as researchers.

Another enduring need for ongoing research involves the development of pedagogical, theoretical, and methodological frames that will enable us to understand changing relations of power, changing constructions of identity, and changing uses of literacy. If the meaning of literacy is deictic or regularly redefined with respect to new technologies (Leu 2000), then part of what follows from this insight is that studies of individual tools and practices (e.g., iPads, VoiceThread, chatting), however helpful, must also avoid parochialism and provide theoretical and pedagogical conceptions that contribute to a broader and deeper picture of literacy/ICT co-productions. An example of a theoretical insight that might traverse specific tools is the manner in which new literacy practices are reshaping the experience of time and space. While schooling may often construct literate activity as monochromic (temporally linear, tangible, and divisible), youth often use Internet technologies in ways that treat it as polychromic (fluid, layered, and simultaneous) (Jones 2005).

This difference has implications for research as well, challenging researchers' assumptions about a single dominant temporal frame or spatial situation of literate activity. Researchers will need to continue to refine and translate, if necessary, methods and skills to conducting studies within digital environments. For example, researchers continue to discuss the methodological implications of conducting ethnographies in online spaces. Some scholars believe that online ethnography is a

distinct form of ethnography often referred to as "netnography" (Kozinets 2009), "virtual ethnography" (Hine 2000), and "expanded ethnography" (Beneito-Montagut 2011). These scholars are interested in (re)constructing and (re)defining the concepts of presence, field observations, time, and place/boundaries (Leander and McKim 2003). Similarly, Landri (2013) advocates for an emerging form of educational ethnography that shifts its centrality away from people to the network (s) of relationships. Other scholars discuss nuances in ethnographic methods but maintain that making distinctions between offline, blended, and online social worlds is not necessary (Baker 2013; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Stornaiuolo and Hall (2014) point to challenges when exploring digital learning spaces including tracing cross contextual meaning-making and managing data multiplicity in the mobile, multi-sited, on-and-off screen work that literacy studies now typically entails. Collectively, these scholars take up the blurriness of our contemporary lives that is lived across virtual and material spaces and communities.

Educational fads appear and disappear frequently and with great abandon. Increasingly, these fads are related to technological tools or Internet-based environments (e.g., flipped classrooms, iPads, MOOCS) and boast fixes for education's perceived woes. Spence's (2001) metaphor of technology itself being "an internal combustion engine on the back of a horse and buggy" captures the essence of the underlying issue with technological fads in education – many times these technologies (i.e., the engine) simply encourage the same approaches to teaching and learning (i.e., the horse and buggy) that have been used for centuries rather than facilitate a re-imagination of contemporary and future teaching, learning, and literacy practices. Scharber (2014) advocates for an updated teaching and learning metaphor that may be more complementary for the engines of technology – the 1981 DeLorean featured in the film, *Back to the Future* (1985). This car is actually a time machine that can travel easily between past, present, and future. Like the car as time machine, modern schooling often requires teachers and students to move between contemporary and traditional educational practices, sometimes even in the space of one class session. As with the DeLorean, constant maneuvering is necessary with educational practices due to constantly updated engines and fluctuating expectations. While our DeLorean time machine will enable teachers and students to move back and forth in time, we must keep our visions for education future oriented. As Doc says to Marty in the final scene of the film before they head off to the future, "Roads? Where we're going, we don't need roads."

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BICS and CALP: Empirical and Theoretical Status of the Distinction

Jim Cummins

Abstract

The distinction between basic interpersonal conversational skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) drew attention to the very different time periods typically required by immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in the school language as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language. The distinction also highlighted the problematic educational consequences of conflating social and academic language. The BICS/CALP distinction was embedded within a broader framework that specified the role of societal power relations in framing both the organization of schooling and teacher-student identity negotiation. It is argued that the distinction is consistent with a wide range of research and has also proven effective in generating positive changes in educational practice and policy in relation to culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Contents

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Introduction

The distinction between *basic interpersonal communicative skills* (BICS) and *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP) was introduced by Cummins (1979, 1981a) in order to draw educators' attention to the timelines and challenges that second-language learners encounter as they attempt to catch up to their peers in academic aspects of the school language. BICS refer to conversational fluency in a language, while CALP refers to students' ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school. The terms conversational fluency and academic language proficiency are used interchangeably with BICS and CALP in the remainder of this chapter.

Initially, I describe the origins, rationale, and evolution of the distinction together with its empirical foundations. I then discuss its relationship to similar theoretical constructs that have been proposed in different contexts and for different purposes. Finally, I analyze and respond to critiques of the distinction and discuss the relationship of the distinction to the emerging field of New Literacy Studies (e.g., Barton 1994; Street 1995).

Early Developments

Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976) initially brought attention to the fact that Finnish immigrant children in Sweden often appeared to educators to be fluent in both Finnish and Swedish but still showed levels of verbal academic performance in both languages considerably below grade/age expectations. The BICS/CALP distinction highlighted a similar reality and formalized the difference between conversational fluency and academic language proficiency as conceptually distinct components of the construct of "language proficiency." Because this was a conceptual distinction rather than an overall theory of "language proficiency," there was never any suggestion that these were the only important or relevant components of that construct.

The initial theoretical intent of the BICS/CALP distinction was to qualify Oller's (1979) claim that all individual differences in language proficiency could be accounted for by just one underlying factor, which he termed *global language proficiency*. Oller synthesized a considerable amount of data showing strong correlations between performance on cloze tests of reading, standardized reading tests, and measures of oral verbal ability (e.g., vocabulary measures). Cummins (1979), however, argued that it is problematic to incorporate all aspects of language use or performance into just one dimension of general or global language proficiency. For example, if we take two monolingual English-speaking siblings, a 12-year-old child and a 6-year-old, there are enormous differences in these children's ability to read and write English and in the depth and breadth of their vocabulary knowledge, but minimal differences in their phonology or basic fluency. The 6-year-old can understand virtually everything that is likely to be said to her in everyday social contexts, and she can use language very effectively in these contexts, just as the 12-year-old

can. In other words, some aspects of children's first language development (e.g., phonology) reach a plateau relatively early, whereas other aspects (e.g., vocabulary knowledge) continue to develop throughout our lifetimes. Thus, these very different aspects of proficiency cannot be considered to reflect just one unitary proficiency dimension.

CALP or academic language proficiency develops through social interaction from birth but becomes differentiated from BICS after the early stages of schooling to reflect primarily the language that children acquire in school and which they need to use effectively if they are to progress successfully through the grades. The notion of CALP is specific to the social context of schooling, hence the term "academic." Academic language proficiency can thus be defined as "the extent to which an individual has access to and command of the oral and written academic registers of schooling" (Cummins 2000, p. 67).

The relevance of the BICS/CALP distinction for bilingual students' academic development was reinforced by two research studies (Cummins 1980, 1981b) showing that educators and policy-makers frequently conflated conversational and academic dimensions of English language proficiency and that this conflation contributed significantly to the creation of academic difficulties for students who were learning English as an additional language (EAL).

The first study (Cummins 1980, 1984) involved an analysis of more than 400 teacher referral forms and psychological assessments carried out on EAL students in a large Canadian school system. The teacher referral forms and psychological assessment reports showed that teachers and psychologists often assumed that children had overcome all difficulties with English when they could converse easily in the language. Yet these children frequently performed poorly on English academic tasks within the classroom (hence the referral for assessment) as well as on the verbal scales of the cognitive ability test administered as part of the psychological assessment. Many students were designated as having language or communication disabilities despite the fact that they had been in Canada for a relatively short amount of time (e.g., 1–3 years). Thus, the conflation of second-language (L2) conversational fluency with L2 academic proficiency contributed directly to the inappropriate placement of bilingual students in special education programs.

The need to distinguish between conversational fluency and academic aspects of L2 performance was further highlighted by the reanalysis of language performance data from the Toronto Board of Education (Cummins 1981b). These data showed that there was a gap of several years, on average, between the attainment of peer-appropriate fluency in English and the attainment of grade norms in academic aspects of English. Conversational aspects of proficiency reached peer-appropriate levels usually within about 2 years of exposure to English, but a period of 5–7 years was required, on average, for immigrant students to approach grade norms in academic aspects of English (e.g., vocabulary knowledge).

The differential time periods required to attain peer-appropriate L2 conversational fluency as compared to meeting grade expectations in academic language proficiency have been corroborated in many research studies carried out during the past 30 years in Canada (Klesmer 1994), Europe (Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle 1978),

Israel (Shohamy et al. 2002), and the United States (Hakuta et al. 2000; Thomas and Collier 2002).

The following example from the psychological assessment study (Cummins 1980, 1984) illustrates how these implicit assumptions about the nature of language proficiency can directly affect the academic trajectories and life chances of bilingual students:

> *PR (289)*. PR was referred in first grade by the school principal who noted that "PR is experiencing considerable difficulty with grade one work. An intellectual assessment would help her teacher to set realistic learning expectations for her and might provide some clues as to remedial assistance that might be offered."

No mention was made of the fact that the child was learning English as a second language; this only emerged when the child was referred by the second grade teacher in the following year. Thus, the psychologist does not consider this as a possible factor in accounting for the discrepancy between a verbal IQ of 64 and a performance (nonverbal) IQ of 108. The assessment report reads as follows:

> Although overall ability level appears to be within the low average range, note the significant difference between verbal and nonverbal scores. … It would appear that PR's development has not progressed at a normal rate and consequently she is, and will continue to experience much difficulty in school. Teacher's expectations at this time should be set accordingly.

What is interesting in this example is that the child's English communicative skills are presumably sufficiently well developed that the psychologist (and possibly the teacher) is not alerted to the child's EAL background. This leads the psychologist to infer from her low verbal IQ score that "her development has not progressed at a normal rate" and to advise the teacher to set low academic expectations for the child since she "will continue to experience much difficulty in school."

During the 1980s and 1990s in the United States, exactly the same misconception about the nature of language proficiency underlay the frequent early exit of bilingual students from English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual programs into mainstream English-only programs on the basis of the fact that they had "acquired English." Many of these students experienced academic difficulties within the mainstream class because no supports were in place to assist them to understand instruction and continue their development of English academic skills.

The relevance of the BICS/CALP distinction is illustrated in Vincent's (1996) ethnographic study of second-generation Salvadorean students in Washington, D.C. Vincent points out that the children in her study began school in an English-speaking environment and "within their first two or three years attained conversational ability in English that teachers would regard as native-like" (p. 195). She suggests, however, that this fluency is largely deceptive:

> The children seem to have much greater English proficiency than they actually do because their spoken English has no accent and they are able to converse on a few everyday, frequently discussed subjects. Academic language is frequently lacking. Teachers actually

spend very little time talking with individual children and tend to interpret a small sample of speech as evidence of full English proficiency. (p. 195)

BICS/CALP made no claim to be anything more than a conceptual distinction. It provided a way of (a) naming and talking about the classroom realities that Vincent (1996) discusses and (b) highlighting the discriminatory assessment and instructional practices experienced by many bilingual students.

Evolution of the Theoretical Constructs

The initial BICS/CALP distinction was elaborated into two intersecting continua (Cummins 1981a) that highlighted the range of cognitive demands and contextual support involved in particular language tasks or activities (context embedded/context reduced, cognitively undemanding/cognitively demanding). Internal and external dimensions of context were distinguished to reflect the fact that "context" is constituted both by what we bring to a task (e.g., our prior knowledge, interests, and motivation) and the range of supports that may be incorporated in the task itself (e.g., visual supports such as graphic organizers). This "quadrants" framework stimulated discussion of the instructional environment required to enable EAL students to catch up academically as quickly as possible. Specifically, it was argued that effective instruction for EAL students should focus primarily on context-embedded and cognitively demanding tasks. It was also recognized, however, that these dimensions cannot be specified in absolute terms because what is "context embedded" or "cognitively demanding" for one learner may not be so for another as a result of differences in internal attributes such as prior knowledge or interest (Coelho 2012; Cummins 1981a).

The BICS/CALP distinction was maintained within this elaboration and related to the theoretical distinctions of several other theorists (e.g., Bruner's (1975) communicative and analytic competence, Donaldson's (1978) embedded and disembedded language, and Olson's (1977) utterance and text). The terms used by different investigators have varied, but the essential distinction refers to the extent to which the meaning being communicated is strongly supported by contextual or interpersonal cues (such as gestures, facial expressions, and intonation present in face-to-face interaction) or supported primarily by linguistic cues. The term "context reduced" was used rather than "decontextualized" in recognition of the fact that all language and literacy practices are contextualized; however, the range of supports to meaning in many academic contexts (e.g., textbook reading) is reduced in comparison to the contextual support available in face-to-face contexts.

In later accounts of the framework (Cummins 2000, 2001), the distinction between conversational fluency and academic language proficiency was related to the work of several other theorists. For example, Gibbons' (1991) distinction between *playground language* and *classroom language* highlighted in a particularly clear manner the linguistic challenges of classroom language demands. She notes that playground language includes the language which "enables children to make

friends, join in games and take part in a variety of day-to-day activities that develop and maintain social contacts" (p. 3). She points out that this language typically occurs in face-to-face situations and is highly dependent on the physical and visual context and on gesture and body language. However, classroom language is very different from playground language:

> The playground situation does not normally offer children the opportunity to use such language as: *if we increase the angle by 5 degrees, we could cut the circumference into equal parts.* Nor does it normally require the language associated with the higher order thinking skills, such as hypothesizing, evaluating, inferring, generalizing, predicting or classifying. Yet these are the language functions which are related to learning and the development of cognition; they occur in all areas of the curriculum, and without them a child's potential in academic areas cannot be realized. (1991, p. 3)

The research of Biber (1986) and Corson (1997) also provides evidence of the linguistic reality of the distinction. Corson highlighted the enormous lexical differences between typical conversational interactions in English and academic or literacy-related uses of English. The high-frequency everyday lexicon of English conversation derives predominantly from Anglo-Saxon sources, while the relatively lower-frequency academic vocabulary is primarily Greco-Latin in origin (see also Coxhead 2000).

Similarly, Biber's (1986) factor analysis of more than one million words of English speech and written text from a wide variety of genres revealed underlying dimensions very consistent with the distinction between conversational and academic aspects of language proficiency. For example, when factor scores were calculated for the different text types on each factor, telephone and face-to-face conversations were at opposite extremes from official documents and academic prose on Textual Dimensions 1 and 2 (interactive vs. edited text and abstract vs. situated content).

Conversational and academic language registers were also related to Gee's (1990) distinction between *primary* and *secondary* discourses (Cummins 2001). Primary discourses are acquired through face-to-face interactions in the home and represent the language of initial socialization. Secondary discourses are acquired in social institutions beyond the family (e.g., school, business, religious, and cultural contexts) and involve acquisition of specialized vocabulary and functions of language appropriate to those settings. Secondary discourses can be oral or written and are equally central to the social life of nonliterate and literate cultures. Examples of secondary discourse common in many nonliterate cultures are the conventions of storytelling or the language of marriage or burial rituals which are passed down through oral tradition from one generation to the next. Within this conception, academic language proficiency represents an individual's access to and command of the specialized vocabulary and functions of language that are characteristic of the social institution of schooling. The secondary discourses of schooling are no different in principle than the secondary discourse of other spheres of human endeavor, for example, avid amateur gardeners and professional horticulturalists have acquired vocabulary related to plants and flowers far beyond the knowledge of those not

involved in this sphere of activity. What makes acquisition of the secondary discourses associated with schooling so crucial, however, is that the life chances of individuals are directly determined by the degree of expertise they acquire in understanding and using this language.

Other ways in which the original BICS/CALP distinction has evolved include:

- The addition of *discrete language skills* as a component of language proficiency that is distinct from both conversational fluency and academic language proficiency (Cummins 2001). Discrete language skills involve the learning of rule-governed aspects of language (including phonology, grammar, and spelling) where acquisition of the general case permits generalization to other instances governed by that particular rule. Discrete language skills can sometimes be learned in virtual isolation from the development of academic language proficiency as illustrated in the fact that some students who can "read" English fluently may have only a very limited understanding of the words they can decode.
- The embedding of the BICS/CALP distinction within a broader framework of academic development in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts that specifies the role of societal power relations in framing teacher-student interactions and determining the social organization of schooling (Cummins 1986, 2001). Teacher-student interactions are seen as a process of negotiating identities, reflecting to varying degrees coercive or collaborative relations of power in the wider society. This socialization process within the school determines the extent to which students will engage academically and gain access to the academic registers of schooling.

Contributions of the BICS/CALP Distinction to Policy and Practice

Since its initial articulation, the distinction between BICS and CALP has influenced both policy and practice related to the instruction and assessment of second-language learners. It has been invoked, for example, in policy discussions related to:

- The amount and duration of funding necessary to support students who are learning English as an additional language.
- The kinds of instructional support that EAL students need at different stages of their acquisition of conversational and academic English.
- The inclusion of EAL students in nationally mandated high-stakes testing, for example, should EAL students be exempt from taking high-stakes tests, and, if so, for how long – 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 years after arrival in the host country?
- The extent to which psychological testing of EAL students for diagnostic purposes through their L2 is valid and ethically defensible.

The distinction is discussed in numerous books that aim to equip educators with the understanding and skills required to teach and assess linguistically diverse students (e.g., Cline and Frederickson 1996, in the United Kingdom; Coelho 2012,

in Canada; Diaz-Rico and Weed 2002, in the United States) and has been invoked to interpret data from a range of sociolinguistic and educational contexts (e.g., Broom's (2004) research on reading English in multilingual South African schools). The focus on academic language as conceptually distinct from everyday conversational language is also consistent with the strong emphasis on sustained and explicit teaching of academic language in the recently implemented Common Core State Standards in the United States (Council of Great City Schools 2014).

Critiques of the BICS/CALP Distinction

The BICS/CALP distinction has also been critiqued by numerous scholars who see it as oversimplified (e.g., Scarcella 2003; Valdés 2004), reflective of an "autonomous" rather than an "ideological" notion of literacy (Wiley 1996), an artifact of "test-wiseness" (Edelsky et al. 1983; Martin-Jones and Romaine 1986), and a "deficit theory" that attributes bilingual students' academic difficulties to their "low CALP" (e.g., Edelsky 1990; Edelsky et al. 1983; MacSwan 2000).

In response to these critiques, Cummins and Swain (1983) and Cummins (2000) pointed out that the construct of academic language proficiency does not in any way depend on test scores to support either its construct validity or relevance to education. This is illustrated in Vincent's (1996) ethnographic study and Biber's (1986) research on the English lexicon discussed above. Furthermore, the BICS/CALP distinction has been integrated since 1986 with a detailed sociopolitical analysis of how schools construct academic failure among subordinated groups. The framework documents educational approaches that challenge this pattern of coercive power relations and promote the generation of power and the development of academic expertise in interactions between educators and students (Cummins 2001; Cummins and Early 2015).

The broader issues in this debate go beyond the specific interpretations of the distinction between conversational fluency and academic language proficiency. They concern the nature of theoretical constructs and their intersection with research, policy, and practice. Theories must be consistent with the empirical data to have any claim to validity. However, any set of theoretical constructs represents only one of potentially many ways of organizing or viewing the data. Theories frame phenomena and provide interpretations of empirical data within particular contexts and for particular purposes. However, no theory is "valid" or "true" in any absolute sense. A theory represents a way of viewing phenomena that may be relevant and useful in varying degrees depending on its purpose, how well it communicates with its intended audience, and the consequences for practice of following through on its implications (its "consequential validity"). The generation of knowledge (theory) is always dialogical, and just as oral and written language is meaningless outside of a human communicative and interpretive context, so too theoretical constructs assume meaning only within specific dialogical contexts (Cummins 2000).

Thus, the BICS/CALP distinction was initially formulated to address certain theoretical issues (e.g., whether "language proficiency" could legitimately be viewed

as a unitary construct, as Oller (1979) proposed) and to interpret empirical data related to the time periods required for immigrant students to catch up academically. It spoke directly to prejudicial policies and practices that were denying students access to equitable and effective learning opportunities.

Much of the criticism of the distinction derives from taking the constructs out of their original dialogical or discursive context and arguing that they are not useful or appropriate in a very different dialogical context. This can be illustrated in Scarcella's (2003) critique. She argues that the dichotomous conceptualization of language incorporated in the BICS/CALP distinction "is not useful for understanding the complexities of academic English or the multiple variables affecting its development" (p. 5). Both BICS and CALP are more complex than a binary distinction implies. She points out that some aspects of BICS are acquired late and some aspects of CALP are acquired early. Furthermore, some variables such as phonemic awareness (sensitivity to sounds in spoken words) are related to the development of both BICS and CALP (e.g., in helping readers to access difficult academic words). She concludes that the distinction is "of limited practical value, since it fails to operationalize tasks and therefore does not generate tasks that teachers can use to help develop their students' academic English.... the BICS/CALP perspective does not provide teachers with sufficient information about academic English to help their students acquire it" (p. 6).

Scarcella goes on to elaborate a detailed framework for conceptualizing academic language and generating academic tasks that is certainly far more useful and appropriate for this purpose than the notion of CALP. What she fails to acknowledge, however, is that the BICS/CALP distinction was not formulated as a tool to generate academic tasks. It addresses a very different set of theoretical, policy, and classroom instructional issues. Scarcella's critique is analogous to rejecting an apple because it is not an orange.

Related to Scarcella's critique are concerns (Valdés 2004; Wiley (1996) that the conversational fluency/academic language proficiency distinction reflects an "autonomous" view of language and literacy that is incompatible with the perspective of New Literacies theorists that language and literacy represent social and cultural practices that are embedded in a context of historical and current power relations (e.g., Barton 1994; Street 1995). As expressed by Valdés (2004, p. 115):

> The view that there are multiple literacies rather than a single literacy, that these literacies depend on the context of the situation, the activity itself, the interactions between participants, and the knowledge and experiences that these various participants bring to these interactions is distant from the view held by most L2 educators who still embrace a technocratic notion of literacy and emphasise the development of decontextualised skills.

There is nothing in the BICS/CALP distinction that is inconsistent with this perspective on language and literacy practices. It makes no claim to focus on any context other than that of the school. Furthermore, the pedagogical practices that have been articulated to support the development of academic expertise (CALP) are far from the decontextualized drills appropriately castigated by numerous

researchers and educators. They include a focus on critical literacy and critical language awareness together with enabling EAL and bilingual students to generate new knowledge, create literature and art, and act on social realities, all of which directly address issues of identity negotiation and societal power relations (Cummins 2001).

One can accept the perspective that literacies are multiple, contextually specific, and constantly evolving (as I do), while at the same time arguing that in certain discursive contexts, it is useful to distinguish between conversational fluency and academic language proficiency. To illustrate, the fact that the concept of "European" can be broken down into an almost infinite array of national, regional, and social identities does not invalidate the more general descriptor of "European." In some discursive contexts and for some purposes, it is legitimate and useful to describe an individual or a group as "European" despite the fact that it greatly oversimplifies the complex reality of "Europeanness." Similarly, in certain discursive contexts and for certain purposes, it is legitimate and useful to talk about conversational fluency and academic language proficiency despite the fact that these constructs incorporate multiple levels of complexity.

Clearly, theorists operating from a New Literacies perspective have contributed important insights into the nature and functions of literacy. However, this does not mean that a New Literacies perspective is the best or only way to address all questions of literacy development. For example, highlighting the social and contextually specific dimensions of cognition does not invalidate a research focus on what may be happening inside the heads of individuals as they perform cognitive or linguistic tasks. There are many important questions and research studies associated with first- and second-language literacy development that owe little to New Literacy Studies but have played a central role in policy discussions related to equity in education. Research studies on how long it typically takes EAL students to catch up to grade norms in English academic proficiency have, within the context of the research, focused on literacy as an autonomous skill measured by standardized tests but have nevertheless contributed in substantial ways to promoting equity in schooling for bilingual students.

Future Directions

The BICS/CALP distinction was not proposed as an overall theory of language proficiency but as a very specific conceptual distinction that has important implications for policy and practice. It has drawn attention to specific ways in which educators' assumptions about the nature of language proficiency and the development of L2 proficiency have prejudiced the academic development of bilingual students. However, the distinction is likely to remain controversial, reflecting the fact that there is no cross-disciplinary consensus regarding the nature of language proficiency and its relationship to academic development.

The most productive direction to orient further research on this topic, and one that can be supported by all scholars, is to focus on creating instructional and learning

environments that maximize the language and literacy development of socially marginalized students. Because academic language is found primarily in written texts, it is not surprising that extensive engaged reading has emerged as a crucial component of an effective learning environment (Cummins and Early 2015; Guthrie 2004). Opportunities for collaborative learning and talk about text are also extremely important in helping students internalize and more fully comprehend the academic language they find in their extensive reading of text.

Writing for authentic purposes is also crucial because when bilingual students write about issues that matter to them, they not only consolidate aspects of the academic language they have been reading, but they also express their identities through language and (hopefully) receive feedback from teachers and others that will affirm and further develop their expression of self (Cummins and Early 2015). Deeper understanding of the nature of academic language and its relationship both to conversational fluency and other forms of literacy will emerge from teachers, students, and researchers working together in instructional contexts collaboratively pushing (and documenting) the boundaries of language and literacy exploration.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

K. Hazen: Variationist Approaches to Language and Education. In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Reading Attitudes, Interests, and Practices

John Edwards

Abstract

The academic literature on reading is largely of a technical nature, most of it having to do with learning.

The degree and type of reading that are done, however, and the motivations and purposes that underpin actual usage, remain less studied.

Yet it could be argued that, once some basic fluency has been established, these factors – which we could put under the general rubric of the social psychology of reading – assume central importance. This chapter summarizes some of the relevant work in the field. Some is narrowly empirical but most involves medium- to large-scale survey approaches.

The chapter concludes by suggesting some fruitful lines for future research.

Keywords

Reading attitudes • Aliteracy • Functional literacy • Leisure reading • Reading: competing influences

Contents

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Introduction

The social psychology, or sociology, of reading remains a relatively small part of a vast literature largely concerned with skill acquisition and development. This is curious for two reasons. First, it is obvious that both teachers and researchers do not want merely to facilitate reading ability –they hope to form and maintain reading habits. Second, there are regular laments – as perennial as grumblings over the inadequacies of the younger generation – about low levels of reading, poor attitudes, lack of enthusiasm, and so on. Indeed, surveys often suggest a gulf between reading ability and reading practices; in many contemporary societies, the essential problem seems to be *aliteracy* rather than *illiteracy* (see later). On both counts, then, questions of what people read, how much they read, and the purposes and effects of their reading surely assume central importance.

Attention to the social psychology of reading is even more timely in a postmodern era that has reinterpreted the roles of author and reader. Nell (1988) touched upon the "new criticism" underpinned by a relativism that suggests that the book is essentially created by the reader (Tinker 1965), that a book is "a relationship, an axis of innumerable relationships" (Borges 1964, p. 13), that "the reader makes literature" (Fish 1980, p. 11). The degree to which this criticism has taken hold in academe is indicated by even more modern attempts to reclaim ground for the "common reader," to reestablish the centrality of the aesthetic qualities of (fiction) reading, and to cast aside those professional "isms" that have turned reading into a job requiring doctoral qualifications (see Bloom 2000; Edmundson 2004).[1]

The book itself has also been defended in recent years, in the face of challenges from the electronic media and arguments for a digitized and book-less chiliasm (see Negroponte 1995). Thus, for example, Birkerts (1994) defended the more traditional pleasures and values of the text. Of course, words on computer screens, like words in books, are *read* – but it is fair to say that the act of reading, constant for many centuries, is undergoing considerable change, and the essence of this change is social and psychological. (It is interesting to note here that the pervasiveness of the "e-book" has turned out to be less than complete: see the commentaries by Max 1994, 2000.)

Although the proportion of illiterate people has been in steady decline for some time, an increase in absolute numbers means that one-third of the world's population can still neither read nor write. In "developed" societies, however, the problem of illiteracy *tout court* is less significant than that of so-called functional literacy, some socially meaningful ability that goes beyond elementary skills (see Oxenham 1980).

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[1]Both the "professionalization" of literature and arguments against it have quite a long history. The teaching of English literature, for example, was generally resisted by the academy until the mid-nineteenth century (later still in Oxford and Cambridge) – on the grounds that it was of insufficient depth but also because of apprehensions about the baleful influence of "experts." On the other hand, as early as 1927, Forster heaved a regretful sigh that "the novel tells a story . . . I wish that it was not so." The story "runs like a backbone – or may I say a tapeworm" supporting other "finer growths" (p. 45). Here we have the disdain for the obvious – and the obviously appealing – that has so distressed the "common reader" ever since; see also the Leavis influence, later.

Several surveys have suggested that, in Europe and North America, as much as a quarter of the population may have difficulty with mundane but important tasks like understanding road signs or product-warning labels (Creative Research Group 1987; Edwards 1991; Kozol 1985; OECD 2000).

In many modern societies, *aliteracy* (Maeroff 1982; Neuman 1986) is as much an issue as functional literacy. It is certainly more compelling in a social-psychological sense, because the question here is why some of those who *can* read *don't* read. The term may be new, but the phenomenon (as implied earlier) is old, and if television is the major modern villain of the piece, other distractions once came readily to hand, most of them actually still with us in one form or another – radio and cinema, of course, but also spectator sports and popular music. The last two have very long histories indeed, while the ubiquity of what commentators have referred to as "manufactured mass culture" is a more modern development (Edwards 1981). It is true, of course, that many of the commentators here have had particularly snobbish axes to grind – thus, when Queenie Leavis observed (in 1932) that "the reading capacity of the general public . . . has never been so low as at the present time" (p. 231), she was reflecting the "higher Leavisite criticism," which reflects, of course, the idea that, in reading as in other areas, there is a "high" culture and a "low" one and that there are critics whose particular perspicacity enables them to illuminate the differences. The real problem for such self-appointed arbiters is not that people don't read; it's that they don't read anything worthwhile. This attitude can still be detected, wherever debate rages over issues of reading "quality," and there is a double psychological import here: on the one hand, such *de haut en bas* attitudes are, in themselves, worthy of analysis; on the other, questions of reading "quality," of whether *all* reading should be encouraged, of whether early tastes for "popular" literature can be expected to refine themselves over time, and so on – these are real enough matters.

Early Developments

Some early work has been unjustifiably neglected – possibly because the area has yet to achieve much theoretical coherence. Waples and Tyler (1931), for example, made a fairly comprehensive examination of topics of reading interest, and a subsequent publication (Waples et al. 1940) dealt with the complexity of adult reading responses. The authors also advocated the use of the case-study method to probe more deeply into reading practices, habits, and attitudes, and this was taken up by Strang (1942). Leavis's very personal study (1932) has already been referred to; when it first appeared, it evoked a large critical response. Interested in developments in fiction and its readership since the eighteenth century, Leavis proceeded with what she termed an "anthropological" method. Few would describe it that way today, but Leavis did conduct a survey of sorts, as well as examining library and bookshop choices (see also Rose 2001). A more systematic, if drier, approach is that of Link and Hopf (1946), who considered who reads, what kinds of books are read, what competitors for readers' attention exist, and how (and why) people go about

choosing their books. Beyond these – and beyond the highly personal commentaries of literary critics and authors – some of the most useful early insights are to be found in general treatments of the intellectual and leisure habits of the "masses" [Hoggart's work (1957, 1995) immediately comes to mind, but the later overview by Rose (2001) is particularly recommended].

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

In the late 1970s, Greaney and his associates began to pay rather more systematic attention to the social aspects of reading. Greaney (1980), for example, found that the amount and type of leisure reading were related to such variables as basic ability, sex, socioeconomic status, family size, and primary-school type (see also Greaney and Hegarty 1987). Greaney and Neuman (1990) also investigated the functions of reading, in a study of children in more than a dozen countries: utility, enjoyment, and escape were the three recurring motivations, and it was found that girls rated the second factor more positively than did boys (sex differences, particularly in the early years, are a consistent finding in the literature). The survey work of Anderson and his colleagues (Anderson et al. 1985), particularly that dealing with children's reading habits vis-à-vis other leisure-time activities (see also Anderson et al. 1988), draws upon the investigations by Greaney and others and suggests low levels of leisure reading. In terms of intervention, Neuman (1999) has adapted the "book flood" idea (see Ingham 1981) from primary schools in England to day-care centers in the USA. The concept is straightforward – make a large number of books available to economically disadvantaged children – and the results are encouraging. (The advantages of what Neuman calls the "physical proximity" of books, coupled with appropriate adult support and guidance, are borne out in most reading surveys and well understood by all enlightened parents.)

Nell's (1988) interesting investigation of "ludic" (i.e., pleasure) reading has been reasonably criticized for its psychoanalytic bent and its methodological difficulties while, at the same time, praised as establishing a base from which further study of ludic reading might proceed (see Venezky 1990). Nell's most important contribution is his documentation of "escapist" reading (reading "fever," as one respondent put it): in one of the families he studied, the father claimed to read 30 books a month, the mother read 25, and the two daughters read 18 and 28.

Large-scale survey work has also continued. In 1993, the Roehampton Institute in London launched the pilot phase of a survey of 8,000 British children's reading habits: a report on the pilot project (involving 320 children) was published in 1994 (Children's Literature Research Centre 1994), and the full report appeared in 1996. Among the important findings, boys read less than girls (particularly as they get older), patterns of reading interests (boys like adventure stories more than romances; girls prefer animal stories to science fiction) are remarkably resilient, and it is much too simplistic to blame television and computer games for depressed levels of reading (indeed, the study endorses earlier suggestions that "voluntary readers tend to be active in other pursuits" (p. 116) and these can include television viewing). Hall

and Coles' (1999) survey of about 8,000 English 10- to 14-year-olds – in some ways an updating of earlier investigations by Whitehead et al. (1974, 1977) – also illustrated the relationships between family socioeconomic status and reading, between pleasure reading and television viewing (while those who read most watch least, some of the "heaviest" readers are also avid viewers), and between gender and reading (girls read more than boys, have more positive feelings about reading, and enjoy their reading more). Broadly similar results were reported by McKenna et al. (1995) in their study of more than 18,000 American primary-school children. Worrying age and gender gaps in reading were also revealed in a province-wide survey in Ontario: at the third-grade level, 69% of boys and 83% of girls said they enjoyed reading; by the sixth grade, these proportions had decreased to 55% and 71%, respectively (EQAO 1999).

Some of the most recent findings illustrate the continuing difficulties in assessing reading habits. In its dourly titled *Reading at Risk* (2004), the (American) National Endowment for the Arts reported that book reading had declined over the previous 20 years and that this decline was sharpest for "literary reading" – the report speaks of "imminent cultural crisis" and a "rising tide of mediocrity," arguing that "at the current rate of loss, literary reading as a leisure activity will virtually disappear in half a century" (p. xiii). The word "literary" is key here, since the NEA survey only concerned itself with fiction, plays, and poetry (not counting, that is to say, the apparently growing taste for non-fiction); as well, no weighting was made for "quality" (see also Bauerlein 2005). A Canadian government-commissioned report found that the amount spent on books (in 2001) was exceeded only by that on newspapers and cinemas; however, the average annual outlay was less than $200 – not very much for, say, a family of four and when a new book can easily cost $40 – and fewer than half of all Canadian households bought any books at all (Hill Strategies 2005). Another Canadian survey (Créatec 2005) has recently found that – although the ratio of reading to television viewing is about 1:5 – almost 90% of adults reported themselves as regular readers. A perceptive commentator (Taylor 2005) asked how one could reconcile this percentage with the fact (noted earlier) that one in four people lacks full functional literacy – and two main points suggest themselves, one substantive and the other methodological. First, there is again the matter of "quality." This is not simply a question of trying to argue that Charles Dickens should count while Danielle Steel should not; Taylor notes, for instance, that comics and joke books can qualify as reading material. Second, most surveys depend upon self-reported data, and, in many instances, the "interview" is a matter of a brief telephone call. These two issues are, in fact, common across survey findings.

There are relatively few investigations that have combined large respondent numbers with detailed assessment instruments. Some recent work in Nova Scotia, however, falls into this category. (Simple statistics on gross levels of magazine, newspaper, and book reading have shown that Nova Scotia is a good reflection of the larger Canadian picture – which, in turn, is broadly similar to that in other "developed" countries: see, e.g., Ekos 1991.) In a pilot survey of university students and teachers, Walker (1990) found that, overall, reading for pleasure was not a generally favored leisure activity and that material read was largely of a "light" or ephemeral nature. There was a small group

of very active, or "core," readers, and significant sex differences emerged with regard to both the quantity and the type of reading done. Walker also reported that the presence of books at home, being read to as a child, and parental value placed upon reading per se were important determinants of reading habits.

The more comprehensive follow-up study (Edwards 1999) involved some 875 students (from the upper grades in both primary and secondary schools), 1,700 parents, and 625 teachers. The questionnaires administered to these three groups, while not exactly the same, were designed to produce complementary and interlocking information; the questions asked reflected a close reading of the existing literature. Teachers and parents were asked for information about their own reading habits and attitudes and, as well, to give us their perceptions of children's reading practices. The information elicited on the questionnaires dealt with demographic factors (age, sex, family size, income level, and occupation), with overall school achievement patterns and subject preferences and with focused probing of reading ability, attitudes, and practices (involving such variables as time spent reading, quantity and type of material read, factors influencing reading choices, home and school encouragement of reading, home reading practices, reading related to other leisure-time pursuits, and so on). Beyond categorical and scaled responses, qualitative data were also elicited (e.g., lists of favorite books, magazines, and authors). Allowing for multiple-section questions, each respondent answered well over 100 queries.

I will touch here upon some of the findings from the children's survey. It is of course impossible to delve at all deeply into them, but they do broadly confirm trends noted earlier. Thus, for instance, girls report greater ability and more favorable attitudes toward reading than do boys – and they do more of it. Primary-school children apparently enjoy reading more than do those in secondary school, and the amount of reading decreases with age. As to type of leisure reading, girls prefer biographical and "romance" fiction, as well as books about travel and animals; boys say they like to read adventure, sports, and science-fiction books. Across the board, there is more television viewing than reading (as much as three hours daily at the lower grade level), but girls say that they watch less than the boys, and they are as twice as likely to prefer reading to television. When we asked children to rank-order their preferences for ten common leisure habits, their answers suggested four categories: the most favored activity was simply being with friends and then came music, movies, and television, sports and hobbies comprised a third grouping, *and* reading appeared in fourth and final position. Books and television were more popular among the younger children; and, again, girls were more likely than boys to prefer reading.

Future Directions

Despite a reasonable amount of data and despite some very robust findings – having to do with age, gender, attitudes, and amount and type of reading – we are still largely at descriptive levels. There is much of interest that we have learned about

reading in the electronic age, and there have also been occasional attempts at stimulating the reading habit. We still require, however, theoretical perspectives to unite and augment existing data, to treat such matters as the underlying factors influencing reading motivation and development, the rewards and consequences of reading, and the establishment and maintenance of leisure time activities.[2] It is readily apparent that a coherent and comprehensive social psychology of reading is a very large undertaking –necessitating, for example, hitherto untried marriages of the "technical" and the sociological literature.

Along the way, as it were, useful work can be done under a large number of headings. One example is the longstanding concern about reading "quality," a current manifestation of which involves teenagers' preferences for horror stories – the "most popular genre for adolescents" according to the Roehampton survey (Children's Literature Research Centre 1996, p. 210; see also Hall and Coles 1999). The consumption of such material predictably attracts a variety of opinion. In some schools, teachers use these juvenile shockers on the grounds that, after all, they are of obvious interest and (it is hoped) will lead to "better" things. The general assumption seems to be that almost any reading is better than nothing. Others, however, strongly disagree, arguing that reading books produced to a formula –endlessly recycled plots peopled by wooden stereotypes ["flat" characters, as Forster (1927) styled them] – only induces the sort of nonprogressive escapism that Nell (1988) has discussed at length. Another aspect of current debates about "quality" that cries out for further analysis is the resurgent interest in banning some books altogether; a group in Virginia (Parents Against Bad Books in Schools) would have removed from study such authors as Atwood, Doctorow, Eco, and Morrison (see the pabbis.com website). A third contemporary avenue into the sociology of reading is provided by another resurgent phenomenon: the book club. Freeman (2005) provides a brief overview – from the mid-nineteenth century to Oprah – and Hartley (2001) raises some interesting questions: why, for example, are women more attracted to such groups than are men? And finally here, I suggest that larger issues of print versus screen, of shelf versus computer, constitute an increasingly important part of the contextualization of reading (see Schonfeld 2003, for an illuminating account of the rapid growth of electronic information storage; see also Arms 2000, and for the most sustained and highly charged defense of the paper media, Baker 2001).

However we approach the matter, any meaningful social psychology of reading should concern itself primarily with aliteracy: why don't some readers read? Valpy (2001) has recently reported what we already knew: questions of reading motivation, attitudes, and practices have been relatively ignored, largely because of current

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[2]We might consider following the lead of Hall and Coles (1999) a little more closely. They asked children how *they* accounted for gender differences in reading. Girls, it was reported, are more mature and sensitive than boys, they are not as physically active, and they have more patience; boys see reading as "sissy" or "square," they can't sit still long enough to read, reading is neither "cool" nor "tough," and so on. In effect, these children were constructing a theory that related socialization in general to reading in particular.

emphases upon achievement, testing, and assessment. Thus, "there is much more interest in whether children can read than in whether they do." It is apparent that an area that pays vastly more attention to the development of skills than to their application is neglecting ends for means.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

K. Hazen: Variationist Approaches to Language and Education. In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Gender and Literacy

Gemma Moss

Abstract

This article reviews the ways in which gender and literacy have been linked in educational contexts and the different patterns of intervention this has led to. In particular, it will highlight the switch in the literature from a focus on the formation of (girls') gendered identities to a focus on (boys') gendered patterns of attainment within the literacy curriculum. The emergence of boys' under-achievement in literacy as a policy problem will be linked to the current dominance of performance-management cultures within governments and the accompanying processes of large-scale education reform which they have led to around the globe. Often, such interventions are designed with the aim of securing maximum homogeneity in outcomes from education. This provides a new context in which to consider the range of social explanations for inequalities in educational performance, their currency, and the challenges that "governing by numbers" (Grek 2009) poses for feminist politics.

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Introduction

This article reviews the ways in which gender and literacy have been linked in
educational contexts and the different patterns of intervention this has led to. In
particular, it will highlight the switch in the literature from a focus on the formation
of (girls') gendered identities to a focus on (boys') gendered patterns of attainment
within the literacy curriculum. The emergence of boys' underachievement in literacy
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scale education reform which they have led to around the globe. Often, such inter-
ventions are designed with the aim of securing maximum homogeneity in outcomes
from education. This provides a new context in which to consider the range of social
explanations for inequalities in educational performance, their currency, and the
challenges that "governing by numbers" (Grek 2009) poses for feminist politics.

Feminism, Gender, and Literacy

Historically, feminist work on gender and literacy can be grouped under two main
headings. On the one hand, there is a well-established tradition of feminist textual
analysis that focuses on text content and examines the meanings texts hold for their
readers or writers (Ang 1985; Moss 1989; Radway 1984). This work has largely
arisen out of a broader feminist concern for the social construction of gendered
identities and has followed a similar trajectory from a primary interest in the
ideological constraints which produce femininity to an understanding of girls'
appropriation and reworking of a range of cultural resources for a wider and often
more oppositional set of purposes (Hey 1997; Williamson 1981/1982). The judg-
ments made are about the value of the text and the contribution the text makes to the
formation of gendered identities (Cherland 1994; Christian-Smith 1993; Gilbert and
Taylor 1991).

   This kind of attention to the relationship between gender and literacy attracted
most interest through the 1980s and 1990s. One of the most hotly contested issues
within the literature during that time was whether genres which were strongly
associated with female readers, such as the romance and soap operas, should be
condemned as part of the ideological apparatus which constrained women's sphere
of action or whether they pointed to contradictions in the ideological construction of
femininity which their readers could potentially exploit (Moss 1989). Radway's
study of women romance readers provides a good example of how the tensions
within this literature were resolved through direct study of readers of the texts as well
as of the text itself (Radway 1984).

By contrast, a second strand of feminist scholarship has focused more closely on gender and literacy learning. Using ethnographic perspectives, this work has tracked how literacy has come to stand for a social good which enables full and meaningful participation in the broader society as well as access to the world of work. Research studies have considered the uneven acquisition and distribution of the competencies associated with the literacy curriculum in this light, drawing attention to gender inequalities in patterns of illiteracy. Early work in this area explored women's unequal access to education and the promise of literacy it brought with it (Horsman 1991; Rockhill 1993). Research centered on marginalized social groups such as adult women who were the target of basic skill courses or women and girls in the developing world who had been denied equal opportunities to learn to read or write in school. Much of the literature drew attention to the social constraints which shaped women's lives and in the process restricted their participation in education (Mace 1998). This became part of the backdrop to a nuanced exploration of the varied role literacy in different forms can play in people's lives (see chapter "▶ Women, Literacy, and Development: An Overview" by Robinson-Pant, Literacies and Social Institutions volume).

Although these two strands of work were in many ways quite distinct, nevertheless, they shared a common concern for social justice and were grounded in a feminist analysis of the difficulties both women and girls face in a world shaped often in disregard of, if not positively against, their own interests. From this point of view, they are complementary approaches in a longer campaign designed to bring about greater gender equality. There were some notable successes. Lobbying against sexism in children's books led publishers to review and modify their output. Meanwhile literacy campaigns in the developing world increasingly recognized the need to target resources on women and girls as well as boys and men. Yet as important as they were, reshaping the literacy environment in these ways did little to alter many of the structural inequalities which relegate women to second place economically and socially. Although the precise focus of debate in these two literatures has shifted over time, neither group of researchers considered that gender equality had been achieved by the point in the mid-1990s when the discourse over gender and literacy suddenly began to change.

Gender and Literacy as a Policy Problem: Should Boys Do Better?

By the mid-1990s, gender differences in performance in the school literacy curriculum had begun to attract a new kind of attention. In different countries, boys' underachievement in literacy began to surface as an issue of concern, whether in official reports based on outcomes from the education system, in media coverage of the same data, or in the academic literature (Commonwealth of Australia 2002; Gilbert and Gilbert 1998; Millard 1997; QCA 1998; Rowan et al. 2002). In many respects, this coincided with the increasing prominence given to performance data in education system management, whether the data were routinely produced by testing at the national level or through participating in international surveys such as PISA

(Programme for International Student Assessment). Isolate the data on literacy, and in countries where girls and boys have equal access to schooling, boys on average do less well than girls (OECD 2009). This is often in sharp distinction to other subject areas such as maths, where the advantage more frequently rests with boys. In fact, the gender gap in literacy attainment is relatively stable and of long standing (Cohen 1998; Rutter et al. 2004). How and why the data became so prominent in public discourse in the 1990s is a matter that requires consideration in its own right, including the changed conditions which made the data capable of being read in new ways.

Feminist commentators initially reacted to the news of boys' underachievement with suspicion (Epstein et al. 1998; Hallman 2000). Against a backdrop of substantial improvements in girls' attainment in a range of subjects, such as maths and science, where previously they had lagged far behind boys (Arnot et al. 1999), the sudden focus on boys' comparative failure in the education system looked like evidence of an antifeminist backlash (Hammett and Sanford 2008; Watson et al. 2010). Media reporting of the data certainly justified this response, as commentators demonstrated with reference to headlines or articles which had appeared in the USA, in Australia, and in the UK, all of which presented boys' failures as stemming directly from girls' success (Gilbert and Gilbert 1998, pp. 4–5; Mahoney 1998, p. 46; Rowan et al. 2002, p. 15). Yet the assertion that girls' increasing educational success has been bought at the price of boys' educational failure is not supported by research. Studies of "boy-friendly" pedagogies, such as single-sex teaching groups; hiring more male teachers; switching to forms of assessment presumed to favor boys, such as multiple choice or final exams; or changing the curriculum to more closely match what are perceived to be boys' interests, do not significantly change outcomes (Carrington et al. 2008; DfES 2007; DCSF 2009). On the contrary, research shows that schools where the gender gap is lowest are characterized by high-quality teaching that treats all children as individuals rather than dealing in gender stereotypes (Younger et al. 2005). Moreover, not all boys are doing badly, just as not all girls are doing well (Epstein et al. 1998; White 2007). Indeed, there is an increasing recognition that gender and attainment need to be understood as intersected by both ethnicity and social class (Department for Education and Skills, 2007; Sharples et al. 2011). Inequalities in outcomes from the education system have multiple rather than singular causes.

The increased prominence given to boys' educational underachievement in literacy can be seen, not so much as evidence of a straightforward strengthening of patriarchal values, as a new twist in a more complex relationship between educational inequalities and the economy (Arnot et al. 1999; Machin and McNally 2005). What marks out the current education settlement are changes in patterns of work, the rise of new managerialism, and the increasing economization of social life in response to the pressures of globalization (Rizvi and Lingard 2010). Governments increasingly expect education to demonstrate its value in economic terms. They export to education the kinds of systems for tracking data used to ensure quality in the commercial sector and the tools of accountability associated with this (Ozga 2013). In this context, children's performance in examinations increasingly counts as

output data, to be modeled against input data and then compared with other national systems. As new technologies make tracking and managing such data on a large scale easier, so governments increasingly put in place more extensive testing regimes which can generate more detailed information about pupil progress. It is the wide-scale use of performance data in the education system that produces the conditions in which boys' relative underachievement in literacy becomes much more publicly visible.

It has been in the interests of many governments to both collect and then make such data public as part of a broader discussion over the value of public services. They want to know and to demonstrate how well the education system is doing, as part of their contract with the voters. Being able to demonstrate that the system is working well operates as a means of winning consent for continuing support for a publicly funded system of education. Equally, publicizing apparent failures applies more pressure to that system to improve and deliver better value for the money spent. A new dynamic is put in place. Boys' underachievement in literacy gains its charge from this context. But it does so as one potential discrepancy in the dataset among many. In the UK, performance differences between schools and between local authorities (school districts) have exerted most influence on the direction of policy. Given the extent to which local schools are socially segregated, in effect, this means social class has trumped gender. Gender and literacy in the UK are contained by a broader discourse of improving educational performance in which the school and its effective delivery of the curriculum take center stage. This distances the system from the feminist goal of achieving greater gender equity. There are gains and losses from this state of affairs. Government policy-making in education eschews advocating strategies that might benefit boys at the expense of girls for the simple reason that this would not help raise results across the board (Ofsted 2003). Such a course of action does not fit with a managerialist impulse which insists on greater homogeneity of outcomes. Yet the more wide-ranging goal of using education in its broadest sense to create a socially just society has also disappeared from view, giving way to much more tightly defined and technicist objectives, expressed in purely numerical terms.

Success and Failure in the Literacy Curriculum: Reworking Feminist Ideas in a New Context

As unskilled manufacturing jobs have moved abroad, governments have committed to building a high-skill, knowledge-based economy at home. This aspiration has brought with it changed assumptions about the levels and spread of achievement in reading and writing required in the workforce. The need to see an improvement in boys' performance in the literacy curriculum gains traction in this context. Yet, it is still not clear how any gender gaps in literacy attainment can be accurately described, still less explained, or what the best solutions to the differences demonstrated in the data might be. From the PISA dataset, we know that boys, on average, report lower levels of engagement in reading; on average, they spend less time reading; and, on average, they show lower levels of attainment. The pattern is consistent across many

countries (OECD 2009) and is replicated in many quantitative datasets (Sullivan and Brown 2015). These are suggestive correlations but they also need to be handled with care. Without due regard to the distribution patterns in the data, as well as the summary average, it is easy to resort to gender-stereotyped explanations which are not well supported by research (Moss and Washbrook 2016; Oakhill and Petrides 2007).

In exploring the data, feminists have looked for possible explanations which make sense in a context where girls' competitive edge in the literacy curriculum does not always lead on to better educational achievement overall or better employment prospects in the wider society. This kind of disconnection has to be taken into account. As a first step, this has often meant returning to earlier understandings about the causes of girls' educational disadvantage and assessing whether and how they might apply to boys. This is not a simple matter of translation (Gilbert and Gilbert 1998, p. 21). By and large, the most common assumption is that boys' underachievement in literacy is created by a dissonance between aspects of masculinity and aspects of schooling (Francis and Skelton 2005). There is less consensus over precisely which aspects of masculinity or schooling matter most in this respect. This leads to different proposed solutions to fixing literacy attainment. In each case, the potential impact on girls is weighed as carefully as the consequences for boys. The following examples from the literature represent three different ways of addressing these issues.

Fixing the Content of the Literacy Curriculum

Elaine Millard's *Differently Literate* examines the differences between boys' and girls' interests in reading and writing and their respective fit with the content of the literacy curriculum in the secondary school (1997). Her work draws on studies of genre preferences. She proposes that the prominence given to specific kinds of narrative fiction and the emphasis on character and personal response in the study of literature in the secondary school present difficulties for boys because they do not match with their interests. She comments:

> (boys') favoured genres are less in harmony with the English curriculum and the choices made for them in class by their teachers. The largest contrast is between boys' interest in action and adventure and girls' preference for emotion and relationships. (Millard 1997, p. 75)

In her view, the fact that the curriculum lines up with girls' not boys' existing interests matters because it reduces boys' full participation within the literacy curriculum. Many of them switch off reading. Outside school, boys unlike girls commit their time to other pursuits. They associate reading at home with female members of the household. If they have interests in reading, then they rarely share them with their peers. Overall, this means that they gain less familiarity with the structures of written language. They are less adept at dealing with the kinds of tasks the literacy curriculum

sets them. The picture Millard paints is of girls and boys acting as relatively self-contained communities of practice each constructed on gendered terrain. Rather than continuing to allow one group's interests to dominate over the other's, her solution is to try to rebalance the English curriculum so that it embraces a wider range of reading material, nonfiction as well as fiction, and a greater range of media texts. She argues that such an expansion in the range of texts taught would extend girls' repertoire with beneficial outcomes for them too while drawing boys into the classroom community of story book readers and writers (ibid, p. 180).

Fixing Boys (and Girls Too)

Rowan et al.'s (2002) *Boys, Literacies, and Schooling* occupies rather different territory. It draws more closely on feminist poststructuralist work on the formation of gendered identities. The authors are more circumspect about polarizing gendered interests, pointing out that there are different ways of doing masculinity and femininity and that consequently there may be as many differences within as well as between these two categories. One of their case studies sets out to challenge the easy supposition that boys will show a keen interest in new technologies and will be relatively skillful in this domain while girls will not (ibid, p. 137). They argue that this supposition does not provide a sufficient basis for reengaging boys with the literacy curriculum. Instead of seeking to identify and then incorporate boys' existing interests into the curriculum as a way of improving literacy attainment, they set their sights on the transformation of gendered assumptions about what and who both boys and girls can be. This means working with and against the grain of teachers' and pupil's expectations about their own and others' place within the curriculum. They describe this as a "transformative project" which seeks to remake gender identities.

> If we keep looking inward to this same set of characteristics in order to come up with a solution to the "problems" produced by traditional discourses around masculinity, we run the risk of reproducing rather than critiquing those discourses that produce the problem. From a transformative perspective, we need to be able to imagine the new: new possibilities, new masculinities, and new ways of being and performing as a "boy" (ibid, p. 71).

They consider that the English curriculum is a good place for this kind of political project to unfurl because of the relative fluidity of the subject domain and its ability to incorporate new kinds of texts and practices that can help develop new kinds of stories. The traditional English curriculum is already under pressure because of the emergence of new technologies. They consider that the practical interventions that they document act as templates for explorations of the dominant mindsets on gender and on literacy pedagogy rather than as specific recipes for reform. There are no hard and fast answers here, rather attempts to get things right. By placing the transformation of gender identities at the heart of their work, they hope that they can begin to regear the curriculum toward a more equitable and expansive future.

Fixing Literacy Pedagogy

By contrast, Judith Solsken's *Literacy, Gender, and Work* focuses on the social interactions that surround learning how to read and write (1993), rather than the construction of gender identities per se. She draws primarily on literacy as social practice perspectives to demonstrate that both home and school literacy learning can be variously construed as self-directed play or adult-sponsored work, a distinction which she maps onto Bernstein's categories of visible and invisible pedagogies (ibid, p. 60). She argues that these contradictory orientations to the process of becoming a reader or writer present children with a series of dilemmas which they then have to resolve. The way they respond influences their development as readers and writers in school and at home. She draws out these contrasts by reflecting on the home and school literacy practices of two of her case study boys Luke and Jack, who seem to resolve these tension points in different ways:

> Both Luke and Jack seemed to define literacy as a particular kind of work in the sense that it was an activity required and overseen by adults, rather than one engaged in for their own purposes or pleasure. ... While Luke played a mischievous 'bad boy' role in resisting most literacy activities (except those he defined as play), Jack played a 'good boy' role by treating literacy activities as chores to be completed. (ibid, p. 36)

For Solsken, the positions children adopt in relation to literacy interact with their understanding of gender relations at home. Solsken argues that this in part happens because more women than men shoulder the burden of preparing children for the work of learning literacy at school and find themselves responsible for ensuring a successful outcome to that process. The high stakes involved in making a smooth and successful entry into the literacy curriculum provide part of the backdrop against which children negotiate over what literacy means for them and the position they will adopt as literacy learners. Solsken concludes that gender does not of itself determine whether children will align themselves with play-based or work-based pedagogies. Rather gender identities interact with and coalesce around children's experience of literacy learning. The consequences of the positions they adopt develop over time and in relation to the pedagogic culture of the classroom. Gender matters in this context.

Gemma Moss has extended this approach to literacy and gender in a study of how students aged 7–10 engage with the school literacy curriculum (Moss 2007). She has highlighted the particular salience that teachers' judgments of their pupils' proficiency at reading has in classrooms. The ways in which children are seated in class, the kinds of books they are expected to read, and the choices they are allowed to exercise over their reading both construct and make visible the categories of "able" and "poor" readers. Against this background, it is boys labeled as "poor readers" who show the most consistent preference for nonfiction texts. The nonfiction texts they choose are visually rich but use a print size normally associated with adult not children's texts. Moss argues that this combination of design characteristics enables this group to act as experts, whether they have read the text or not, thus allowing

them to escape others' judgments about their proficiency as readers (Moss 2007). She suggests that boys' genre preferences are thus created in response to and not ahead of the literacy curriculum and the hierarchy of readers it constructs. Girls and boys labeled as "poor readers" react differently to this designation. Girls are more willing to accept that label and work within it. They may suffer because others underestimate what they can do. Boys are more inclined to resist. This leads to different profiles of underachievement, which require different remedies.

Current Problems and Future Directions

Can the approaches outlined in brief above address the distribution problem within the performance data, namely, why different proportions of boys and girls struggle to do well within the literacy curriculum while others sail through? Are they specific enough about which boys (and girls) struggle most? Does it make sense to try and search for these latter categories, so that their problems can be fixed? Solsken and Moss's research suggests that the problems do not lie so much with a certain kind of boy (or girl) who stands apart from the content of the literacy curriculum, as with the demands that the literacy curriculum places on all children. Their work reorients debate away from consideration of the literacy curriculum as the place where gendered tastes are arbitrated and gender identities made to an examination of the conflicting modes of social control the literacy curriculum instantiates. This turn in analysis from what the curriculum says directly about gender to how the curriculum orders its knowledge base and regulates knowers is in line with Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse (Bernstein 1996). It may well be that this is the best direction in which to turn at a time when education itself is being reshaped and made accountable for what it does in new ways and when gender politics struggle to find a place in a managerialist culture.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen and Bronwyn Davies: Formation of Gender Identities in the Classroom. In Volume: Discourse and Education
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Critical-Literacy Education: "The Supremely Educational Event"

Peter Freebody

> *It is important to continue to create an educational space within critical literacy for the culture of critique, a space to work out critiques that can seize hold of the most basic contradictions, broken promises, seeming conundrums, and necessary compromises. It is important, in that sense, to treat critique as the supremely educational event, in fostering autonomy and reflection (Willinsky 2007, p. 17).*

Abstract

This chapter outlines how historians, linguists, anthropologists, sociologists, and educators have contributed in various ways to the study and practice of "critical-literacy education" (CLE). CLE is a project aimed at integrating knowledge about literacy into an analysis of power-in-action and knowledge about power into an analysis of texts-in-action. Summarized here are CLE efforts to have individuals and communities understand more fully their current contexts, their histories, and how they, particularly those traditionally not well served by current ways of teaching literacy in school, may take more productive part in enhancing their societies. One conclusion is that these goals are best pursued through deeper understandings of texts, the social practices they help to shape, and the social relations those practices build and sustain.

Keywords

critical literacy • anthropology • applied linguistics • psychology • sociology • power relations

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Contents

Introduction

Over thousands of years inscribed, printed, or digitized materials have been made, authorized, and distributed and their contents enforced, but generally not by the people who are meant to comprehend and comply with those contents. The major changes in the means of producing and distributing texts – the alphabetic script, the printing press, the internet – have been "major" partly because they have opened avenues to new groups of people for expanding their expression. So whatever else it might be about, literacy has always been about the exercise of power and authority, and many literate people have known that for a long time.

Critical approaches to understanding, learning, and teaching literacy are, therefore, hardly new-fangled accessories to the main educational effort. In literacy-saturated societies, the contents of written materials and how their use and production have been taught together constitute modes of ruling. Educational settings are, at the one time, comprehensively literacy-dependent and highly regulated environments. Freire, a founder of CLE, emphasized the perennial conflicting potentials of literacy education:

> Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity, or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (Freire 1970, p. 15)

In the necessarily selective discussion that follows, it becomes clear that, while the field of CLE is characterized by a multiplicity of affiliations and approaches, practitioners share an understanding of these conflicting potentials, and a goal of helping learners how to know about and act, using the resources of literacy, on the conditions in which they and their communities live.

Early Developments

Often originating in the study of legal and religious texts, centuries-long traditions of close textual reading and of disputes over interpretation are found in many cultures (Bruns 1992). Along with these have come debates about how best to learn and teach these forms of inquiry and disputation. But the term "critical-literacy education" has a specific provenance dating from the 1960s. The term originated with Paulo Freire, a politically active literacy educator who became a lead advisor to adult literacy programs initially in his native Brazil, and later in Africa and Central America. He aimed to have learners examine how they themselves are characterized, "embedded in" the texts around them, working on an understanding that it is the interpretive structures in which disenfranchised people lived that make them, not marginal to society, but in fact a necessary element of it – but embedded as "beings for others" (Freire 1970, p. 55). He aimed to have learners understand these ideas:

1. Institutional and governmental procedures hold social relations in place. Certain ways of reading and writing sustain these arrangements and make them sensible. By reading and writing differently, people can both critique and rebuild social practices and relations.
2. We can make texts intelligible by understanding their sources, purposes, interests, and the material and social conditions that make them available.
3. A critical perspective on literacy provides ways of seeing it as, at the one time, an individual and community resource, a "bankable" market commodity, an emblem of modernity, and thus a potential source of both liberation and oppression.

Freirean programs provided an education in political citizenship as well as literacy. They earned CLE international visibility and provided templates for interventions beyond adult, workplace, and nation-building settings. Educators quickly saw the significance of Freire's work, and so did the political and cultural authorities of Brazil. The military government imprisoned Freire in 1964 and then "encouraged" him to leave the country. He was able to return only with the restoration of democracy in that country 15 years later. Over that period Freire's work connected productively with other contributions on social class and language, school organization and socioeconomic reproduction, and critical pedagogy (Albright and Luke 2013; Bernstein 1971; MacLaren 2000).

But much early Freirean work has also been criticized for being one-dimensional and mechanistic in its view of how literacy clarifies and challenges, or obscures and reinforces life conditions (cf. Fairclough 2010). It has further been argued that the view of social class in Freirean work is characterized by a polarity that is inappropriate in light of the complexity and fluidity of class formations over the intervening 40 years (e.g., Luke 2010). More recent approaches consider (1) sociopolitical dimensions other than class, (2) contemporary industrial and pop-culture conditions, (3) visual and digital modes of communication and representation, and (4) the

postmodern, postcolonial features of contemporary experience. The contribution of Freire and his colleagues has nonetheless been decisive, consolidating a view of literacy that remains ill-advised to ignore in any informed considerations of literacy education.

Major Contributions

Educators have differed in three major ways in how they have engaged with the relationship between literacy and power: in their base disciplines, their underlying ideological commitments, and the domains of education on which they are focused. Disciplines strongly represented in CLE have included history, applied linguistics, anthropology, and sociology. While these disciplines form the headings for the following discussion, a range of ideological commitments and interests are also evident, including: Marxian, post-structuralist, postcolonialist, feminist, race/ethnicity based, cultural studies based, popular culture and media based, and others. Finally, educators' motives in exploring CLE have often arisen from their particular educational topics of interest, including: the early stages of reading and writing; students from nonmainstream language backgrounds; the multimodal contents of school texts; digital forms of knowledge building and communication in formal, informal, and pop-culture settings; adult and work-based programs; and teacher education. These orientations differ in how they characterize CLE, why it matters, what counts as evidence of its effects, and what needs to be done.

Historical Approaches

Accounts of the history of literacy are generally unambiguous on the matter of its ability to intensify and accelerate social, cultural, and political processes, and on its relation to oppression, transformation, and liberation. In her studies of literacy in ancient Persian, Greek, and Roman societies, for instance, Thomas has regularly drawn attention to

> the fascinating tension between the obvious fact that writing makes certain activities possible or easier, and that different potentials are seized upon by different communities. In some, writing means bureaucracy, control and oppression by the state, in others an enabling skill that frees an individual's creative potential. (Thomas 2009, pp. 13–14)

Similarly, Eisenstein (2012) concluded from her studies of the effects of the printing press and the subsequent spread of reading and writing in early modern Europe that literacy's contradictory tendencies are still with us 500 years after Gutenberg's invention:

> we still seem to be experiencing the contradictory effects of a process which fanned the flames of religious zeal and bigotry while fostering a new concern for ecumenical concord

and toleration, which fixed linguistic and national divisions more permanently while creating a cosmopolitan Commonwealth of Learning. (Eisenstein 2012, p. 311)

Faced with accounting for significant, rapid, and durable social or political transformations, historians have often turned to evidence for new or enlarged uses of the written word. Keynes (2003), for instance, summarized the role of the standardization of the Latin script across medieval Western Europe and Britain:

The Alfredian regime [871–899 CE] depended for the advancement of its purposes on exploiting the power of the written word. (Keynes 2003, p. 197, insert added)

So issues of power – political, economic, cultural, moral, and linguistic – variously figure in historical accounts of both ancient and recent literacy education programs that have been aimed at transformation and stability, nation-building, and economic transformation (e.g., Graff 2001; Luke 1988).

It is curious, then, that many governments, education systems, communities, and researchers, currently behave as if literacy education has recently been somehow freed from its worldly ways and ushered into an era of innocence and neutrality. Turning "what matters" in literacy education into "what works" for all, measuring and comparing nations and jurisdictions on standard assessments of their literacy capabilities, and pinning economic, cultural, and political progress on these comparisons, whatever else they do, all fly in the face of the historical documentations of the uses of literacy, the ways in which literate societies have grown, how minority and indigenous languages, dialects and literacy traditions continue to vanish, and how people experience their everyday encounters with literacy.

Applied Linguistic Approaches

Applied linguists have contributed a variety of analytic approaches for learning and teaching about the workings of texts. The most prominent examples of these have drawn on systemic functional linguistics in providing pedagogic templates (e.g., Rose and Martin 2012) and in developing "critical discourse analysis." A lead proponent is Fairclough (2010) who has built a body of work showing how semiotic resources such as language are implicated in the production of social life. These resources provide people with ways of representing reality, using different modalities for acting and relating socially, and building social, communal, and individual identities. Following Bernstein (1971), Fairclough and colleagues have described how some practices of one social group (e.g., professional historians) are selectively recruited into the workings of another (e.g., History teachers in school), such that new forms of literacy practice are represented in ways that, for our example, serve institutionalized teacher-student relations and the structures of pedagogical activities (Martin 1999).

Applied linguists have also contributed to critical understandings of the analysis of texts produced without verbal content, or with ensembles of different semiotic

contents (e.g., words and images, Kress 2010). Some have argued that language is no longer central to many print- and digitally based events in and out of educational settings. The educational point is clear: The epistemologies and logics of these semiotic systems are different (the materiality of images is space; the materiality of language is time and causality) and lead to different ways of learning about and working with knowledge.

Applied linguists have further emphasized the transformative effects of the production of texts by students and the restrictiveness of conventional educational assessments relative to the goals of learning. Kress (2010) has argued that, when people learn, they develop new ways of showing sequences of systematic, principled changes in how well they can make text, how making those texts has changed their understanding of the world, and how they can now act in and on those understandings.

Anthropological Approaches

Anthropological contributions have used observational, cross-cultural, and documentary methods to expand on two key claims about literacy: that literacy is best seen as involving localized, socially coordinated, and routinized practices and that literacy evolves differently in differing social and institutional settings. So, for example, the literacy events and practices (cf. Street 2001) documented in one setting, such as the homes of youngsters, provide potentially informative comparisons with those seen in another, such as the schools those youngsters attend.

The first claim, that literacy is best seen as social, emphasizes the coordinated and shared nature of literacy events and practices as they are conducted in real-world settings. A literacy event is taken to be an event in which writing shapes how the participants understand one another and the purposefulness of their interactions. These events provide the experiences that ground the development of literacy practices, routinized ways of using written language, including commonly shared ideas about literacy and its part in building and maintaining relationships and identities, along with the ideological assumptions that in turn underlie those ideas (Street 2011).

The second central idea, that documenting varieties in literacy events and practices in homes, schools, and workplaces is informative and useful, highlights the diversity of literacy activities in and between settings and cultural groups. As in the case of the applied linguists, anthropologists documenting these have generally shown school-based literacy events and practices to be restrictive – in the structure of their activities, their relationships, and their consequences – when compared with those found in homes and workplaces (Pahl 2008). People from certain backgrounds can be systematically excluded from access to the literacy practices important for schooling, and failure to realize or act on this consolidates that uneven access.

Anthropological orientations have pointed to the need to reshape literacy education in light of (1) the diversity and hybridity of cultures and languages in most school settings and workplaces in the world, (2) the socioeconomic and

sociopolitical formations and life trajectories facing young people, and (3) the "ways of knowing" that have been conventionally been overwritten by colonized forms of education (e.g., Cope and Kalantzis 2013; Prinsloo and Stroud 2014). Some researchers have put forward ways of "reshaping" that include: teaching that explicitly works with marginalized languages, literacy practices, and out-of-school experiences into classroom activities (Pahl 2008) and approaches specifically directed at pedagogical, policy, and research efforts that explicitly explore gender, race, or other sociopolitical dimensions through literacy learning and teaching activities (e.g., Lewis 2014).

Street has suggested that an ethnographic perspective to literacy can avoid the ways in which competing approaches, however intentionally, reflect more than just disciplinary differences, by making two contributions:

> (1) that ethnographic perspectives and an understanding of literacy practices as multiple and culturally varied, can help avoid simplistic and often ethnocentric claims regarding the consequences of literacy based on one-dimensional and culturally narrow categories and definitions and (2) that an ethnographic perspective can sensitise us to the ways in which the power to name and define is a crucial component of inequality. (Street 2011, p. 580)

The body of work built up by anthropologists of literacy aims to offer coherent bases for the application of a "diversity-based" critique of the relatively narrow ideologies and repertoires of practice through which much contemporary schooling does its work of socioeconomic and cultural reproduction. Beginning with the everyday empirics of how people do things with texts, day in and day out, and attending to documenting the details of how these patterns arise and are conveyed, valued, and devalued together constitute distinctive contributions of anthropologists of literacy to an appreciation of how much of learners' experiences and knowledge remains un- or mis-recognized in the settings of public institutions.

Sociological Approaches

The ways in which the teaching and learning of literacy differentially distribute capabilities affecting individuals and groups' life chances are seen by sociologists as a key to how schools shape and sustain social structures. Ways of learning and teaching literacy are included in activities that legitimate the material orders of society, the culturally and economically reproductive processes by which material and cultural privilege is systematically "mistaken" and recast as academic and intellectual privilege (Albright and Luke 2013).

Sociologists have pointed to specific ideas and practices that sustain the educational work of policy, school organization, curriculum development, and other apparatuses supporting and "remediating" literacy development. In an under-recognized research project, Fraatz (1987) conducted a study of the teaching and remedial support of reading in US schools. In accounting for these processes, Fraatz used the concept of "mobilization of bias," referring to:

the way in which *organizational structures and processes condition the ways people interpret their goals, alternatives, resources, and personal contributions to the 'mission' of the institution*. (Fraatz 1987, p. 11, emphases in original)

Fraatz found bias based on features of students' backgrounds mobilized in the definitions and explanations of and in the solutions offered to "the problem of literacy learning." These ways of talking and thinking, Fraatz argued, framed and rationalized the content of literacy lessons and tests and the organization of the school's practices.

Central to these bias-mobilizing practices, Fraatz claimed, is discourse about parents' involvement in support programs. Among her conclusions was that public discourses and much research about "literacy-negligent" parents ignore how school personnel characterize parents and the nature of the exchanges between these groups:

parent involvement in schooling is far more important for the support it offers the school's mobilization of bias than it is for improving the achievement of disadvantaged students (p 126) ... because teachers with both high and low levels of contact with and interest in parents and home life control the definition and meaning of children's attributes in the classroom ... judged against the backdrop of the ways schools structure learning. (Fraatz, p. 163)

Fraatz's work provides an antidote to the tendency to regard literacy problems in schools as mainly originating in individuals, their psychological states or processes, or their parents and communities. For Fraatz, as for most educational sociologists, literacy education is a touchstone for how public organizations begin to relate to young children from different socioeconomic and cultural settings, introducing them to the skills, dispositions, and bodies of knowledge that the society most values. Power relations are always and everywhere relevant to those introductions.

Problems and Difficulties

Most fields in education are informed by a range of disciplines with conceptually incompatible ideas about learning, teaching, literacy, equity, and the rest, and CLE faces most of these problems too. Three problems seem to have particular significance to CLE, problems about: relevance, pedagogy, and clarifying the place of CLE in the critical education project.

First, relevance: A comparison of everyday literacy practices conducted now with a generation ago would show one glaring new development: online digital social media. Some have argued that conventional CLE assumes a combination of: durable print objects, reading and using rather than writing and reworking, and a view of identity as a stable attribute rather than a fluid set of "performances" (Knobel and Lankshear 2008). The argument is that these assumptions no longer obtain in people's everyday use of social media:

existing paradigms of critical literacy and critical media literacy are limited in their capacity to engage productively with the fluid and densely interwoven spaces of social media. (Burnett and Merchant 2011, p. 54)

In terms of sources and means of learning, many societies are now engaged in a transformation centered on the use of data – "big data" – driven by a combination of the, often open, accessibility of online storage and analysis technologies, the prevalence of the Internet, and the connection of data-collection devices to the Internet (the "web of things"). There are active attempts to develop the key educational challenges and opportunities presented by this transformation (e.g., Computing Research Association 2015), and it is clear that schools face the specific challenge of how to prepare young people with the skills, knowledge, and disposition of inquiry that will provide useful access to "big open data." At least equally important is that making use of this immeasurable and unpredictable potential will call for a combination of adaptability and critical discernment – the new, open, big-data literacy.

Second, pedagogy: There is a difference between, on the one hand, inquiring into a text out of curiosity about its internal patterns and the cultural, moral, and ideological assumptions that make it possible in the first place and, on the other hand, determining whether or not that text satisfies certain predetermined cultural, moral, and ideological requisites – to do with, say, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, and so on. Some argue that conventional CLE practice is pre-deterministic; lesson units and research programs alike set out to work up one dimension of texts rather than to discover learners', and other possible readings. Research by Ellsworth (1989) showed how unpredictable the categories were that formed the bases of oppression or privilege for any given group of learners. She argued that CLE needs to have at its core a reliance on the learners and teachers interacting, then and there. Ellsworth concluded that it is the unpredictability of critical categories in any instance of CLE pedagogy that demarcates CLE's real mission: "It is in this sense that a practice grounded in the unknowable is profoundly contextual (historical) and interdependent (social)" (Ellsworth 1989, p. 323).

Third, conceptualizing CLE: In highlighting practical challenges of equity and schooling, accounts of critical-literacy education have often pointed to the capabilities, understandings, and dispositions needed by students to face the vocational, civic, and domestic experiences lying in wait for them. Less frequent have been debates about the coherence or comprehensiveness of available theories. One practical consequence is that instances of CLE are under-theorized at the macro-social/political level – accounts of how certain educational policies and practices advance the interests of particular groupings around, for instance, class, gender, religion, or race/ethnicity. This can leave some researchers, teachers, and policy makers interested in advocating or practicing forms of CLE vulnerable to accusations of "subjectivity" or "bias" and can kick-start the now-familiar life cycle of an educationally transformational project: emergence, enthusiasm, orthodoxy, institutional recruitment, and residualization.

Future Directions

Four general directions are outlined here as general responses to the difficulties itemized above. First, relevance: With regard to digital, online communications and social media, there are a number of initiatives and models that reinstate the importance of millennia-old knowledge about the relationship between literacy and power. Kellner and Share (2007, p. 65), for example, proposed a model for critique with themes that include analyzing the codes and conventions media texts use to communicate, exploring the relationships between representation and power, and examining the role of individual, start-up, and corporate producers in the media industry. Studying how these media offer new and potent possibilities for collective, critical-literacy cyberactivism will develop as a new evolutionary branch of CLE (Knobel and Lankshear 2008).

Second, pedagogy: Richardson (2007) concluded from her detailed study of young African-American women's engagement with social media and popular culture that they are "are aware of the dominating forces but do not possess the level of critical tools necessary to escape internal victim blaming for their predicament" (p. 806). A number of studies have pointed to similar shortfalls in critical textual tools among learners, teachers, and teacher educators. One response to this is Freebody and Freiberg's (2011) suggestion that CLE be seen to refer to a "distinct and growing body of technical knowledge about textuality" (p. 432), and that an integrated curriculum built around CLE incorporate the study of (1) texts and interpretations as analyzable products, (2) textual and literate practices as social practices in which interpretations are context-relevant, purposeful social actions, and (3) how texts and interpretations reflexively produce further texts, interpretations, and social practices (pp. 444–445). The pursuit of CLE as a curriculum as well as a "mission" provides practical directions with potential large-scale, cross-curricular applications.

Third, theory: Janks's (2010) model is an important, productive, actionable attempt to bridge conceptual differences across disciplines. Janks identified four interrelated lines of inquiry in that had grown to characterize CLE, focusing on how different educational practices around reading and writing differentially (1) shape learners' understandings and analyses of cultural and political domination; (2) provide access to powerful ways of knowing and communicating; (3) account for the significance of linguistic, dialectical, and cultural diversity; and (4) provide various resources for designing individual, community, and social futures. Janks's is perhaps the most comprehensively framed outline of the components of the CLE project, providing a map of the territory, some "directions" on why the components must work together, and a coherent approach to policy and practice.

Finally, the high visibility and importance for jurisdictions and nations accorded national and international testing highlight, among other things, the need for critical studies of "literacy" as a public object – how it appears in debates about practice and policy as apparently compact, one-dimensional, globally portable, and ideologically and culturally neutral. This is a practical, political challenge to CLE practitioners and advocates not only because such a view of literacy is radically at odds with centuries-old knowledge of what literacy is and how it relates to understanding and

disputation, but because the international testing movement is supported by claims that have been shown to be historically indefensible (Graff 2001, and see Graff's other research documents these "literacy myths") – claims about the direct, consistent, and quantifiable value of literacy to economies, cultures, communities, and individuals.

Conclusion

There is a positive thesis at the heart of critical-literacy pedagogies, methodologies, and practices: Interpreting and producing texts by "pressing against" what texts offer us on the surface are ways of rendering experience more understandable. CLE provides both learners and teachers with a strong claim that dissensus is an enlivening social practice for all learners, in and out of highly regulated educational institutions, and that aspiring to more equitable societies is an educational matter for the privileged and disadvantaged, mainstream, and marginalized. It is a matter of designing alternative paths for self- and community development (Kress 2010), cultivating an attitude toward one's "self" as in and of history, and exploring ways of knowing, feeling, and interacting, that are actively informed by the cultural and socioeconomic conditions that have helped shape that "self," but that do not define it.

Contemporary societies have made texts integral to the operation of many everyday settings. We use texts to organize social relations, and thereby, we put them to ideological, moral, and political work. Institutionalized education is well designed for the important work of training in increasingly specialized, "faithful" reading and writing; more organizationally challenging but no less important is work in schools on the kind of contestation, discomfort, suspicion, or disruption that, in Willinsky's words, constitutes "the supremely educational event."

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Critical Literacy

Yvonne Foley

Abstract

Historically, the term "literacy" was defined as the ability to read and write. However, this limited definition of literacy has been challenged through the emergence of social theories, where it was recognized that literacy is more complex than traditional perspectives allow The New London Group (Harv Educ Rev 66(1):60–93, 1996). A body of work associated with the term new literacy studies (NLS) views literacy as a set of socially and culturally situated practices, rather than simply as a range of technical academic skills that operate at an individual level (Gee, Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses, critical perspectives on literacy and education. Falmer, London, 1990) (Heath 1983; Street 1984). This shift in perspective has embraced the plural and discursive nature of literacy and integrates ways of *being and doing* in the world (Luke, Genres of power? Literacy education and the production of capital. In Hasan R, Williams, G (eds) Literacy in society. Longman, London, 1995; Gee, An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method. Routledge, Abingdon, 2005).

Critical approaches to literacy recognize the link between meaning making, power, and identity (Janks, Literacy and power. Routledge, Abingdon, 2010). While there are a number of orientations associated with critical literacy, all share the perspective that "human action is mediated by language and other symbol systems within particular cultural contexts" (Lewis et al. Reframing sociocultural research on literacy. Routledge, Abingdon, 2009, p. 5). Language therefore plays a key role in how we make sense of the world in which we live. Below is a brief review of some of the existing literature related to the history of critical literacy and some of its distinct orientations within the field of education. An account of the ways in which critical approaches to literacy have influenced teacher

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education programs and been instrumental in shaping teacher identity is considered. Finally, challenges associated with critical approaches to literacy are foregrounded and linked to future possibilities.

Contents

Early Developments

Critical literacy education is commonly associated with Freire (1970), who advocated a political orientation to teaching and learning. Influenced by Marxist philosophies, Freire (1970) forged a concept of literacy that had the potential to develop critical consciousness within educational practices. Freire believed that the ruling class constructed and legitimated school knowledge and constructions of reality and that these were lived out in everyday practice. He proposed that school literacy practices played a role in creating passive recipients of certain bodies of knowledge. He argued strongly that the traditional schooling system was based on the "banking model" of education, where knowledge was transferred directly from the teacher to the learner. A learner's preexisting knowledge and experiences within this transmission model were deemed to be inconsequential. Freire (1970) advocated a more learner-centered participatory approach to literacy where dialogue and disparate interpretations were valued, thus promoting transformative and liberatory pedagogies that provide opportunities for social and political analyses.

Critical Theories

Critical theories associated with literacy emerge from the wider discipline of critical social theory and foreground issues of class, gender, and ethnicity (Morgan 1997). Both of which are oriented towards a critique of social life that includes

institutionalized schooling with the aim of exploring and understanding how society works. Leonardo states that within education, critical social theory is conceptualized as a critical form of classroom discourse that "cultivates students' ability to critique institutional as well as conceptual dilemmas, particularly those that lead to domination or oppression" (2004, p. 11). Building on this tradition allows a critique of the ways in which certain social groups construct and control particular ideologies, institutions, and customs within their society, thereby reproducing and sustaining their dominant role (Morgan 1997, p. 1). Critical social theories are therefore considered to be transformative in nature as they seek human emancipation from the circumstances that constrain and control them. Such perspectives are particularly relevant to education as they allow an examination of existing ideologies and educational practices that often limit and oppress certain groups of learners. A critical theory of education, which is rooted in critical theories of society, attempts to challenge oppressive and limiting pedagogies. This promotes the cultivation of educational spaces that allow for the social transformation and development of all individuals for full participation in their society (Freire 1970).

These sociological accounts inform and underpin critical literacy education and enable an understanding of the way language is used in society to maintain control of specific ideologies and practices and promote the dominance of the *status quo* (Janks 2010). Traditional notions of literacy value particular textual practices associated with reading and writing and these are used as *cultural tools* to justify a variety of messages and practices within society (Janks 2010). However, poststructuralism emphasizes the value of difference and heterogeneity and draws attention to the varied experiences of those who have been marginalized or suppressed within traditional approaches to literacy education. This allows for an engagement with issues of race, class, gender, language, and sexuality and other dimensions of identity that traditional approaches to literacy may have ignored.

Poststructuralist theories recognize that the texts that operate within society are socially constructed and ideologically laden, and this has had a significant impact on approaches to text analysis. It is recognized that ideological meanings are not only within political discourses but embedded in the ways in which society communicates its ideas, beliefs, values, and the actions that accompany these. In other words, ideology is a production of meaning and a way of viewing the world that is classified as common sense (McLaren 2009, p. 69). As a result, no text is neutral but reflects the perspective of the producer (Janks 2013). Analysis within such critical approaches is "put to work to reveal the hidden ideologies of texts" and the norms that serve particular interests within a society (Janks 2010, p. 35). Scholarship within critical approaches to education recognizes the importance of context and social constructions within society and emphasizes the possibility of reconstruction in order to transform and improve the way we live (McLaren 2009). The reconstruction of text is therefore considered to be a continuing process of transformation.

A recent review highlights the central aim of critical approaches to literacy as one that critiques and transforms "dominant ideologies, cultures, economies, institutions and political systems" (Luke 2012, p. 5). Luke proposes that the diverse philosophical foundations associated with critical approaches have led to:

(a) A focus on ideology critique and cultural analysis as a key element of education against cultural exclusion and marginalization

(b) A commitment to the inclusion of working class, cultural and linguistic minorities, indigenous learners, and others marginalized on the basis of gender, sexuality, or other forms of difference

(c) An engagement with the significance of text, ideology, and discourse in the construction of social and material relations, everyday cultural and political life. (Luke 2012, p. 6)

Major Contributions

It is recognized that there are a number of distinct orientations to critical literacy education. The following section considers how critical pedagogy and discourse analysis have influenced the ways in which it has been conceptualized and implemented in educational contexts.

Critical Pedagogy Approaches

Critical pedagogy is rooted in poststructuralism and argues for practices that conceptualize difference as a resource and allows for the "fashioning of new identities within existing configurations of power" (Giroux 1992, p. 28). Following on from the work of Freire, proponents from North America such as Shor (1980), Giroux (1983), and McLaren (1995) further developed key concepts linked to *critical pedagogy* with the aim of critiquing and challenging societal and institutional inequalities. These accounts established a strong theoretical basis for *critical pedagogy*, by linking it to critical theories and education (Crookes 2013). This cross-fertilization enables us to understand better the various links between ideology, power, culture, and language and to recognize the ways in which the messages and practices of those who are positioned in dominant roles in society are legitimated.

Giroux's (1992) work on critical pedagogy addresses issues of agency and seeks to expose the reality that certain groups are marginalized, silenced, or excluded within educational settings. He calls for a disruption of the rigid pedagogical borders that have often been used to achieve these ends within institutionalized schooling. Within educational practice, the critical pedagogy movement "aims to develop students' critical awareness of those oppressive social forces, including school structures and knowledges" (Morgan 1997, p. 6). Such practices allow students to be involved in a critique of dominant ideologies and world views that are portrayed through the media, popular cultural texts, literature, textbooks, digital materials, and functional texts (Shor and Freire 1987). Viewing literacy through such a lens establishes a clear link between the "reader" and the social world and provides a way of enacting critical theories within classrooms. Literacy is therefore not viewed as simply reading or writing in a functional sense but as a set of social practices where students engage in a critical reflection and examination of the world in which

they live. Critical literacy education therefore seeks to enhance students' agency in order to hear the voices of those who are limited by existing "norms" and to challenge the dominant cultural practices in school settings (Shor 2009; Lewis et al. 2009). Critical practices within schools are seen as offering spaces where pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, literacy, and language can be reenvisioned and reconstructed (Lewis et al. 2009).

Contemporary accounts of critical pedagogy therefore emphasize its dialectical nature and position school sites as contexts that are not only places of domination but places of liberation (McLaren 2009). Within such perspectives, institutionalized schooling is not simply "an arena for indoctrination or socialization or a site of instructions, but also a cultural terrain that promotes student empowerment and transformation" (McLaren 2009, p. 62). Such accounts challenge the traditional role of schooling that seeks to create homogeneous groups of citizens and instead provide a vision of the possible, where schooling fosters opportunities for students to become "inventors, critics and creators of knowledge" (Luke 2012, p. 7).

In recent decades, increased migration has reemphasized the need for a critical approach to language and literacy education, as it promotes an explicit focus on cultural and linguistic diversity (Norton and Toohey 2004; Janks 2010). It is recognized that within racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse Anglophone countries that the dominance of English as the medium of instruction is linked to monolingual and monocultural ideologies and policies (Luke and Dooley 2011). Well-documented research (OECD 2013) has reported inequitable schooling experiences within Anglophone countries for students from linguistic minority backgrounds, despite policy rhetoric that seeks to promote equality and inclusion (Luke and Dooley 2011).

Janks' (2010) critical literacy model addresses social, cultural, and linguistic diversity and offers a rich framework for thinking about issues in the classroom linked to dimensions of power, diversity, access, and design/redesign. Her work links each of these areas to language and how socially constructed ways of speaking and writing within communities inhabit what we term as *discourses* (Janks 2010). This body of work, along with others, draws on notions of discourse as a way of addressing the social, cultural, and language needs to learners from minority backgrounds.

Discourse Approaches

During the 1980s in Australia, a Hallidayan functional approach to language offered an additional dimension to critical pedagogy. This was implemented in two interconnected ways: through systemic-functional linguistics and the genre movement (Halliday and Martin 1993; Fairclough 1989). This movement allowed an exploration of the way that language is used within texts to position readers, speakers, and those being addressed. Opportunities to acquire knowledge of the linguistic structures of dominant discourses through text analysis, and to gain an understanding of how language is used to carry out social functions in the world, was

considered to be important for students from cultural and linguistic minority backgrounds (Rogers and Wetzel 2014).

Hallidayan linguistics was influential in the birth of critical pedagogy in the United Kingdom through the work of Fowler et al. (1979) and in Fairclough's (1989) account of critical discourse analysis (CDA) that drew on Halliday's analysis of language. Advocates of these language approaches to literacy education strongly argue that students need to be given access to "genres of power" (Halliday and Martin 1993) before they can successfully engage in ideological analysis and text desconstruction (e.g., Lankshear 1997; Cope and Kalantzis 2000; Fairclough 2003). However, these views recognize difficulties in relation to notions of power when classroom practices are considered. Power is not easily transferred to learners through the explicit teaching of analytical skills and processes when engaging with texts (Wallace 2003). An examination of Foucault's (1982) concept of power shows that power is shifting, localized, unstable, and relational. Furthermore, certain social structures may function in a gate-keeping role to prevent access to specific social goods, social groups, and bodies of knowledge. Such considerations raise questions about the implementation of such approaches within classroom contexts.

Gee's (2005) model of Discourses draws together a consideration of issues of power and *language in use* and how these are socially constructed and transformed through dialogic interactions in society. Gee's body of work makes a distinction between Discourse with a capital "D" and discourse with a small "d." Small "d" discourses are defined as the bits of language that can take the form of an individual work, phrase, or longer utterances that make sense to particular social groups (Gee 2005, p. 18). Capital "D" Discourses draw on the larger narratives in society that address issues of race, gender, class, and sexuality. Discourses can therefore be considered as cultural repertoires or available ways of thinking that operate within sociocultural contexts. As a result, meaning is not established by simply decoding grammatical structures but by understanding the ways in which people within different Discourses have used language as a resource in a particular way to participate in various activities.

Given that critical literacy practices are considered to be communicative events situated within specific sociocultural contexts, it stands to reason that discourse analysis is a useful tool for analyzing the ways in which meaning has been constructed within texts and other semiotic resources. However, while advocates of such an approach argue that critical literacy practices are not possible without engaging in an analysis of discourse, it was recognized that the genre movement and CDA did not have explicit pedagogies built in and were, therefore, not enough on their own (Wallace 1992, 2003). As a result, greater emphasis on classroom application within educational contexts was highlighted through the critical language awareness (CLA) movement, which used CDA as a starting point (Clark et al. 1990; Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). Wallaces' work (1992) addressed such an omission by developing a critical language awareness framework for use in classroom settings.

Over the last decade, an increasing number of studies have focused on the intersectionality between discourse analysis and literacy research. (Gebhard et al. 2012; Janks 2013; Lewis et al. 2007; Gibbons 2009; Rogers and Mosley 2008; Rogers and Wetzel 2014). These bodies of work address the "complexity of movement across literacy sites and practices in an increasingly global world" (Rogers and Wetzel 2014, p. 11). Scholars offer theoretical frameworks, clear examples and pedagogical resources for classroom application, thereby bridging the gap between theories of critical literacy and teacher education. The following section reviews how such concerns are addressed within teacher education.

Work in Progress

Teacher Education

Scholarship associated with critical literacy education has mainly focused on school-based classroom contexts and links literacy practices to localized community settings. However, recently there has been a growing body of research that explores critical literacy within teacher education programs, both preservice and in-service. Shor's (1980) earlier work addresses the need to "educate the educators" by implementing a Freirean approach to teacher education. He highlights that further research within these arenas is needed and this continues to be the case.

Historically, within the Australian context, federally funded educational initiatives, such as the Christie Report (Christie et al. 1991), proposed the integration of critical literacy education as a core component of teacher preparation programs. Despite the lack of success with this proposal, many teacher education programs in Australia implement aspects of critical literacy (Luke 2000). While it has taken much longer for critical literacy education to gain momentum within teacher education in other countries, contemporary work has recognized the need and has pushed the agenda for critical literacy approaches to be more visible within teacher education programs (e.g., Rogers and Wetzel 2014; Sangster et al. 2013; Janks et al. 2014).

There are reports of critical literacy within teacher education within the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and South Africa, and these bodies of work have raised questions about how we train teachers in critical literacy and what these educational practices look like (e.g., Lewison et al. 2015; Rogers and Wetzel 2014; Vasquez et al. 2013; Sangster et al. 2013; Janks et al. 2014). However, there is still a lack of understanding of the ways teachers make sense of, or engage in, critical literacy practices. Rogers' work in the United States demonstrates the "potential of critical literacy education to deepen awareness of power and language" (Rogers 2013, p. 9). She emphasizes the need for teacher educators to actively "seek out the diversity that exists within seemingly homogeneous groups of students" (Rogers 2014, p. 16). She argues that literacy practices that are intentionally draw on the varied cultural and linguistic resources within the classroom foster an environment that gives voice to difference.

While a variety of models are drawn upon for implementation in different contexts, the overarching aims are to broaden the knowledge base of preservice and in-service teachers, in an effort to promote democratic and equitable classrooms and to enhance school reform. Many of these studies address a gap in the literature on critical literacy and teacher education and explore how teachers themselves gain a pedagogical understanding of the principles and practices of critical literacy. Rogers and Wetzel (2014) claim that exposing student teachers to critical theories and pedagogies can result in them recognizing the need to include such practices in their own classrooms.

These contributions document new ways for teacher educators to consider a hybrid of critical literacy approaches for use within teacher preparation programs. They argue that the variety of approaches provide powerful ways of communicating to student teachers that there is no singular way to practice critical literacy. Rogers suggests:

> The intellectual work of designing critical literacy practices provides multiple learning opportunities for teachers to rethink traditional assumptions about literacy, learning and the role of literacy education in the lives of the children and families with whom they work. (2014, p. 257)

The critical educator is therefore someone who recognizes the symbiotic nature of the relationship between the individual learner and the social world.

Critical Literacy and Identity

Another direction that critical approaches have taken is to address the link between a study of language and issues of identity and power (e.g., Norton and Toohey 2004; Masuda 2012). Studies in this area advocate that critical literacy is needed within educational settings in order to enable teachers and students to understand fully the relationship between power, ideology, and schooling, thereby making issues of identity, agency, and power visible (Lewis et al. 2007, p. 16). The complex processes involved in teaching and learning are highlighted within these bodies of work, and attention is drawn to the histories of participation that teachers and students bring to bear on classroom practices – these leave a mark on the participant (Lewis et al. 2007).

Poststructuralist views dismiss the notion of a fixed identity and instead consider identity as something that is constantly in the process of being constructed and reconstructed, as a result of interactions that take place within diverse social settings (Masuda 2012). These social processes are rooted in contexts and render notions of identity as multiple, unstable, and shifting (Miller 2009; Masuda 2012). Participation in social routines and conversations associated with a range of diverse discourses forge specific ways of thinking, valuing, believing, and doing (Gee 2005). Gee (2005) links such understandings of identity to the ways in which both teachers and learners engage in literacy practices. Various studies align with this

understanding and foreground how critical literacy practices can help both teachers and learners to understand how texts and dominant socially constructed discourses shape the ways in which they have been positioned within educational contexts (e.g., Luke and Dooley 2011; Rogers and Schaenen 2014).

Teachers' views about literacy practices are often built on the dominant discourses within their professional contexts, and these often determine what kind of knowledge is valued and who they are as teachers of particular "subject" areas (Masuda 2012). Contemporary studies claim that building the critical into teacher education programs allows both teacher educators and student teachers to explore critical literacy practices together (e.g., Vasquez et al. 2013). This promotes student-teacher-led enquiry into how language is used to disrupt the commonplace as it allows participants to position themselves as inquirers and constructers of knowledge (Rogers and Schaenen 2014, p. 13; Luke and Dooley 2011). Such perspectives claim that such approaches change the ways in which teachers think about language, literacy, culture, learning, and their own identities as agents of change (Lewison et al. 2008).

Problems and Difficulties and Future Directions

The discussion above demonstrates that human and social action is mediated by language and other meaning making symbols within a range of different settings. While some of the studies discussed in this chapter shed light on the different orientations and directions that critical literacy education has taken, there are some difficulties that need to be addressed in moving forward. The following section foregrounds some of these challenges, together with some considerations for future possibilities.

The integration of genre approaches with critical literacy practices is advocated by scholars as a way of providing access to meaning for a range of students. Genre approaches are often identified with the analysis of texts and how linguistic structures carry out social functions. Influenced by Hallidayan perspectives, scholars claim that it adds a useful dimension to critical literacy approaches as it allows an exploration and understanding of the language used by a writer to establish particular meanings across a range of texts. However, critics argue that this concept becomes problematic when considered in the light of diverse classroom contexts. They state that such claims overlook the need for students to grasp a comprehensive understanding of textual genres and the ways that lexical and syntactic functions are associated with particular discourses and ideologies. Luke (1997) recognizes that learners from low socioeconomic or diverse language and ethnic backgrounds are positioned as disenfranchised in such approaches due to the emphasis that is placed on ideological and textual analyses. These students often fail to recognize certain portrayals unless effective pedagogic practices are implemented in the classroom to enable them to discover such complex uses of language.

Problems also arise when classroom-based practices are considered. Critics argue that critical literacy appears to lack a set of pedagogical strategies that

would position it as a systematic curricular approach. Luke (2000) suggests that this is due to the diverse theoretical positions that underpin or inform critical literacy (e.g., Bakhtin, Foucault, Derrida, Bourdieu, and Freire) which are then translated into a broad range of pedagogic routines. Despite the plurality of theoretical perspectives associated with critical approaches, Luke (2000) cautions against the development of a specific blueprint for "doing" critical literacy in classroom contexts. A number of proponents of critical literacy (e.g., Luke 2000; Vasquez et al. 2013) align with this perspective and suggest that critical literacy practices need to be negotiated between teachers and students across a variety of teaching contexts. The range of conceptual positions and the reluctance to specify a formula for such practices place the responsibility for curricular design and classroom application on teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum developers (Behrman 2006). These challenges are not insignificant and suggest that the combination of critical literacy theories and practices requires creative and localized solutions.

Within critical literacy approaches texts are conceived as cultural tools or human designs that are used within particular environments to communicate specific meanings. It is essential within critical literacy practices that students from language minority backgrounds are given opportunities to deconstruct these meanings and understand the implicit ways that discourses of power are negotiated within texts. The field of critical literacy would benefit from an exploration of how teachers negotiate the complex ways of integrating critical literacy practices, discourse analysis approaches, and second language pedagogies within existing curricular frameworks. This focus on research would provide insights into the ways that teachers use such practices to support students from such backgrounds to develop the language needed to read beyond the text and question how they are being positioned by the text as readers. Investigating how teachers provide a critically literate curriculum that enables their students to engage with the risky topics that surround their daily lives would enable us to gain insights into local solutions to the various challenges linked to its implementation (Vasquez et al. 2013).

Given the increase in global migration, teachers need professional development opportunities to reflect on their sense of self as professionals as they seek to meet the literacy demands of diverse classroom populations. Classrooms in many Anglophone countries are now places where complex social, cultural, linguistic, and political issues intersect. This is a rich environment for the development critical literacy practices and the reconstruction of teacher identity, but many teachers lack professional development opportunities that allow them to reflect on such matters. Professional learning programs would enable teachers to understand how knowledge, identity, and classroom practices intersect (Miller 2009). Research that tracks teachers engaged in professional development over a period of time would allow researchers to gain an understanding of the complex and conflicted thought processes that take place as they seek to implement critical literacy practices and reflect on their image of self in complex landscapes.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

D. Palmer and B. Caldas: Critical Ethnography. In Volume: Research Methods in Language and Education

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Language, Literacy, and Knowledge Production in Africa

Kwesi Kwaa Prah

Abstract

This contribution assesses the state of language and literacy studies in Africa. It traces the extent and record of African scripts and debates issues of literacy development in African societies. It poses questions regarding the challenges ahead in literacy enhancement on the continent and initiates the discussion with an examination of the question of numbers of African languages.

Keywords

Literacy • Knowledge Production • African Scripts • African Languages

Contents

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Introduction

This contribution assesses the state of language and literacy studies in Africa. It traces the extent and record of African scripts and debates issues of literacy development in African societies. It poses questions regarding the challenges ahead in literacy enhancement on the continent and initiates the discussion with an examination of the question of numbers of African languages.

Early Developments

The issue of how many languages exist in Africa is a complex consideration. Estimates vary very widely. They range from Lord Hailey's figure of 700 to Grimes's figure quoted by UNESCO of "about 2000" (Grimes 2000; Hailey 1938, p. 68). Gregersen wrote that "the nearly 300 million people in Africa speak something over 1000 languages-with only about 40 spoken by more than a million people. Language communities with 1000 or fewer speakers are not rare, and at least 20 languages are reported with fewer than 100 speakers" (Gregersen 1977, p. 200). Heine notes "the bewildering multiplicity of roughly one thousand languages and several thousands of dialects" (Heine 1993, p. 1). In *The Languages of Africa* (1970 edition), Greenberg lists 730 languages in his index. The author admitted that, "in the present state of our knowledge, any listing of languages is necessarily unsatisfactory in many respects." Greenberg's listing is inaccurate and displays some of the problems the Center for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) research project is clearing up. For example, dialects of Luo like Shilluk, Anyuak, Acholi, and Lango are listed as separate languages. Bari, Mondari, Fajelu, and Kakwa are listed as separate languages when they are in fact simply dialects of the same language. Under Akan, it is suggested that "see individual languages." In the guide to his entry of languages on sectoral maps, he explains that "languages spoken in a number of areas are only entered once on the map." Thus Fulani is only indicated in one of the main West Atlantic areas and not elsewhere. When reference is made to some other language, the number of the language itself is not to be found on any of the maps. The reason for this may be that it is merely a variant name, that the group is too small to be indicated on a map, or that they live within the speech area of another people. Whatever the case may be, this way of representation is misleading. Fulani speakers are today to be found in 17 countries in West and Central Africa, in the area Dalby calls "fragmentation belt" (an area of extreme linguistic fragmentation), which covers the latitudinal space of the area as far north as the Senegambia basin, to Ethiopia, and down to Northern Tanzania. Fulani is easily one of the largest languages in Africa, spoken by about 60 million people as either first, second, or third language, and it named variously as Pulaar, Fulful, Fulfulde, Peul, Tuclour, Fula, and Fulani. Greenberg's manner of presentation obscures such important facts about the language and its demographics. These weaknesses have been largely carried into the work of Fivaz and Scott (Fivaz and Scott 1977).

Mann and Dalby's *The Thesaurus of African Languages* poses other problems. The authors indicate in their introduction that "the approach we have adopted is to treat as a 'language' each speech-form whose speakers claim a separate linguistic identity, reserving the term dialect for cases where speakers explicitly acknowledge both a wider and narrower linguistic identity. Linguistic identity is generally manifested in a common name, so that crudely it may be said we have distinguished as many languages as there are names used by communities to refer to their language." (Mann and Dalby 1987, p. 1) This is unfortunate. A great deal of self-identification in Africa as in many parts of the world is more political than linguistic/cultural in any serious sense. In Africa, many of these identities have been created by a convergence of colonial administrative and missionary activity (particularly with reference in the latter instance to Bible translations) (Mann and Dalby 1987, p. 1).

This confusion of numbers plays into the hands of those who then argue that because there is such a profusion of languages in Africa, since Africa is a Tower of Babel, it is not realistic to envisage the use of African languages as languages of education and development.

What is not easily recognized by many observers is that most of what in the literature, and classificatory schemes, on African languages pass as separate languages in an overwhelming number of cases are actually dialectal variants of "core languages." In other words, most African languages can be regarded as mutually intelligible variants within large clusters (core languages). Indeed, almost all African languages are transborder languages, and the majority of them cross more than one state border.

Major Contributions

What the Center for Advanced Studies on African Society (CASAS) research has revealed is that over 80–85% of Africans, as first-, second-, and third-language speakers, speak no more than 15–17 core languages, based on our clustering on the basis of mutual intelligibility. Africa, for its size, is hardly a *Tower of Babel*. If the total population of Black Africa is between 700 and 800 million (as first-, second-, and third-language speakers), the Fula, Pulaar, Peul, Tuclour, Fulful, Fulbe, and Fulani cluster alone would account for about 60 million; Hausa and its varieties bring up another 40–50 million; Oromo, Igbo, Bambara, Amharic, Kiswahili, Yoruba, and Gbe would produce another 35–40 million in each instance; the Nguni dialects, the Sotho Tswana, the Akan, the Eastern and the Western inter-lacustrine Bantu (Kitara) languages, Luganda/Lusoga and Luo, Gur, Lingala, and Kikongo are between 20 and 30 million per set. Other languages, of much smaller size, but which enjoy preponderance within existing states include Fang, Nyanja-Cewa, Wolof, Ovambo-Herero, Sango, Somali, and Samburu/Maa.

Babatunde Fafunwa, basing his viewpoint on David Dalby and UNESCO sources, suggests that 120 language clusters have been identified. 85% of the languages are concentrated in the "fragmentation belt." (Fafunwa 1989, pp. 99 & 102) Arguably, the figure for language clusters is actually very much lower. It has

been estimated that 75% of the languages in the "fragmentation belt" belong to the two groups of Hamito/Semitic/Afro-Asiatic and the Niger Congo.

Actually, Afro-Asiatic subsumes Hamito/Semitic. In any case the Meinhof's Hamitic theory which suggests that Hamites entered Africa through the Horn area is discredited and enjoys little standing today. Furthermore, whether the Niger-Congo phylum is an offshoot of Proto-Afro-Asiatic or more immediately related to Chadic is evidentially contestable. Fafunwa has reproduced a UNESCO table on *Languages Used Across National Boundaries* which is rather poor. For example, if Setswana is understood in its narrow sense (i.e., that it is not a dialectal variant within the Sotho/Tswana cluster but a totally unique language), it features in Namibia, Botswana, and South Africa, not two countries as the UNESCO table suggested. In a wider and more significant sense, Setswana is part of the wider Sotho-Tswana cluster which includes Lozi in Barotseland. Somali is spoken in five countries but does not appear on the table. Evidence indeed suggests that well over 95% of African languages are spoken across borders.

Another example would be that if Luo is used as a restricted descriptive category, it covers parts of three countries (Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania). In the wider sense in which it has been used by Crazzolara or Okot Bitek, its coverage will include in geographical scope an area as wide as parts of Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania (Crazzolara 1938). Proximate and mutually intelligible dialects of the Luo language in Eastern Africa, for example, are sometimes referred to under various designations as Jur (Sudan), Anyuak (Sudan and Ethiopia), Shilluk (Sudan and Ethiopia), Acholi (Sudan and Uganda), Langi (Uganda), Alur (Uganda), Chopadholla (Uganda), and Luo (Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania). Kikuyu, Embu, Meru, and Akamba in Kenya are closely related variants. The Bari-speaking people in Sudan have been "analytically chopped up" into Mondari, Bari, Nyangbara, Fajelu, Kakwa (Uganda, Sudan, Zaire), and Kuku (Uganda and Sudan). Tugen, Kipsigis, Nandi, Sebei, Pokot, Sabaot, Elgeyo, and Marakwet are not separate languages, but rather dialects of Kalenjin (Jerono et al. 2012). Muerle, Boya, Lopit, and Tenet in Sudan are mutually intelligible. In Ghana, the Akan have been in the anthropological literature referred to as Ashanti, Fanti, Agona, Kwahu, Akim, Akuapim, and Nzema, and even subunits of these like Ahanta, Gomua, Edina, etc. The Gbe-/Ewe-speaking people can be found in communities all along the West African coast from Ghana through Togo and Benin and to the Nigerian border area. This cluster which has been orthographically harmonized by the Labo-Gbe Center in Benin and CASAS includes Aja in Badagry, Nigeria, Aja, Gun, Mina, and Fon in Benin, Mina and Ewe in Togo, and Ewe in Ghana (Capo 2000; Bedou-Jondoh et al. 2005). In East Africa, the Teso, Kumam, Karamojong, Nyangatom, Dodos, Jie, Turkana, Toposa, and Donyiro collectively cover the areas in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Sudan. The Nguni are found in Tanzania where they closely relate ethnolinguistically to the Nyamwezi, Ngoni, and Konde. They are also located in Malawi. Nyanja in Zambia and Cewa in Malawi are practically the same (Banda et al. 2008). In Mozambique, Shangaan, Tsonga, and Ronga are mutually intelligible Nguni variants. But they have phonologically and morphologically grown away

from the other languages in the cluster. Nguni in Swaziland is called Swati, Kangwane in northern Natal/Zululand, Zulu in South Africa, Xhosa in South Africa, Ndebele in South Africa, and Matabeleland in Zimbabwe (Malambe et al. 2013). Some classifications even would count as separate languages narrow dialectal subforms of Xhosa like Bomvana, Cele Baca, Gcaleka/Ngqika, Hlubi, Mpondo, Mpondomise, Ntlangwini, Tembu, and Xesibe. The Sotho-Tswana cluster is to be found as Tswana in Namibia, Tswana in Botswana, Lozi in Barotseland/Zambia, Sotho in Lesotho, and Pedi in South Africa (Chebanne et al. 2003). Again in East Africa, the inter-lacustrine Bantu have a high degree of mutual intelligibility. They include the Nyoro, Toro, Haya, Ganda, Ankole, and Rwanda (Namyalo et al. 2008; Ndoleriire et al. 2007). Rendille-Somali and Oromo and Borana are literally closely related pairs (Qorro et al. 2014). Maasai and Samburu are equally close (Karani et al. 2014).

Heine has identified four key objectives, which motivate the classification of African languages. These are, firstly, the need to bring some order to the multiplicity of African languages (referential *classification*); secondly, a search for origins of these languages (*genetic classification*); thirdly, the inter-linguistic influences between these languages (*areal classification*); and, fourthly, the establishment of the structural convergencies and divergencies between African languages (*typological classification*). Heine argues that these different types of classification serve different goals and functions and that indeed "non-awareness of the different functions of these classifications may lead to scientifically untenable results." A good example of the pitfalls of this methodological mess is provided by Malcolm Guthrie who "confused two different types of classification by grafting and superimposing a genetic classification on a referential one-with the effect that his reconstruction of Bantu pre-history turned out to be at variance with the historical facts he had intended to describe" (Heine 1993, p. 1).

Work in Progress

The role of language and literacy in contemporary African social life depicts peculiarities which are increasingly unique in the post-colonial world. There is a fairly decisive difference between the languages of the elites and the languages of the broad societal majorities. The elites continue to be social constituencies which utilize erstwhile colonial languages: French, English, and Portuguese. The technical instrument required for social performance in the culture of African elites is literacy in the language of the former colonial power. The masses of African countries have little or no facility in these languages. In African societies, the colonial languages are social symbols of power (Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir 2003, p. 80). All public business and governmental matters are transacted in these languages, and therefore those that have skills in these languages control public and government business. These realities are considerably different from the experience of post-colonial Asia.

Indigenous and Colonial Languages and Literacies

About 45 years ago, Gerald Moore made a number of perceptive observations which bear on the considerations here. He wrote that:

> In the British West Indies, as successive waves of African, Indian and Chinese immigration spent themselves upon the shore, forgetting in a generation or two the very provinces whence they had come, English in a variety of dialect forms gradually established itself as the unique language of the region. In Asia and Africa it became, at least temporarily, the language of government, of higher education and, more important still, of higher status. In Asia, however, the withdrawal of imperial control revealed how precarious the situation of the language really was. Their volume of literary activity in languages such as Bengali, Tamil, Gujarati, Malay and Urdu, together with the gradual decline of English usage in public life, suggests that ultimately the imperial language may prove as marginal as the English presence itself; whilst in tropical Africa only the recent spread of mass education has offered it the possibility of escape from an equally marginal role. (Moore 1969, p. xi)

In the half century, which has passed since these points were made, the role of English in Africa has not gone beyond the narrow elite which is able to use the language with any degree of accomplishment.

By and large, mass literacy education campaigns in Africa have had little impact in effectively spreading the English language. What can however be said is that its role as the linguistic basis for the exercise and the administration of power in former British colonial Africa remains entrenched. Moore added that "... historical experience confirms that a language which remains the property of a small elite cannot provide the basis for a national culture. A recent parallel would be the use of French by polite society in nineteenth century Russia" (Moore 1969, p. xi). Similarly, Latin could not provide a basis for national cultures in Roman Europe. In contemporary Africa the development of even outlines of national cultures after almost a half century of post-colonialism continues to be elusive.

Two decades ago, Jack Goody made insightful remarks on this issue. He wrote that "indeed part of the phenomenon called neo-colonialism has to be seen in terms of this very openness which is associated with the absence of a strong, written tradition that can stand up against the written cultures of the world system" (Goody 1989, p. 86). Goody's judgment here is persuasive, but the additional point has been made that while a written culture has made the resistance against cultural neocolonialism of parts of Asia more successful, what has perhaps been most central in this cultural resilience has been the standing of the world religions of the Near East and Asia proper. Western cultural penetration of the non-western world never successfully undermined the status of the major religions of Asia the way they successfully did in Africa (Prah 2001, p. 125).

The process of knowledge production in Africa is represented in two histories. There is the indigenous knowledge which precedes the colonial encounter and which has been the result of the age-long transmission of knowledge from generation to generation. The language base of this knowledge in Africa has largely been orally constructed. For this reason as a knowledge depository, it irredeemably leaks. Collective memory cannot be held and transferred as integer knowledge with any

reliability. With the establishment of western presence and institutions, the processes of knowledge production in Africa were superseded by western modes of knowledge production built into the introduction and use of western languages. This latter form of knowledge production ignored the preceding processes of knowledge production founded on African languages. In effect, two parallel processes for the construction of knowledge were established.

Record of African Scripts

For the most part, until a century ago, African societies were preliterate. Literacy based on the Roman alphabet is no more than a century and a half old for the majority of African societies. There are, however, some languages with a long tradition of writing and which employ scripts other than the Roman. The Arabic script has been used to write a number of African languages. Such usage is described as *ajami* in Arabic. They include languages like Swahili, Hausa, Wolof, Fulfulde, Kanuri, Bambara, and others. In all these cases, in more recent times, Roman letters have replaced the Arabic script. The earliest Afrikaans scripts (South Africa) were written as *ajami*. This goes back to the historical record of the early Malay Muslim slaves who were brought into the Western Cape of South Africa from Java by the Dutch colonists. Ethiopic, the old Semitic script from antiquity, is still used to write Geez, Amharic, and Tigrinya, and the Greek alphabet in a revised and adapted form was used for writing Coptic and Nobiin (Old Nubian). Hunwick informs us that Mansa Musa historically was the best-known ruler of the Mali Empire. After his return from pilgrimage to Mecca in 1325, he ordered the construction of the Great Mosque of Timbuktu. The construction of the great mosque established Timbuktu's status as an Islamic city, and over the next 200 years, Muslim scholars were drawn to it, so that by the mid-fifteenth century Timbuktu had become a major center of Islamic learning under African cultural conditions.

Timbuktu's most celebrated scholar Ahmad Baba (1564–1627) claimed that his library contained 1600 volumes and that it was the smallest library of any of his family (Hunwick 2003, p. 2). Libraries supporting the Timbuktu manuscript tradition have for centuries been numerous. There are in Timbuktu alone today some 20 private manuscript libraries and about 100 in the sixth region of Mali (Hunwick 2003, p. 2). In effect "Arabic was to Muslim Africa what Latin was to medieval Christian Europe" (Hunwick 2003, p. 2).

Over and above all these "imported" scripts, Africa has a few indigenous examples of written forms. Until 1972 when the Latin script was adopted by the Siad Barre administration, Somali was unofficially but popularly rendered in the Osmania script devised by Osman Yusuf Keenadiid. While it was in form a good part Ethiopic, it had also Arabic and Italian influences.

The Vai script, strictly speaking a syllabary or a catalog of characters, each of which denotes a syllable rather than a single sound, was created in the 1830s by Momadu Bukele. It remains popular in Liberia, particularly among the Vai, where it

is mostly used in informal correspondence. More recently, in the subregion, Mende (a purely phonetic Mende script from Sierra Leone was devised around 1920 by Kisimi Kamala), Loma, Kpelle, and Bassa have developed related scripts, which lean on the Vai example. All of these, like the Vai example, are syllabaries. An alphabet, Nko, was devised by Souleymane Kante in 1949. Until today, it is used very restrictedly and primarily by speakers within the Mandingo, Malinke, Bambara, Dioula, and Kasonke cluster, especially in Guinea, Mali, and Ivory Coast. A Bambara "Ma-sa-ba" syllabary was devised by Woyo Couloubali in the Kaarta region of Mali in 1930. Between the decade spanning 1920 and 1931, syllabaries had appeared for Mende, Bassa, Loma, Kpelle, and Efik-Ibibio. An earlier esoteric alphabet has been in use for about a century among the Efik in southeastern Nigeria. Better known, perhaps, and historically more widely studied is the Bamum script (Shümon) invented and developed under the direction of King Njoya of southern Cameroon. It was originally conceived as a logographic system and was gradually changed by successive royal edicts first to a syllabary and subsequently to an alphabet (Berry 1970, p. 88). After 1910, his scribes began compiling the chronicle of the Bamum Kingdom. This was finished during the 1920s in the closing years of Njoya's reign (Dugast and Jeffreys 1950). In sum, specifically in West Africa, over the past century, a number of indigenously conceived writing systems have been produced. Most of them have from the start been largely esoteric and invariably religious in inclination. There is also the particularly interesting case of *Oberi Okaime*, a language which was created by members of a millenarian sect based in the village of Ikpa in the Itu Division of Calabar Province in 1931. The sect was founded in 1927, but the language emerged in 1931. There is no evidence that the language and script survived beyond the 1930s. None of these African scripts has been effective in competition to the colonially introduced Roman alphabet. None seriously moved outside the narrow confines of small exclusivist groups, often semireligious. It is interesting to note that this religious dimension of literacy and scripts is shared by religious communities as historical entities in other parts of the world.

Apart from Ethiopian clericalism, Coptic priesthood, and African Muslim scholarship, literacy as a sociological phenomenon, in old Africa, never fully emerged. The developers and custodians of the African scripts referred to here like the Efik, Bassa, Vai, Loma, and Bamum never formed a composite and coherent priesthood to consolidate, protect, and elevate the scripts. This fact may be important in our attempt to understand the absence of literacy in large parts of old Africa.

Problems and Difficulties

When modern literacy came to Africa through the western encounter, the principal agents for its spread were missionaries. Literacy in Africa therefore first made an impact as a way in which the Christian traditions of the west could be transferred to the mind of the African. For this very reason, literacy in Africa introduced by the missionaries was undertaken in African languages, close to the hearts and minds of

the people, and the first book that was invariably translated was the Bible. Thus literacy for the missionaries was meant in the first instance to serve purely Christian ideals. But rivalries between various Christian church groups and sects were transferred into the forms of orthographies adopted by competing missionary groups. Very frequently rival missionary groups would use the same language, indeed the same dialect, and translate the Bible using totally different orthographic and spelling systems.

The colonial administrators, especially in the early stage of the establishment and consolidation, of colonial rule largely left the tasks of education in the hands of missionaries. The first schools and some of the most prominent schools in Africa today remain missionary schools or schools with distinct Christian affiliation. Slowly as colonial administrations became entrenched, economic, social, and political interests moved more prominently to the fore in the organization of colonial societies. The administrations were anxious that the products of missionary education could serve the intentions of the colonial administrations. Like Macaulay's intended product which he described in his *Minute on Indian Education (1835)* for the British Raj, colonialism created "a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect."

Frequently, in the early stages of the introduction of western literacy and education, Africans would resist, but with time almost all acquiesced. In British colonial African schools like King's College (Budo, Uganda), King's College (Lagos, Nigeria), and Achimota College (Achimota, Ghana) quickly acquired reputations for the English literacy proficiency of their pupils. These schools, organized along British public school lines, reproduced in colonial African literacy standards in English which permitted pupils to transit from these colonial schools to British universities with relative ease. For as long as colonialism lasted, these standards held. Currently in the post-colonial situation from all parts of Anglophone Africa, reports suggest that the literacy skills of students in English are rapidly falling. This is a phenomenon, which is also noticeable in French-based universities in Francophone Africa.

In post-Apartheid South Africa, at university level, poor English communication skills are particularly noticeable among African language-speaking students. However, these constraints are by no means exclusive to them. Some lecturers have also pointed out that the quality of written Afrikaans is also deteriorating. This is happening in a society in which the governmentally engineered supremacy of Afrikaans under Apartheid has over the past 20 years been popularly reversed. It is observable that in post-apartheid South Africa, English is fast gaining ground over all the other languages. Although the government on paper has elevated the status to equality of all 11 official languages, in practice there appears to be little use of the African languages for official tasks. In a conversation held with the African National Congress (ANC) parliamentarian Duma Nkosi on the 11 October 2000, he suggested that even in Parliament there are members who battle to express themselves effectively in English. Sometimes the inadequacies of their linguistic expression distort the meaning they wish to convey.

Future Directions

Literacy estimates for Africa generally stand at around 50%. But literacy figures for Africa are notoriously unreliable. Apart from the problems of certifiable counting methods, there is the more serious problem of frequently not counting literacy in African languages. Strikingly, literacy in African languages, where it exists, in the absence of literature is tenuous. Literature in African languages continues to be predominantly religious. In many areas, the Bible is the most available text in African languages.

In practical terms, Tanzania is possibly the most successful country in sub-Saharan Africa with regard to literacy in African languages. It is the only country where more newspapers in African languages are sold than English, French, or Portuguese newspapers. But even then it is a success story built on one language, Kiswahili. Indeed, on the whole continent, newspapers in Kiswahili constitute the overwhelming majority of papers in African languages.

The challenges of democracy and underdevelopment can only be met when Africans begin to work as literate societies in African languages. To do this there is need for the harmonization of the orthographies of mutually intelligible languages so that on the economies of scale the production of literature becomes profitable and cost wise within reach for the masses. African development must mean the development of literacy in African languages.

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Biliteracy and Globalization

Viniti Vaish

Abstract

This chapter starts with defining 'biliteracy' and 'globalization' interdisciplinarily. Conceptually the former is a text type and the latter a process. Four themes stand out at the cross roads of biliteracy and globalization: changing media of instruction in national school systems, new literacies required in the workplace, the threatened linguistic ecology of the globe, and biliterate textual practices influenced by the internet. Each of these themes is discussed under the heading 'major contributions'. The author discusses her own and other research projects regarding biliteracy under 'work in progress' while pointing out that many school systems teach languages in silos and proscribe biliteracy practices in the classroom denying students access to the multiple resources they bring to the class. Finally the author contends that future research in this area should study the workplace which is changing rapidly and thereafter try to link the skills required in the 21st century workplace to biliteracy in the classroom.

Contents

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Introduction

The confluence of biliteracy and globalization is somewhat uncharted water. What text types and practices does one find at the lifeworlds of this confluence and what implications do they have for the bilingual classroom? Who are the main players at this meeting place of texts (as in biliteracy) and processes (as in globalization): markets, policymakers, teacher practitioners, or finally the consumers and producers of languages? What does a biliterate text in our globalizing world look like both inside and outside the classroom? This chapter explores some of the answers to these questions.

The fields of biliteracy and globalization are highly specialized within their broader disciplines. Hornberger (*Continua of Biliteracy*) has provided an updated review on the field of biliteracy, which goes back to the 1970s. Thus, this chapter will not repeat what Hornberger has already provided for us; instead it will concentrate more on the nexus of biliteracy and globalization. The data herein come from the two countries where I conduct the research – India and Singapore. Research in the former is an ethnographic analysis of a Hindi–English dual medium government school (Rajkiya Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya), which follows the three-language formula (TLF), India's language in education policy. In the case of Singapore, data come from two research projects. The first is the Sociolinguistic Survey of Singapore (SSS 2006) and the second is titled: Use of First Language in Teaching and Learning Chinese and English. In this chapter I will refer to the latter as the translanguaging project.

Early Developments

Globalization

The literature on globalization can be considered to be somewhat bounded by two massive trilogies: Wallerstein's (1974, 1980, 1989) *World Systems Analysis* and Castells' (1996/2000, 1997/2004, 1998/2000) *The Information Age*. Both sets of work are brilliant in their analyses of the ways the globe is networked into congeries of empires, corporations, communities, and pan-national organizations. However, Wallerstein's Marxist perspective is now dated due to the demise of communism as an enduring political alternative. Though Castells' early writings are Marxist, his later work is more applicable to the world in which we live today. The shortcoming of his trilogy is that the work does not make India a major focus as it does China, thus

excluding not only a globalizing country of one billion people but also one of the dominant cultures of our world.

Globalization has been defined somewhat differently by economists (Bhagwati 2004), sociologists (Castells 1996/2000, 1997/2004, 1998/2000), and anthropologists (Appadurai 1996), but they all agree on the high level of connectivity in this phenomenon between nations, corporations, and individuals. Pieterse, the cultural anthropologist, gives a definition that encompasses many of these views. He writes that globalization "is an objective, empirical process of increasing economic and political connectivity, a subjective process unfolding in consciousness as the collective awareness of growing global interconnectedness, and a host of specific globalizing projects that seek to shape global conditions" (Pieterse 2004, pp. 16–17). As a phenomenon, Friedman (2005) points out that globalization is not new; in fact it is a process that started around 1492 and has manifested itself in three phases so far. In the first phase, 1492–1800, globalization was about imperial forces acquiring colonies by brute force; the second phase, 1800–2000, saw the rise of multinationals and the early version of the World Wide Web; and finally, since 2000, globalization is about individuals participating in the global economy leading to what Friedman calls a "flat world" or level playing field.

Biliteracy and Related Terminology

Hornberger (*Continua of Biliteracy*) points out that in the 1970s the word "biliteracy" carried connotations of fluency or mastery in the reading and writing of two or more languages. Her own definition of biliteracy, on which this chapter is based, is "any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing" (Hornberger 2003, p. 35). This definition includes varying levels of competencies, text types (traditional and multimodal), and verbal and symbolic communication. It thus encompasses biliteracy as exhibited in the lifeworld of the bilingual and not as confined only to the classroom through school-related texts. Hornberger's model is a way of analyzing what is taught (content of biliteracy), in which languages it is taught (media of biliteracy), where it is taught (contexts of biliteracy), and what is the outcome of the teaching (development of biliteracy). The nestedness of these four sets of continua emphasizes that for optimal biliterate development the learner should be allowed to access as many points on the continua as possible.

Related terms that have currency today are multimodal literacy (Kress 2003), which is literacy based on the affordances of a web page, gesture, sound, and other semiotic symbols including script, new literacies that one finds in cyberspace or workplace (Lankshear and Knobel 2003), and finally multiliteracies (Cope and Kalantzis 2000). None of these terms are about multiple languages and scripts as directly as is the term "biliteracy," though all these terms are based on linguistic and cultural diversity. The term that comes closest in meaning to biliteracy is "multilingual literacies" used by Martin-Jones and Jones (2000). Recently Pahl (2006) has edited a book that ethnographically links New Literacy Studies to multimodality in

an age of globalization. However, the multimodality inherent in the diverse scripts and languages in which a bilingual has competence is not the major focus of this otherwise excellent volume.

Major Contributions

The themes that emerge from the field of biliteracy and globalization are changing media of instruction in national school systems, new literacies required in the workplace, the threatened linguistic ecology of the globe, and finally biliterate textual practices influenced by the Internet. Each of these will be briefly described in this section. Let me begin with changing media of instruction and new literacies. Block and Cameron (2002, p. 5) point out that "globalization changes the conditions under which language learning takes place" by commodifying languages and creating new literacies required by the workplace that schools are expected to teach. This is definitely true of India. TLF, which offered English as a second language only in secondary schools, is being transformed by globalization because the urban disadvantaged are demanding earlier access to the linguistic capital of English. This demand is linked to new sectors of the economy which are opening up since India started globalizing in 1991, like the mushrooming of call centers all over New Delhi. Consequently, government schools have initiated dual-medium programs, which offer English as one of the media of instruction along with Hindi from nursery itself.

The spread of global English is perceived as threatening the linguistic diversity of the planet. Using the metaphor of biodiversity, Skutnabb-Kangas (2003, p. 34) argues that not only can the world's linguistic diversity be documented in the same way as biodiversity, there is also a correlation and, indeed, even causal connection between the two. She writes that "Maintenance of diversities . . . is one end of the continuum where ecocide and linguistic genocide are at the other end." Skutnabb-Kangas' main point through these arguments is to raise awareness about language endangerment of small languages from the threat of big killer languages, like English. In a similar vein, Phillipson (1992, 2006) sees globalization, Americanization, and Englishization as part of one process. He finds that English has retained its hold in former colonies and that it remains a divisive tool with which socioeconomic strata are separated into the haves and have-nots. This view has been critiqued by Canagarajah (1999) who shows how English has been appropriated in Sri Lanka and Vaish (2005) who finds an agentive demand for and use of English in India.

Contesting the well-known view that globalization homogenizes languages is the not so well-known literature documenting the rise of non-English languages due to globalization Soh (2005). Dor's (2004, p. 98) thesis is that "the forces of globalization do not have a vested interest in the global spread of English. They have a short-term interest in penetrating local markets through local languages and a long-term interest in turning these languages into commodified tools of communication." He predicts that the Internet "is going to be a predominantly non-English-language medium." In 2004, there were 280 million English users and no less than 657 million non-English users, and this gap is widening in favor of the latter. A similar view is

expressed by Indrajit Banerjee, Secretary-General of the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), who comments:

> One would think that globalization in Asia would mean going English but that's not the case . . . The diasporic market means you can have international newspapers, international TV and radio channels which are completely based on local languages. This is what I call the globalization of the local. (Banerjee (2005), p. 29)

In keeping with Dor's view, Warschauer (2002) and Warschauer et al. (2002) point out that though in the Internet's history and design English and Romanized languages are privileged, this is changing due to the increasing online usage of languages like Arabic. For instance, the website of CNNArabic.com is a biliterate text that uses both Roman and Arabic scripts. Interestingly it is also a multimodal text because it has photos, videos, and sound. Also in informal e-mails, colloquial Arabic is extensively used in the Roman script – a type of biliterate text that is becoming very common on the Internet.

This is also found in data from India where Hindi–English bilinguals use similar biliteracy practices to communicate. The following e-mail, which was sent to me by one of the young students in my study in India, is a case in point. Here the sender uses Romanized Hindi (bolded) and English to communicate:

> Hi Mam
> **Main Bahut Khus Hua Apki** E-Mail **Pakar**
> *(I was very happy to receive your e-mail)*
> & Thanks for my reply.

Finally, English is not the only language to claim a global status. Goh (2000) stakes a similar claim for Mandarin saying that like English it is used in inner, outer, and expanding circles. Goh's claim is based on the increasing economic power of the inner circle (China) and the increasing number of Mandarin learners in the outer circle.

Goh also points to the rising use of Mandarin on the Internet through sites like the Chinese Google and Chinese Wikipedia. Thus, the emergence of languages like Arabic and Mandarin in cyberspace and the mingling of scripts with diverse languages in informal communication point to new biliterate practices that are yet to be explored in depth.

Work in Progress

Broadly speaking, work in biliteracy tends to fall into two discrete domains – either the research is in the classroom or on the linguistic landscape of a site. A project of the former type is "Signs of Difference: How Children Learn to Write in Different Script Systems" undertaken by the Institute of Education in the UK (Kenner 2004; Kenner and Kress 2003). This was a year-long study of 6-year-olds in London learning Chinese, Arabic, and Spanish along with English. The methodology

involved asking the case study children to teach their peers how to write Chinese, Arabic, and Spanish using their own work. They found that in this biscriptal experience each script is a different "mode" and the child organizes the Chinese and the Arabic scripts in terms of spatiality and directionality.

In a research project currently being conducted in Singapore, the author is studying the use of translanguaging in the English reading classroom. Translanguaging "in its original sense refers to the purposeful pedagogical alternation of languages in spoken and written, receptive and productive modes" (Hornberger and Link 2012, p. 262). According to Garcia (2009) and Baker (2006), the term was first used by Cen Williams in Wales and referred to a specific curriculum which involved "the hearing, signing, or reading of lessons in one language, and the development of the work (the oral discussion, the writing of passages, the development of projects and experiments) in another language" (Garcia 2009, p. 301).

Specifically Vaish is researching how vocabulary, discourse, and grammar can be taught to emergent biliterates who are struggling to become proficient readers in English. In one of the schools where the study was conducted by Malay–English bilinguals, it was found that Malay can be used as a resource to teach homophones like "whole" and "hole." When the children were told the meaning of these words in Malay, they immediately understood the homophonic nature of this pair of English words (Vaish and Subhan 2014).

The *International Journal of Multilingualism* has focused on the concept of "linguistic landscape." An illustration of such research is Cenoz and Gorter (2006) who compare 975 signs on two streets in the Netherlands and Spain, respectively, on the basis of the type of sign, number, and names of languages on the sign, order of languages, and type of font and whether the sign represents top-down language policy or bottom-up language use. Such literature perceives biliteracy as semiotic texts, which are found not just in the classroom but also in the lifeworld of advertising, newspapers, comics, television, movies, and other textual practices that influence school-going children.

In similar studies both Bhatia and Ritchie (2004) and Ladousa (2002) write about Hindi–English advertising in India. Bhatia and Ritchie (2004, p. 513) hypothesize: "The economic forces of globalization together with the rise of global media have set the stage for a dramatic, exponential rise in global bilingualism," thus challenging Phillipson's idea of English language hegemony. Ladousa's data come from the city of Banaras where the English-only advertisements in the Roman script signal a global language of the center, whereas the Hindi ones in the Devanagari script index either a powerless periphery or an emerging Hindu–Hindi power that resists the linguistic colonization of English.

The literature on linguistic landscape does not use the term "biliteracy" preferring "bilingualism" as a catchall that accommodates speech and text. However, changes in the linguistic ecology of the globalizing world and medium of instruction demand a closer look at biliteracy so as to define it in terms of specific texts and practices as well as enrich existing theory. Vaish (2008) suggests that biliterate texts can be categorized as traditionally biliterate or hybrid. A biliterate text is an artifact, for instance, a road sign, a piece of writing in the classroom, an advertisement on the

Fig. 1 A biliterate text

street or graffiti, and finally an English textbook that has been glossed and annotated in Hindi, in which there is written or symbolic (as in an image) evidence of two or more languages or cultures. A hybrid text is a subset of biliterate texts in that it has an aesthetic, creative nature, is usually not grammatically acceptable, and is popular in sites like advertising and public culture. Specifically a hybrid text represents symbolically or through a comingling of scripts, what a bilingual does through code switching. While the former may be accommodated inside the bilingual classroom, the latter is proscribed.

Figure 1 may be considered a biliterate text. It is a page from the English textbook of a girl in grade 10 of the dual-medium Rajkiya Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya in New Delhi.

This poem by William Wordsworth appears in the English textbook for class 10, which is used in the government school system in India. The student to whom this textbook belongs has underlined all the words she has found difficult and written their meanings in Hindi. For instance:

Bare tree: बिना पत्ते का पेड़
Cave: पहाड़ों की गुफ़ा

In some cases, the student has made annotations in English; for instance, she has written "address of a child" and glossed this phrase in Hindi as बच्चे का पता so as to make a distinction between the two meanings of the noun "address."

The teachers in the Rajkiya Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya actively encourage the creation of biliterate annotations in the texts because they use L1 as a resource in the

Fig. 2 A hybrid text

classroom. One of them, Mrs Shobhana Gulati, explained to me (Field notes, October 16, 2005) that the Devanagari script is a great way to teach pronunciation in English. This is because Devanagari is a phonetic script, and the words are pronounced exactly the way they are written. There are no silent letters or two pronunciations of a single letter like /s/ and /k/ for the letter "c." Thus, if there are difficult pronunciations in the English lesson, she makes the children write the exact pronunciation of the English word in Devanagari.

On the other hand the advertisement under Hindu–Muslim is a hybrid text (see Fig. 2).

The first word under Hindu–Muslim is in Sanskrit: शुभमंगलम्, which means "blessed marriage." The main text under "Sorry Sir, We don't have non-quality proposals" reads: जो लाखों प्रपोजल्स की बात करते हैं वे आपको obsolete व settled या e-mail वाले पते व फोन रहित proposals की भीड़ में ढकेल देते हैं. We show you the "Quality Proposals" then constantly work for you. हम उनकी तरह "member ID" देकर अलग नहीं हट जाते हैं । निर्णय आपको करना ह। Prof. and Personalized.

(Those who talk of lakhs (this is 1,000,000 in India) of proposals give you obsolete or settled or e-mail addresses and push you in the crowd of non-phone number proposals. We show you the "Quality Proposals" then constantly work for you. Like them we don't just give a "member ID" and move away. The decision is yours. Professional and personalized).

This advertisement mixes languages and scripts with dazzling flexibility. The pragmatic force of this advertisement is that it is written very much like a Hindi–English bilingual would speak. Such biliterate and hybrid texts are becoming increasingly common in the lifeworld of a bilingual as the world globalizes.

Problems and Difficulties

One of the main problems in this field is what implications these new texts and practices have for the bilingual classroom. In countries like Singapore, the mother tongue classroom, where children are taught Tamil, Malay, and Mandarin according to their ethnic group, is an enunciative space where the use of English is proscribed. There are even mother tongue classes where children are fined if they use English. In such a classroom, where even code switching is not encouraged, the nested nature of the variables on the *Continua of Biliteracy* is not acknowledged leading to biliterate development which is not optimal.

However, data from SSS (2006) show that the children are creating such texts on their own. This project is a large-scale survey of 1,000 10-year-olds linked to 24 follow-up studies. One of the girls in the follow-up studies who is biliterate in Cantonese, Mandarin, and English enjoys the DreamWorks movie *Chicken Little* with Mandarin subtitles. The screen of this movie, not possible to replicate on paper, is a fine illustration of a multimodal biliterate text situated in a culturally globalizing world. Figure 3 is a biliterate page from the language log of this Chinese girl in which she has used both Mandarin and English to show her TV-watching practices.

A problem, voiced by teachers participating in Vaish's translanguaging project in Singapore, is regarding pedagogy. Teachers want to know when and how much L1 they can effectively use in the English class. Furthermore, what if the teacher does not know the L1 of the child? Finally, parents who send their children to an English-medium school might look askance at pedagogy which uses L1 as a resource in the English classroom.

Globalization has created hybrid textual forms that are proscribed in the bilingual classroom. However, these are the texts that children encounter in their multilingual lifeworlds. The challenge is for teacher education in the field of bilingualism to include an understanding of these changing textual practices and use them as a resource in the classroom. Hornberger and Vaish (2006) show, through a comparison of bilingual classrooms in India, Singapore, and South Africa, how teachers use linguistic resources that the children bring to the classroom to teach the language of power. For instance, in the classroom in India, the teacher uses Hindi to explain to the student that 7 times 2 is not 13, though the medium and textbook of instruction for Mathematics is English.

Fig. 3 Biliterate text from a child's language log

Future Directions

Globalization has created new workplaces, like the call center, where biliterate skills, especially "English-knowing bilingualism," a term originally used by Kachru (1982), are critical. In call centers in New Delhi though the computer screen is in English, the agent working on it might seek clarification of something on the screen in Hindi and English. There is an emergent literature on bilingualism (Roy 2003) and identity (Shome 2006) in the worksite of call centers. Roy discusses issues of linguistic racism where employees are punished for incorrect accents as what they are selling is a service packaged in a particular kind of language. Shome's article on identity is linked to Castells' idea about globalization, though she herself does not make this link, creating an opposition between the Net and the Self. By the Net, Castells means a networked society that has replaced traditional social structures of family and human behavior. On the other hand, the Self refers to reaffirming identity

in a landscape of change. There is a need to explore issues of identity and biliteracy practices.

The field of biliteracy would also benefit from research projects, which backward map from the workplace what biliterate skills are valuable in a globalizing economy. Are schools in multilingual countries able to provide these skills? For instance, in Singapore's bilingual education policy, Mandarin has both an instrumental value, in that it can promote business with China, and a symbolic value in maintaining Chineseness. How do young Singaporeans make use of biliteracy in the workplace? Do they value what the nation's bilingual policy has given them? A host of such questions about biliteracy and globalization are waiting to be researched in our changing communicational landscape.

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Part II

Literacies and Social Institutions

Academic Literacies in Theory and Practice

Mary R. Lea

Abstract

The term "academic literacies" provides a way of understanding student writing, which highlights the relationship between language and learning in higher education. It draws upon applied linguistics and social anthropology for its theoretical framing and its orientation toward the social, cultural, and contextualized nature of writing in the university. The work on academic literacies sits broadly within a body of research called New Literacy Studies (NLS), which takes a social and cultural approach to writing, in contrast to more cognitive perspectives. The use of the plural form, "literacies," signals a concern with literacy as a range of social and cultural practices around reading and writing in particular contexts, rather than individual cognitive activity. Research findings suggest that in order to understand more about student writing, it is necessary to start from the position that literacy is not a unitary skill that can be transferred with ease from context to context. The research points to the requirement for students to switch between many different types of written text, as they encounter new modules or courses and the writing demands of different disciplinary genres, departments, and academic staff. It has unpacked this diversity primarily through ethnographic-type qualitative case study research, looking at students' and faculty experiences of writing for assessment and the gaps between their expectations of the requirements of writing. In foregrounding the relationship between writing and learning, writing is conceptualized in terms of epistemology – rather than cognitive skill – and what counts as knowledge in the different contexts of the academy.

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Introduction

The term "academic literacies" provides a way of understanding student writing, which highlights the relationship between language and learning in higher education. It draws upon applied linguistics and social anthropology for its theoretical framing and its orientation toward the social, cultural, and contextualized nature of writing in the university. The work on academic literacies sits broadly within a body of research called New Literacy Studies (NLS), which takes a social and cultural approach to writing, in contrast to more cognitive perspectives. The use of the plural form, "literacies," signals a concern with literacy as a range of social and cultural practices around reading and writing in particular contexts, rather than individual cognitive activity. Research findings suggest that in order to understand more about student writing, it is necessary to start from the position that literacy is not a unitary skill that can be transferred with ease from context to context. The research points to the requirement for students to switch between many different types of written text, as they encounter new modules or courses and the writing demands of different disciplinary genres, departments, and academic staff. It has unpacked this diversity primarily through ethnographic-type qualitative case study research, looking at students' and faculty experiences of writing for assessment and the gaps between their expectations of the requirements of writing. In foregrounding the relationship between writing and learning, writing is conceptualized in terms of epistemology – rather than cognitive skill – and what counts as knowledge in the different contexts of the academy.

Early Developments

In universities across the world, academics publish books, journal articles, and conference papers, while their students spend much of their time completing written assignments for assessment purposes. It is within this context that increased attention has been paid to student writing, in terms of how best to teach it and how best to support it. The longest tradition of student writing support in tertiary education has been in the USA with the provision of freshman composition courses. According to Davidson and Tomic (1999), the first of these "began in 1806, when Harvard established the first Boylston Professorship of Rhetoric and Oratory" (p. 163). Later, alongside the compulsory freshman writing course, the expansion of US higher education in the 1960s led to the setting up of remedial or basic writing courses, for those students who were not deemed ready for the freshman courses. In tandem with the compulsory requirement for all American university students to follow a freshman writing course came the development of the College Composition movement which was well established from the 1960s in the USA, as practitioners, who were responsible for teaching these courses, also theorized their work in publications concerned with teaching writing (cf. Bartholomae 1986; Bizzell 1982). However, in the UK and other countries with similar educational traditions, there was little systematic attention paid to student writing in higher education before the mid-1980s (Ivanič and Lea 2006).

Present-day orientations toward theorizing academic literacies have their roots, in part, in the work which was carried out by practitioners supporting student writers in the USA in the early 1980s. At this time, a new direction had begun to emerge in the US literature which raised questions about the nature of academic discourse. This was informed by work in linguistics and literary theory and contrasted with the more cognitive and psychological models of the individual learner which had come to dominate writing research. Bizzell (1982), for example, critiqued what she termed the "inner-directed theorists," who were primarily concerned with the context-free cognitive workings of the individual mind. She contrasted their approach to writing with the "outer-directed theorists," who, she suggested, were concerned with the social context of writing, and in particular with the influence of discourse communities in the use of language. She argued that the focus for student writers should be on discourse communities and the requirement to address their conventions; the task of freshman composition and basic writing teachers was to introduce students to academic discourse conventions.

Bartholomae (1986) also called for a social view of writing. He, too, was situated in the freshman composition context and concerned with basic writers and the ways in which inexperienced, novice writers wrote themselves into academic discourse and the different disciplinary conventions of the university. Coming from an English and humanities tradition, Bartholomae (op.cit) saw writing as both a social and

political act, whereby students had to appropriate a specialized discourse; in Bartholomae's view, this was often a matter of imitation. Both Bizzell (1982) and Bartholomae were concerned with finding ways in which the student could be acculturated as smoothly as possible into both the broader discourse of the academy and the specific discourse conventions of particular disciplines.

At the same time that writers in the USA were focusing on the ways in which students could be helped to learn the conventions of academic discourse, similar approaches were also being taken by Ballard and Clanchy (1988) in Australia and by Hounsell (1988) in the UK. These authors came from rather different disciplinary traditions, and in contrast to the US writers, they were not directly concerned with "basic writers" or remedial writing classes. Their research was carried out with standard entrant 18-year-old students in traditional universities. Ballard and Clanchy adopted an anthropological approach in considering the issue of literacy in the university; their focus was upon the relationship between language and culture as a way of understanding more about literacy. Although situating their work within a rather different intellectual tradition from Bizzell (1982) or Bartholomae (1985), the arguments they rehearsed were remarkably similar to the US-based authors. That is, students lacked the experience and understanding of the linguistic traditions and conventions of higher education, and they needed to be taught how to "read the culture" (Ballard and Clanchy 1988, p. 11). They argued that if academics made the culture and its implicit ground rules of disciplinary writing explicit and accessible, students could grasp the way a discipline worked, and surface problems in their writing would disappear.

In the UK, Hounsell (1988) was one of the first to look in depth at the problems students encountered when confronted with the unfamiliar discourses of the university. He identified academic discourse rather than literacy as "a particular kind of written world, with a tacit set of conventions, or 'code', of its own." In common with Ballard and Clanchy (1988), he also conceptualized this code as "crackable." He illustrated how students need to be sensitive to different disciplinary ways of framing in their writing and highlighted the tacit nature of academic discourse calling for the features of academic discourse to be made more explicit to students. Although in many ways this work was the forerunner of "academic literacies" research, it can be critiqued for its lack of attention both to the ways in which language is specifically implicated in the learning process and to deeper epistemological issues concerning the ways in which writing constructs disciplinary bodies of knowledge.

Major Contributions

New Literacy Studies

Against this backdrop, a new body of work began to emerge. This offered a different explanation of students' struggles with writing and meaning making, which went further than the problems of acculturation into disciplinary discourse – as evidenced

in the work described earlier – and explored the nature of power and authority in student writing (Ivanič 1998; Lea 1994; Lillis 1997). This particular orientation laid the foundation for the contested approach which has become the hallmark of academic literacies research during the last decade. In 1996, Street published an innovative chapter on academic literacies which both challenged academic convention (by incorporating the original texts of others) and foregrounded questions of "academic literacy." The perspective taken by Street (1996) in this publication sat within a body of work which had become known as the "New Literacy Studies." Street's seminal contribution to NLS had been made earlier when he distinguished between autonomous and ideological models of literacy (Street 1984). He had argued that whereas an autonomous model of literacy suggests that literacy is a decontextualized skill, which once learned can be transferred with ease from one context to another, the ideological model highlights the contextual and social nature of literacy practices and the relationships of power and authority which are implicit in any literacy event. Literacy, then, is not something which once acquired can be effortlessly applied to any context requiring mastery of the written word. Writing and reading practices are deeply social activities; familiarity with and understanding these practices takes place in specific social contexts, which are overlaid with ideological complexities, for example, with regard to the different values placed on particular kinds of written texts. Following this perspective, NLS, with its roots in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, conceptualizes writing and reading as contextualized social practices.

Challenge to Deficit Models of Student Writing

Until the mid-1990s, this body of research had been concerned with school-based, community, and work-place literacies but had not paid any attention to literacies in the university. Academic researchers had concentrated in exploring other contexts for research purposes, rather than the university context within which they themselves were situated. Although early work by both Lea (1994) and Lillis (1997) had conceptualized writing as a contextualized social practice and had explicitly challenged deficit models of writing, neither situated their work explicitly in the NLS tradition nor made reference to "academic literacies" as such. However, Lea (1994) did illustrate the multiplicity of discourses in the academy, an important distinction from the use of the term discourse in the singular. Ivanič also foregrounded the use of different and competing discourses in her study of mature students (Ivanič 1998). Overall, what characterized this emerging body of work on student writing was its specific focus on writing as a social practice and recognition of the multiplicity of practices, whether these were conceptualized as discourses or literacies. The use of the term "literacies," rather than "discourses" (the framing provided by US writers), gradually became more prevalent in the literature. This was not merely because of its association with a theoretical framing provided by NLS, but because the focus of concern was student writing, rather than spoken language – the term discourse being associated more commonly with the use of spoken rather than written language.

Research by Lea and Street (1998) introduced new theoretical frames to a field which was, at the time in the UK, still predominantly influenced by psychological accounts of student learning. Rather than frame their work in terms of "good" and "poor" writing, they suggested that there was a need to focus on understandings of faculty and students without making any judgments about which practices were deemed most appropriate. They examined student writing against a background of institutional practices, power relations, and identities, with meanings being contested between faculty and students, and an emphasis on the different understandings and interpretations of the writing task. Findings from their research suggest fundamental gaps between students' and faculty understandings of the requirements of student writing, providing evidence at the level of epistemology, authority, and contestation over knowledge, rather than at the level of technical skill, surface linguistic competence, and cultural assimilation. Based on their analysis of the research data, they explicate three models of student writing: study skills, socialization, and academic literacies. A study skills model is primarily concerned with the surface features of text and is based on the assumption that mastery of the correct rules of grammar and syntax, coupled with attention to punctuation and spelling, ensures student competence in academic writing. An academic socialization model assumes that in order to become successful writers, students need to be acculturated into the discourses and genres of particular disciplines. The third model, which is academic literacies, to some extent subsumes features of the other two and is concerned with issues of meaning making, identity, power, and authority in student writing. These three models and, in particular, the privileging of the academic literacies model have been drawn upon widely in the literature on teaching and learning in higher education, calling for a more in-depth understanding of student writing and its relationship to learning across the academy.

Methodological Considerations

Methodologically, the research uses a mix of approaches for data collection and analysis although these tend to be dominated by ethnographic type and qualitative methods. Research in the field generally draws upon data from a number of different textual sources, frequently using interview transcripts alongside samples of students' writing and faculty feedback on that writing. Researchers have been particularly influenced by critical linguistics, which is concerned not only with the more obvious surface features of language but with the ways in which texts embed subtle relationships of power and authority. Researchers have found this approach to analysis particularly pertinent when examining how students make meaning in their writing. As a consequence of a methodological approach which focuses in detail on the relationship between texts and practices, ongoing research in the field has been influential in challenging dominant deficit models of student writing in higher education practice (cf. Jones et al. 1999; Lea and Stierer 2000).

To date, much of the research in the field has been carried out among marginal groups of students. In her early work, Lillis (1997) paid particular attention to the implications of the increasing diversity of the student body, exploring the implications

of opening up higher education to previously excluded groups, such as mature women and black students. She uses detailed interview and data from students' essays to explore the ways in which such students make meaning through their academic writing. Methodologically similar perspectives are adopted by Ivanič in her analysis of mature student writers and the distinctions she elaborates between four aspects of writer identity (Ivanič 1998). Lea (1998) takes a similar stance in exploring how students studying at a distance construct knowledge through the texts they read and write. Despite the wide variety of contexts being studied, the findings concerning students' struggles with writing and the gaps between tutor and students' expectations and understanding remain remarkably constant. What links research in the field is the attention to the nature of situated practices and their associated written texts.

Work in Progress

Academic literacies research has gone hand in hand with ongoing changes in global higher education, including increased diversity in the student body, the introduction of modular degree programs, moves from traditional academic disciplines to vocational and professional courses, e-learning, and the globalization of the tertiary sector. These are having profound influences on the kinds of texts that students are being asked to produce for assessment, and more recent research reflects the application of the principles of academic literacies to these changing contexts.

Research in the field has both reflected and illuminated further the changing nature of the context for today's academic writing. In this respect, authors have begun to address the implications of this research on student writing for educational development in tertiary education more generally (Lea and Stierer 2000). One particularly significant aspect of this approach is related to the ongoing attention being paid in tertiary education to the use of reflective writing, particularly in professional and vocational courses. A number of researchers are examining the nature of the writing that is required in these contexts, both foregrounding and problematizing the relationship between the supposedly self-evident relationship between reflective practice and reflective writing (Baynham 2000; Creme 2000; Rai 2004; Stierer 2000).

Academic literacies research is also taking place against a backdrop of attention to the changing nature of texts themselves, a change first highlighted by the New London Group and their attention to multiliteracies. Arguing that increasing linguistic and cultural diversity and the multiplicity of channels of communication required new ways of understanding the literacy landscape in education, they suggested that language-based approaches alone were inadequate for addressing the changing environment. Their work has been taken forward in debates concerned with the nature of multimodal texts (Kress and Leeuwen 2001). Thesen (2001) relates these more general debates on multimodality to the changing nature of higher education. Drawing on data from her research in a South African university, she provides evidence for the shifts that are taking place in the new contexts of higher education, which privilege multimodal texts over the essay. She suggests that these are likely to

lead to intense struggles over what counts as powerful knowledge. Although this is a persuasive argument in some contexts, a tension – between the privileging of print and the increased use of multimodal texts – continues to surface, with ongoing claims being made for technologies bringing forth new kinds of literacies in educational contexts, in the face of the ongoing dominance of the authority of the written text in tertiary education (cf. Lea 2004b).

In related debates, Street has critiqued approaches which appeared to align mode with particular types of literacy, for example, the use of terms such as computer literacy and visual literacy, arguing that it is the context rather than the mode which needs to be foregrounded in a social view of literacy (Street 1996). In addressing this relationship further, he uses the term "new communicative order" to describe the complexity of literacy practices which are associated with screen-based technologies, multimodality, the use of hypertext, and the Web (Street 1998). Snyder (2002) adds to these debates, arguing that being literate involves using different modalities and that the challenge is to consider what technologies mean for educational practices in terms of the broader social, political, cultural, and historical contexts. She suggests that texts are always informed by social and cultural practices and that new types of texts, new language practices, and new social formations will develop as people find new ways of communicating with each other.

Despite these general developments, most of the work on literacies and technologies focus upon school-based and informal contexts of learning (Lankshear et al. 2000; Snyder 2002) and are not concerned with the contexts of higher education. One exception is a developing body of work which has been taking an academic literacies lens to the texts of online learning. Goodfellow et al. (2004) argue that the texts of computer conference discussion in online courses should be approached as academic writing, embedding relationships of power and authority in much the same way as any other writing in the academy. Despite being virtual environments, students still have to "read off" the ground rules concerning what counts as knowledge, in a context given primarily by the university delivering the course. Goodfellow and Lea foreground the institutional context of virtual learning and the implications for student writing, whether online or offline. This builds upon their earlier research on a global online course, illustrating how students often struggle with, and have little opportunity to challenge, the dominant literacies and discourses embedded in the course design, thus foregrounding the nature of institutional practice (Goodfellow et al. 2001).

The focus on institutional context is particularly significant because the notion of academic literacies as institutional practice has been somewhat lost in the ways in which the literature of the field has been taken up recently, particularly in educational development circles. The importance of institutional context was first raised by Lea and Street (1998), and in separate publications, both the authors have, more recently, returned to this as an essential element of an academic literacies framework (Lea 2004a; Street 2004). Street argues that we need to reconsider the whole notion of the university and the role of writing within that. He proposes a way of linking ideas from what he terms the new orders: that is, the new work order, the new communicative order, and the new epistemological order with academic literacies research.

Problems and Difficulties

Academic literacies research has been highly successful in providing evidence for new approaches to student writing, which challenge more conventional deficit models and highlight the link between student writing and learning. Indeed, Haggis argues that this framing provides an alternative explanation to dominant approaches toward understanding student learning more generally in a mass higher education system (Haggis 2003). However, the major challenge to the field, now, is to find ways of making the research findings relevant and central in pedagogic contexts. In this respect, some authors have raised questions about the relevance of this research to pedagogic practice. Lillis (2003), for example, argues that while "powerful as an oppositional frame, that is as a *critique* of current conceptualizations and practices of student writing, academic literacies has yet to be developed as a design frame" p. 192. She argues that Bakhtin's work on dialogism provides an added dimension, providing a focus on dialogue rather than monologue as central to supporting student writing. Lea (2004a) raises concerns about the whole focus of the field upon student writing. She suggests that the "tendency of the research in the field to concentrate on the non-traditional entrant and her writing, whether in terms of age, gender, race or language, at best might mask the implications of the research more broadly and at worst recreate a deficit model or study skills model." She proposes a model of course design which is based on the findings from academic literacies research and takes more account of literacies across the university.

At present, therefore, the central body of research continues to be around issues of student writing and the applications of academic literacies as a research model to practice-based settings. In this respect, Creme and Cowan (2005) report some interesting research findings in a peer assessment project with students. They argue that it is not only academic teaching staff who have implicit models of "good writing." By the second semester of their first year of study, students, too, seemed to have internalized a view of "the essay" and, in the action research project in question, appeared to be using this tacit knowledge in their response to the work of their peers. Creme and Cowan suggest that their students had already become acculturated, or academically socialized, into institutional ways of talking about essays, that is, they seemed to implicitly "know the rules." This is a particularly interesting finding because it provides an alternative perspective to the dominant finding of academic literacies research concerning students' struggles with writing. Creme and Cowan conclude that their students had fairly fixed notions of other students' writing and suggest that this could form the basis for further exploration about students as both readers and writers. Academic literacies research has focused almost exclusively on writing and has not foregrounded what is to some extent a self-evident relationship between writing and reading. It may be time to redress this balance.

It is noticeable that the majority of publications in the field draw on research carried out in the UK or countries with similar tertiary education structures, for example, South Africa and Australia. This reflects a troubling reality of research into academic and student writing – its national rather than international

orientation. This might well be because research reflects local concerns which are not always understood across cultural divides, particularly when different educational priorities are at stake. We are beginning to see some exception in terms of a related area, the implementation of "writing in the disciplines" programs (Monroe 2002). These foreground learning the discipline through writing and adopt principles which are closely related to the "academic socialization" and "academic literacies" models of student writing. The distinctions and similarities between these two bodies of work remain a fruitful area of collaboration and research, with academic literacies researchers able to offer empirical methods of data collection and analysis which are not generally evident in the literature in writing in the disciplines.

Methodologically, it could also be argued that the field has somewhat neglected social and cultural approaches to learning, which have their roots in disciplinary traditions other than those of social linguistics and anthropology. Lea (2005) has argued that academic literacies researchers should take account of the framing offered by work on communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991), activity theory (Engestrom 1987), and actor-network theory (Law 1992). All these approaches can provide academic literacies researchers with additional methodological tools when analyzing their research data.

Future Directions

This chapter has highlighted the varied and changing nature of the texts and practices found in academic contexts and the contribution made to our understanding of this from academic literacies research. However, to date, the focus has been primarily on writing. With the changing nature of textual practice in tertiary education, as explored in this chapter, it may now be an opportunity for researchers to pay more explicit attention to reading as part of writing, in both print-based and virtual contexts. This development could be addressed in tandem with another limitation in the field, the lack of longitudinal ethnographic research in specific institutional settings. More research of this kind could provide evidence for comparison and contrast in different disciplinary contexts and take account of the changing status of knowledge, and its associated texts, in today's global higher education. A substantive body of work of this nature would establish the dominance of the field and its contribution to understanding how the academy of the twenty-first century is constructed through both its texts and practices.

Cross-References

▶ Language, Literacy, and Knowledge Production in Africa
▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies
▶ New Literacies, New Times: Developments in Literacy Studies

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Learning: Embedded, Situated, and Unconscious

Alan Rogers

Abstract

This paper summarises three areas of debate in educational research, embedded learning, situated learning and unconscious learning, to see what light they throw on the emerging field of informal learning and formal/non-formal learning. It takes two cases which have been the subject of much recent discussion - political socialisation and learning in social movements - to illustrate the argument.

Contents

The current interest in "lifelong learning" has directed attention to "informal learning" – that learning that takes place throughout life *outside* of formal and nonformal educational and training programs. The terrain however is contested and

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uncertain, and there is confusion around descriptors, with crossover terms being used by different fields of study – apart from "the tendency to treat education and learning as synonymous concepts" (Duke 2001, p. 502). This paper examines three contemporary debates in discussions of learning – embedded learning, situated learning, and unconscious learning – to see what light they throw on formal and informal learning.

Embedded Learning

"Embedded learning" is an example of this confusion, for the term is used with several different meanings.

Deliberative: The dominant usage of the term denotes the deliberate embedding of one learning goal as part of another learning activity, including vocational training, or in real-life activities (see Skills for Life website). In workplace training, embedded learning is seen as learning without having to remove the learner from his/her work (Margaryan et al. 2013). Embedded learning in this discourse then is purposeful, intentional (at least on the part of the teacher), involving the preparation of teaching-learning strategies and materials.

Everyday embedded learning: But embedded learning is also seen as all that learning (conscious and unconscious) which occurs incidentally in life's activities and experiences – a universal and natural process, using experience to build meanings and ways of living (Rogers 2014). Learning takes place embedded within everyday activities in a particular context and culture; such incidental learning is usually unintentional rather than deliberate (Hager and Halliday 2009).

Since all learning is firmly embedded in the social and emotional context in which the learning takes place, embedded learning also occurs unobserved in formal learning contexts, the so-called "hidden curriculum" in which some things are learnt which are not directly intended by the teachers or trainers, including the beliefs, values, prejudices, and norms of those who constructed the learning program (Kentli 2009).

"Embedded learning" then in some contexts means the hidden learning which lies within every experience and context, including education and training; but it also means the deliberative action of educators and trainers embedding specific kinds of learning within other learning programs or activities.

Situated Learning

What we learn depends on the context in which it is embedded; it is "situated learning," rooted in the situation in which the learner participates rather than in the "head of the learner"; "learning may be only understood as situated in a specific cultural context" (Mezirow et al. 2000, p. 3; Brown et al. 1989). But the term carries today a specific meaning elaborated by Lave and Wenger (1991) in their description of learning through "legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice" [CoP] (for discussion and critique, see Fenwick 2000).

Deliberative situated learning: Although Lave and Wenger said that it should not be seen as a pedagogical strategy, some educators and workplace trainers have concluded that the best way to encourage learning is by creating a community of practice as an instructional environment (Stein 1998). Workplace and professional development programs emphasize training taking place in the same situation in which the knowledge and skills are applied and through "real" problems (Collins and Halverson 2009).

Natural situated learning: But Lave and Wenger saw situated learning through communities of practice as part of the *natural* processes of socio-culturally promoted learning, using as an example the ways in which children learn their first language.

Understanding of the nature of situated learning contexts is developing. First, situations are now seen as changing, "always historically contingent and incomplete" (McGregor 2014, p. 214). Thus each learning situation is unique, it can never be exactly repeated – which is why learning cannot be decontextualized in a formal classroom; formal learning programs themselves are always "situated." Secondly, the context "embraces notions of power relationships, politics, competing priorities, the learner's interaction with the values, norms, culture of a community, organization or family" (Stein 1998 citing Courtney et al. 1996). It also includes a sense of space, both physical and also in terms of "an open space" for learning (see OSL website). Thirdly, however there is what is called the "new materialism" which insists that "matter matters," a focus on the significance of "nonhuman actants" (for recent summary, see McGregor 2014). Latour's Actor-Network-Theory (Latour 2007) and "the figured world" of ideas and artifacts as outlined by Holland and her colleagues (Holland et al. 1998) are examples.

Situated learning, like embedded learning, can then be seen as a natural process of learning in a particular context and at the same time as a deliberative tool for creating contexts for purposeful learning programs.

Unconscious Learning

This is probably the most difficult of our themes, for many different terms are used in these discussions; tacit, implicit, incidental, unintentional learning all have their place in the lexicon. But the existence of learning which is unconscious or which is not recognized as learning is now almost universally accepted. As Blunt points out, a person waiting for a car to be repaired might learn fortuitously while observing the process; the learning occurs without the learner being consciously aware of having learned. On the other hand, he/she may also wish to learn purposefully by studying car maintenance (Blunt 1988, p. 38).

Deliberative: Unconscious learning in some cognitive studies means deliberate attempts to make some learning unconscious, habituated – the memorization of tables, for example. In skills development, activities are "routinized" through repetition until workers no longer need to think about what they are doing. This "second nature" learning is defined as intentional learning of a skill to the level of unconscious performance or the unconscious holding of rules by a process of

internalization, whereby explicit knowledge becomes implicit knowledge. In such "intuitive" or "noncognitive learning,"[1] "the individual has a sense of . . . what is the appropriate or inappropriate response to make in a given set of circumstances but is largely ignorant of the reasons for that mental state" (Reber 1993, p. 232; see Berry 1997; Polanyi 1967).

Everyday unconscious learning: Cognitivists however also tend to use the term *implicit learning* to refer to learning that is both unintentional and unconscious – "the acquisition of knowledge independently of conscious attempts to learn and in the absence of explicit knowledge about what was learned" (Shanks 2004, p. 202). Implicit learning is thought to be an alternative mode of learning, automatic and more powerful than explicit thinking (Lewicki 1986; Cleeremans 1997). Because it is "nonconscious," unrecognized even by those engaged in it, it is very difficult to research (Livingstone 2010).

Many writers see this everyday unconscious learning in and from the socio-cultural context as "socialization." Socialization is not confined to youth but is an interactive process continuing throughout the whole of life; through it we continuously become members of different groups and "think, feel and act in ways the group considers appropriate" (Persell 1990, p. 98). Although much socialization (both positive and negative) occurs through conscious processes, including formal schooling, most is unconscious. "A person may be socialized into the norms of an organization [or social group] without being aware either of the learning or of what some of the norms are" (Eraut 2000, p. 16). This unconscious learning tends towards the confirmation of the existing *status quo* rather than social transformation. But it is not a passive process; for the learner is active in making sense of their social world and constructing their own ways of being part of their social group (Wentworth 1980).

Consciousness and Learning

Discussions on consciousness and learning focus on three issues. For some, unconscious learning is learning without *awareness* or with partial awareness (e.g., Frensch and Runger 2003). Recent discussions have pointed to the tacit learning that is embedded in the body (see especially Jordi 2010), learning by the whole person (Carl Rogers 1984, p. 70). Others see unconscious learning in terms of *articulation*, the inability to "verbalize," that which we know but cannot tell (Polanyi 1967; Lewicki et al. 1988). Nonaka (in an oft-cited paper) suggests this kind of learning is highly personal and hard to formalize, making it difficult to communicate to others or to share with others (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995).

Intentionality: But more frequently, implicit learning is seen as unintentional learning (Stadler and Frensch 1998; McLaughlin 1990). Not all unintentional learning

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[1]This is different from "noncognitive skills" such as "persistence, integrity, leadership and motivation. . .," Kyllonen 2012 np.

is unconscious, of course (one can think of the aftermath of experiences such as a road traffic accident which brings about much unintended but conscious learning). But there are occasions when people learn without intending to learn, different from intentional education and training activities (Overwien 2005). Livingstone pointed out that "[s]ometimes the learning process was intentional and conscious ..., sometimes it was unintentional but conscious (incidental or ... accidental), and sometimes it was unintentional and unconscious (tacit)" (Livingstone 2010, p. 87). A distinction between the intentionality of the learner from that of the "teacher" (in the widest sense of the word) may be seen in the daily barrage of advertisements in the media and on the streets which is clearly *intended* to bring about *unintentional* learning on the part of a specific target group (and it appears to have a subliminal learning impact on nontarget populations as well) (Saunders et al. 2003).

Two Examples

It may be helpful to illustrate these discussions with two examples.

Political Socialization

There is increasing interest and concern today about "political socialization," especially in the light of discrimination and radicalization. The alleged "alienation" of some youth from political processes has been widely asserted (e.g., Putnam 2000). Anthropologists see socialization as the process through which individuals learn political attitudes and behavior from generation to generation, influenced by political socialization agents (Quintellier 2013). Learning the norms and practices of society (Sapiro 2004) is not of course confined to youth; it is a lifelong process of constantly becoming. Political socialization involves both what people learn and how they learn it. As well as knowledge and skills, attitudes such as expectations and prejudices, and behavior (participation or nonparticipation) are also learned (Almond and Verba 1963). The family, peer groups, media (including social media), school, organizations and lobby groups, state, religion, events, etc. are among the agencies (Langton 1969). Much of this "teaching," even in the family, is indirect, hidden, unintended (at least in terms of "learning"). Political values are developed experientially through the exercise of "voice" (Verba et al. 1995) and through participation in activities more than cognitively through teaching and exhortation (Youniss and Yates 1997). Schools and other institutions and youth movements often provide conscious planned and purposeful learning, although the context – often hierarchical, competitive, and with attempts at neutrality – may send out hidden messages which counteract the formal teaching.

The main process of such learning is seen as the internalization of the ideologies of the community through recognition of the significance of its symbols and rituals leading to growing awareness, then concern and then to some measure of critical analysis, a commitment (to social justice, for example) and from that to action (Watts et al. 2003). In this process, the learner (including youth) is not passive – they

actively make sense of their political context and decide continuously for themselves which issues they will address and how (Flanagan 2004). The emotions are deeply involved – and for this reason, countering the undesirable effects of some such socialization learning by formal or nonformal learning may not be the most effective approach.

Learning political values then comes about through processes which shade from deliberative to the natural. Much is overheard and/or observed, not intended as learning, incidental to conversation, reading and actions. It is rarely addressed directly but is *embedded* in the family, in religion, in work or interested organizations such as unions, in the social media. It is always *situated* – specific to particular contexts and interests with all their socio-cultural and emotional currents and flows. And most of it is *unconscious* learning, only rising to levels of consciousness at specific times for specific purposes.

Learning in Social Movements and Civil Society

Some educationalists are focusing their attention on learning within the "new" social movements, ranging from mass global movements (e.g., feminism) to what have been called "experimental micro-political practices" (Welton 1993; Mayo 2012). For many, the common element is a commitment to progressive change through sustained processes of collective action undertaken by networks or alliances of heterogeneous individuals and groups in opposition to some aspect of the status quo (Finger 1989; Foley 2004). But others point to the wider field of civil society, including local voluntary bodies or activities (e.g., an allotment group, Barton and Hamilton 1998, pp. 208–222; or reading circles, Duncan 2012) which, although not necessarily engaged in a struggle for social justice on a grand scale, are often engaged in small-scale collective action to access resources, to get different voices heard, to explore fields previously denied to them. Yet others have widened this further to include the learning embedded in participation in voluntary drama groups, choirs, sports clubs, and the like (Holst 2002; Elsdon 1991; Elsdon et al. 1995).

Learning in and through social movements includes formal, nonformal, and informal learning (Hall et al. 2012). Some is deliberative learning, intentional and integrated, (Chovanec et al. 2008, p. 186), including the "popular education" provision made by many social movements (see Kilgore 1999). But behind this lie the knowledge and skills learned unconsciously from the experience of participating in such activities (Hall and Clover 2006, p. 584). Facing new tasks, new responsibilities, new interactions, new communicative practices, working within organizations and structures which may be different from "the usual hierarchical interest groups and . . . structures" (Steinklammer 2012, p. 32), one learns for participation through participation – developing knowledge about the organization and the situation, policies, and possible lines of actions; building skills for action. In Elsdon's research, respondents claimed an increase in confidence, improved capacity for constructive personal relationships, a variety of personal, social, physical, and coping skills and on occasion widened interests and a willingness and ability to

take on organizational responsibilities (Elsdon 1995, p. 78). In many movements, activists find themselves mediating on behalf of others, acquiring the know what and know how to deal with courts and bureaucracies, speaking truth to power (Robins 1996). It is not that knowledge and skills, having been newly learned, are then applied; rather it is *through the application* that the knowledge and skills are learned; knowledge creation and praxis are inextricably fused (Chaudry and Kapoor 2010). And it is largely collaborative learning through a common identity, shared perspectives, a sense of solidarity, and sharing in the creation of knowledge (Holford 1995).

Learning in and through voluntary groups and movements is *embedded* learning; it is *situated* in the immediate context and issues. Much (but not all) is *unconscious* and unintended. On the basis of this, it has been argued that this learning-in-action, because it is often not recognized, remains only potential; it needs [adult] education, ("the special powers of theory") to create critical reflection, raising consciousness so as to distance oneself from the immediate: "without conscious educational processes ...[the] empowering experiences of practice ... cannot fulfil their full empowering potential" (Foley 1999, p. 3). But others point out that the newer understandings of the informally learned "funds of knowledge" (Moll et al. 2005) and "banks of skills," although tacit, (Rogers 2014) are fully operative in the course of everyday life, constituting the tacit rules by which life's decisions are made (Perruchet et al. 1990).

Conclusion

Two kinds of learning, deliberative and natural, shade imperceptibly into one another in a continuum of learning. Both include elements of *embedded* learning, *situated* learning, and *unconscious* learning. Anthropologists have long seen this when exploring how nonindustrial societies help members to learn the ways of their culture (Goody 1982; Cole 1971). Lancy with his studies of craft development can perhaps speak for many:

> Becoming a blacksmith involves two kinds of processes. Part of the preparation is well defined in time, involves a single specified teacher or model, a particular setting, requires the mastery of several specific skills, is entered into voluntarily and consciously by the apprentice .... Informal and complementary processes are life-long, involve learning from many individuals and settings, require the mastery of some specific skills, but place main emphasis on the acquisition of personal traits or characteristics, are also largely voluntary, but unconscious ..... (Lancy 1980, pp. 272–273)

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Second Language Academic Literacies: Evolving Understandings

Constant Leung and Jo Lewkowicz

Abstract

Due to population mobility and demographic changes the conceptual distinction between first and second language education is increasingly difficult to maintain in many educational contexts. In this chapter we trace the evolving language models underlying two increasingly connected fields within language education: the teaching of in English (as a second language) for academic purposes and academic literacy (usually associated with first language speakers). It will be argued that despite the communicative approach first heralded some fifty years ago, the teaching of English as a second language is still grappling with the conceptual and pedagogic challenges of mirroring real life language use. Likewise, academic literacy education has been moving from a somewhat generic grammar-based approach towards a more subject discipline-driven approach that takes account of the actual language use in different domains of the academy. We conclude with the observation that there is a need to develop a model of language and literacy for academic communication that takes account of situated practices within specific disciplines, without losing sight of the communicative facility afforded by general language proficiency for both first and second language users.

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Contents

Introduction

Increasingly schools and universities in many parts of the world are expected to serve ethnically and linguistically diverse students. Up until recently though, scholarly discussions on language and literacy education have tended to adopt either a first language or a second language perspective (see Note[1] for a gloss on language labels). This divide was perhaps fostered by the educational and intellectual climate that prevailed in an earlier historical period. In the past 30 years or so, however, public educational institutions have been made progressively more conscious of the need and the obligation to serve diverse student populations under the aegis of marketization of education provision for international students and/or social integration for all "home" students, irrespective of their language and ethnic backgrounds. Many "home" students are from linguistic minority communities; some of these students are bi-/multilingual with different proficiencies in their languages. The distinction between first and second language is thus increasingly difficult to maintain in terms of student classification (see Read 2016: Chap. 1 for a discussion). It is recognized that for many second language students, the use of their second language for academic purposes is challenging. The ability to communicate in a second language through the spoken mode in everyday settings, even at high levels of lexico-grammatical accuracy and pragmatic familiarity, does not automatically translate into effective academic use, particularly in relation to reading and writing (e.g., Cummins 2000; Haneda 2014; Leung 2014; Menken 2008; Scarcella 2003). The purpose of this chapter is to explore the different priorities and the potential overlapping concerns

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[1]There is a set of related terms connected to the teaching of English language to speakers/learners whose first language is not English.. The term "English as a Foreign Language" (EFL) is used widely to refer to the teaching of English to learners for whom English is not normally a medium of societal communication, e.g., learners of English in Japan or even Japanese learners of English following an English language course in the USA. The term "English as an Additional Language" (EAL) is increasingly used, particularly in Australia and UK, instead of English as a Second Language (ESL) when referring to learners-users from diverse language backgrounds whose first language is not English. In the USA, the term "English Language Learners" is used when referring to school-aged students from minority language communities. Given that this discussion will cover issues and research connected to a number of related fields hailing from different intellectual traditions and educational frameworks, we use the term "second language" as a general label.

between studies in second language pedagogy and work in academic literacy education (which generally has a tacit first language orientation).

In this chapter, we will use the terms "second language pedagogy" and "academic literacy education" in a broad sense and will refer to relevant teaching and curriculum literature covering a range of educational settings (e.g., work-based and college programs) and students (e.g., school-aged and adult). The main purpose here is to draw out pedagogic principles and to map perspectives. Perhaps it would be useful to observe that there are some discipline-specific tendencies in the ways the terms "language" and "literacy/literacies" are understood. In the second language literature, "language" has tended to be used as a general catchall term to include the development and use of language for listening, speaking, reading, and writing (often referred to as the "four basic skills"); therefore, concerns for "literacy" development have been subsumed under the banner of language. A cursory glance at any commercially published English as a second language course book will bear witness to this. In the "academic literacy/literacies" literature, the spoken language is assumed to be part of students' lived experience, and the use of lexico-grammar of "language" itself is seen in relation to established socio-cultural and pragmatic conventions. Furthermore, there is relative little explicit attention given to the different impacts that first and second language may have on literacy development (cf. Leung and Street 2017). This difference in basic assumptions is, in fact, material to some of our arguments in this chapter. The plural form "literacies" is preferred by some writers (e.g., Lea 2004; Street 2003, 2005), and it will be used where appropriate to signal the existence of a literature which acknowledges the multiple ways language and other semiotic means are used for meaning-making in academic contexts. Although the second language in this discussion is English, the conceptual issues raised are not necessarily language specific and thus can be applied more generally.

Second Language Model for Communication

Since the advent of communicative competence more than 40 years ago, this concept has continued to impact significantly and multifariously on the teaching and learning of English as a second language. Communicative competence was first introduced as a result of Hymes'(1972, 1977) seminal work on the ethnography of communication. For Hymes, communication through language (and other semiotic means) involves a good deal more than using vocabulary and grammar to represent meaning. To communicate competently in context, speakers have to know when to speak (or write), what to say or write in relation to the intended audience, and how to convey the message (i.e., in what spoken and/or written form). These conceptual and analytic insights were recontextualized in the early 1980s by Canale and Swain (see Canale 1983, 1984; Canale and Swain 1980a, b) to become a set of theoretically informed principles and practices that was to underpin communicative language teaching (CLT). An underlying premise of CLT was that the teaching of language needs to go beyond the traditional notion of familiarizing learners with formal lexico-grammatical rules and to include the specific language knowledge and skills needed by learners in the future. Thus, the content of language teaching is to be constituted with reference to the context of use. The notion of

needs analysis within CLT taps into this conceptual concern. Yalden (1983: 86–87), an early exponent of this practice, suggested that teachers should pay attention to the purposes for which learners were acquiring the language, the setting in which they would likely use the language, the learners' role in relation to other interlocutors when using the target language, as well as the communicative events in which they would likely participate. The curriculum thus should be based on the projected needs of learners, addressed through an analysis of their specific requirements, taking into consideration the different text types (e.g., formal reports, academic essays, notes) and language uses (e.g., giving presentations, making polite requests, addressing peers and teachers) relevant to their particular needs. Learners are to be provided with opportunities to learn and practice the targeted language through activities modeled on real-life language use. More recently, in a similar vein, Nation and Macalister (2010) propose that the content of language teaching can be defined in terms of what the learners lack in their present knowledge, what they need to learn in relation to their projected needs, and what they want to learn. They suggest that learners' needs can be established by conducting interviews, question-naire surveys, and observations of situated language use. So, in principle, CLT has a commitment to modeling language as it is used in real contexts. However, building curriculum around projected needs may itself be an issue. This approach assumes that it is possible to predict in advance the key factors which students would find problematic and address them through teaching. The resultant teaching content is very likely to be general and insufficiently sensitive to learner real-time needs. From a theoretical perspective, what is being modeled does not necessarily match what students are expected to do with and through language during their studies: it cannot take account of the situated demands yet to be experienced (a point to which we will return presently).

Some tenets of such a socioculturally sensitive and activity-based curriculum are evident even in the early CLT-influenced course books produced for the international English as a foreign language market largely serving adult learners (e.g., Soars and Soars 1984). However, equally apparent in such texts is the narrow view of language that was being "modeled" to learners. Authentic language was seen as that taken from sources not specifically written for pedagogical purposes but material written by and for native speakers, e.g., newspapers and magazines (see, e.g., Harmer and Elsworth 1989). A related assumption was that "real English" was that used by middle-class native speakers using standard language. Hence, the target language model was often distant from learners' needs and interests, particularly those learning the language outside what Kachru (1985) termed the inner circle (countries where English is the primary language of communication, e.g., the USA). This earlier assumption has, not surprisingly, evolved, and currently the social dimension of language, i.e., how language is used among various interlocutors in different situations, is no longer filtered through the lens of monolingual and monocultural norms and practices. More recent course books, e.g., Quinones and Korol (2004), Rea and Clementson (2011), and Soars and Soars (2009), offer learners opportunities to engage with to a wide range of materials and language that relate to international learners from around the world. This decentering move is nowhere more evident than in English for Academic Purposes.

Taking account of the specific needs of learners is fundamental to the branch of CLT known as English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The work in EAP is largely

concerned with university-level education. As Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002: 2) point out, EAP instruction has to be grounded "in an understanding of the cognitive, social and linguistic demands of specific academic disciplines," so acknowledging variation of language use across disciplines. In fact, learners at all levels of education, be it school or university, need to acquire the "communicative skills to participate in particular academic and cultural contexts" (ibid). At the inception of CLT, academic communication was seen primarily in terms of academic reading and writing, with EAP focusing on study skills (Wingate 2015). A clear demarcation was made between language and content, with the second language learner being seen as having a deficit in the "universal" language of academic communication – a deficit the language teacher should help to fix.

This oversimplistic understanding of academic communication was at odds with Hymes' (1972) ethnographically oriented approach to communication and understandably failed to adequately address the problems of second language learners. As Wingate (2015: 7) points out, communicative competence within the academic setting is context/discipline specific and involves:

> in addition to linguistic proficiency, (1) an understanding of the discipline's epistemology, i.e. the ways in which subject knowledge is created and communicated, (2) an understanding of the socio-cultural context, i.e. the status of the participants in the academic community and the purpose of the interactions occurring in the community, and (3) a command and the conventions and norms that regulate these interactions.

In school systems within English-speaking countries, linguistic minority students need to grapple with the complexities of their second language across different curriculum subjects. They are, in effect, learning language and content at the same time. The work of Cummins has been very influential in terms of language modeling (e.g., 1992, 2000, 2008). He distinguishes between basic interpersonal communication language skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). While linguistic minority students may quickly appear to be adept at using language for everyday communication (BICS), that is, in greeting the people around them, ordering food in the school canteen, etc., they may lag behind their peers in the "academic" language specific to schooling; they may not have "the oral and written registers of schooling" (Cummins 2008:74) such as being able to report on a chemistry experiment carried out in the school laboratory. The consequences of failing to master the academic language of school may lead to such students experiencing difficulties with mainstream education and even being deemed educationally below average (ibid).

The BICS/CALP distinction has been very useful in alerting us to the challenges faced by second language school students. However, the boundaries between BICS and CALP are not clear-cut in actual language use, particularly in terms of spoken communication. A stretch of content-driven teacher-fronted spoken exposition may in part approximate to formal "bookish" written language, but it is also likely to be inter-spliced with interpersonal talk oriented toward relationship maintenance and classroom management (Leung 2014). Furthermore, there is a need to attend to the ways in which language is actually used in different curriculum areas, particularly in relation to

representing and expressing discipline-specific meanings through specialist registers (e.g., subject-specific terms) and genres (e.g., argument, description, and evaluation) (for further discussion, see Bailey and Huang 2011; Schleppegrell 2004).

Our account so far suggests that while the language modeling underpinning English language teaching across the different sectors has shown sociocultural sensitivities, there is a need to explore how such sensitivities are played out in our evolving understanding. In the next section, we will consider how academic literacy (ies) have construed the notion of language.

Language in Academic Literacy Education

It is well understood that using language effectively for academic purposes is something that has to be learned for most students, including students who are first language speakers; the capacity to use academic language does not come with their everyday language repertoire. For some, it is quite a challenge, particularly in relation to reading and writing (see Clark and Russell 2014 for an overview). This has been a persistent source of educational concern; periodically it manifests itself in public statements of "low" standards (see Appendix 1 for an example). The responses to this perceived need to improve students' academic literacy have been characterized by Lea and Street (1998) in terms of three approaches: study skills, academic socialization, and academic literacies. The study skill approach assumes that literacy is a set of atomized skills concerned largely with surface level features of the lexico-grammar system (e.g., spelling and sentence level grammar); these are regarded as transferable skills that can be applied in all areas of academic language use, irrespective of disciplinary requirements and practices. This approach conceptualizes student writing as technical and instrumental. So the orientation is to "fix" problems in student learning. The underlying model of language is based on traditional grammar. The pedagogic efficacy of this technical and linear "from learning to universal application" approach has been questioned in recent years. The academic socialization approach attempts to broaden the notion of "skills" to take account of issues of learning and social context; student learning is seen as a process of adopting and attuning to a "new" culture (with the help of teachers), and what is learned is in part dependent on how students orient to learning and how they interpret their learning tasks. This approach is clearly more sensitive to both the student as learner and to the "local" academic context. It has nevertheless also been found wanting, mainly because it assumes that the academy is a relatively homogenous and stable cultural environment, with norms and practices that can be learnt and applied in all putative academic contexts. The language model that underlies this approach assumes a set of universal academic language norms and practices. Despite the greater recognition of contextual factors, this approach nevertheless regards the language used for reading and writing as a transparent means of representation; it does not address the situated and discipline-driven language, as well as discourse issues, involved in the production and representation of meaning through reading and writing. The academic literacies approach, which inter alia draws on Gee's (1990) "New Literacy Studies," regards reading and writing in the academy as situated social

practices that reflect disciplinary and institutional preferences and priorities. The curriculum-related literacy demands and comprises a variety of communicative practices involving different registers and genres. For the student, this means that as they follow different disciplines within a degree program (e.g., economics, accounting, and industrial relations on a business management degree), they have to switch between different expectations and language and literacy practices appropriate to each discipline. The underlying language model is thus situated and discipline-driven language practice.

It is not suggested here that these three approaches in academic literacy education are in a progressive developmental sequence nor are they mutually exclusive. In terms of the evolving ideas though, it is possible to say that each approach successively encapsulates the other in that the academic socialization approach takes study skills into account but embodies them within the broader context of acculturation processes; likewise, the academic literacies approach encapsulates academic socialization and study skills as part of the diverse discipline-driven practices.

Communicating in Academic Contexts

The ideas in the evolving field of English as a second language teaching have signaled a conceptual commitment to adopt a language model that reflects real-life language use. At the same time, the academic literacy field, traditionally mainly concerned with the general student population (i.e., not necessarily second language focused), has also moved toward a situated language model. Given the complex, discipline-embedded nature of academic communication, it is not surprising that academic literacy is a challenge for all students, and not only for second language learners. And we are beginning to see some convergence in terms of approaching academic language and literacy demands as an educational challenge for everyone in the increasingly diverse student populations. For instance, some educational establishments in New Zealand and Australia are currently working toward identifying not only international but also home students who require literacy support once they have enrolled at the university (see, e.g., Dunworth 2009, 2010, 2013). This need to address all students' discipline-specific literacy requirements is also reflected in the UK in the work of Wingate and Tribble (2012; also see Wingate 2015), among others, who suggest that there is a need to move away from teaching universal aspects of EAP and to work with subject-specific experts in order to align the language teaching much more closely to discipline-specific genres. This means raising students' awareness of the appropriate uses of language for academic study within their discipline through exposure to relevant examples and discussion of their merits.

On the ground, things may be quite different, as collaboration between subject and language specialists requires institutional support and shared professional values. Students often find themselves working in several disciplinary areas each with different language practices and expectations. Lillis (1999) suggests that there may be a "practice of mystery" in which teachers' disciplined- and institution-related requirements and expectations are not necessarily made explicit (because they have

been naturalized within disciplinary practice to the point of invisibility). For instance, students often find it perplexing that in some subject areas and with some teachers, it is acceptable to write in the first person voice but not in others, for no apparent reason. This is related to what Ivanič (1997) describes as different "selves" in academic discourse: "autobiographic self" (the identity all writers bring to a piece of writing), "discourse self" (the impression writers give of themselves in a piece of writing), and "self as author" (the extent to which writers see themselves as authors of a piece of writing). In such circumstances, students have to learn to "guess" and unpack what teachers mean and expect. This requires much more than decontextualized language skills (also see Crème and Lea 1997). In terms of knowledge conventions and language practices, there would appear to be a gap for many incoming students. Even international students who will have had to demonstrate an acceptable level of language proficiency by providing a language test score on one of the recognized measures (e.g., IELTS or TOEFL) find it difficult to deal with some of the ways in which language is used in their disciplinary contexts. For instance, in many EAP courses, particularly those oriented to test preparation, students are often asked to work with teacher-supplied templates of text structuring. In a study of students' actual experiences at the university, Jenkins (2014) reports that such pre-learning may actually be unhelpful because it does not align with tutor expectations. In Jenkins' account, one of her student interviewees reports that on submission of her first piece of work, she was told that her writing was far too "mechanical." This in itself reflects that academic communication requires more than knowledge of "bookish" forms of language.

In addition to complexities and challenges of language use in academic communication, there are issues particular to the English language by virtue of the fact that it is an academic lingua franca in many world locations. In general it is no longer the case that the majority of English language speakers worldwide are native speakers (Crystal 2012), and this shifting language profile also applies to academic settings. The way language is used in academic settings, particularly in English-medium institutions located outside the anglophone world, is also changing. In these institutions, students and teachers are likely to be from a variety of language backgrounds; they are likely to be communicating with one another with English as the prime medium, but they do so using all the linguistic resources at their disposal rather than relying solely on English, their second language. Students and teachers draw on all of their multilingual resources in order to achieve effective communication – an observation that is being increasingly acknowledged in the literature (for a comprehensive discussion of multilingualism and translanguaging, see, e.g., Canagarajah 2013; García and Li 2014). Language norms and practices are thus changing, but these are being only partially reflected in curricula.

Given the situated complexities of communication in academic disciplines and the divergent multilingual practices in English lingua franca contexts, it is now imperative that we acknowledge the fluidity and diversity of language practices, both spoken and written. It is therefore unhelpful to continue to regard academic communication as easily encapsulated by a monolithic notion of academic English. A more context-sensitive perspective is called for.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we have tried to show that the conventional division between first and second language issues in relation to the use of academic language no longer holds easily in contemporary conditions. Students of all language backgrounds have to grapple with the situated intricacies and variations in particularities of disciplinary spoken and written language practices. The previous assumption that students have knowledge deficits that can be fixed through a formula-driven dose of writing instructions and study skills on arrival at university is no longer adequate or appropriate. At the same time, the once neat division between "home" and "international" students in terms of their capacity to use language for academic purposes can lead to misdiagnosis; we cannot assume that "home" students are conversant with academic language use, particularly in relation to writing. There is a case to be made that *all* students, irrespective of their language backgrounds, need to be inducted into academic language practices (both spoken and written) within their fields of study. They all need to acquire the appropriate voice, style, and lexis for their respective discourse community(ies). Some second language learners may, in addition, require support at the levels of grammar and semantics, while all students may need guidance on working with the disciplinary and linguistic practices in their fields of specialization. In the next period, one of the main tasks facing language educators is to develop a model of language and literacy for academic communication that takes account of situated practices within specific disciplines, without losing sight of the communicative facility afforded by general language proficiency for both first and second language users. It follows that more differentiated pedagogic responses and provision will need to be considered for different groups of students.

Cross-References

▶ BICS and CALP: Empirical and Theoretical Status of the Distinction
▶ Critical Literacy
▶ Literacies in the Classroom

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

In Volume: Second and Foreign Language Education
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    Methods

Appendix 1

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation/11690481/Oxford-Uni
versity-dons-verdict-on-their-students-Cant-spell-read-or-think.html   Accessed   on
2016-10-19

Oxford University dons' verdict on their students? 'Can't
spell, read or think'

Withering examiners' reports include some 'disconcerting' and 'troublesome'
answers

Some Oxford students found it 'difficult to express their thoughts in writing' according to examiners'
reports Photo: Alamy

By James Rothwell, Nick Mutch, and Jake Hurfurt
12:20 AM BST 22 Jun 2015
They are supposed to be the cream of the academic crop.
    But Oxford University students have been excoriated by their tutors for their poor
spelling in exams and displaying a lack of "basic common sense" in essays.

Some students at the elite university found it "difficult to express their thoughts in writing" and spoke as if they were "down the pub," according to examiners' reports in a range of subjects.

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Family Literacy

Vivian L. Gadsden

Abstract

Family literacy constitutes a rich area of inquiry within larger discussions on children, parents, and family learning and broad discussions of literacy in and out of school. It is often interpreted as a single concept, in which the focus on literacy is complemented by attention to families, or may be examined as a multidimensional concept in which families and literacy are studied in tandem to inform and deepen our understanding of the intersections between the two areas of inquiry. While a significant amount of the literature on family literacy focuses on the range of programs providing literacy support to both parents and children and at home and school, a core of research seeks to understand families learning literacy in context – e.g., homes and communities, the relationships that foster learning in these contexts, and the role of the family itself in creating and sustaining literacy learning and engagement. A tension that has persisted in the field centers on conceptualizations of literacy as cultural and social practices, socio-contextual factors, and social change versus discrete skills that assume universality of interests, needs, and backgrounds of learners. Drawing upon selected works representing different areas of inquiry and different decades of research, this review focuses on developments and shifts in family literacy over the past 50 years, including immigrant families and digital literacies; the persistence of tensions and problems; and the possibilities that are emerging within and across language and literacy theory, research, and practice.

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Family literacy is a critical part of discussions on children, parents, and family learning and broad discussions of literacy in and out of school. It encompasses a wide array of literacy practices and relationships between children and parents, among adults, and within families. It may be interpreted as a single concept, in which the focus on literacy is complemented by attention to families, or may be examined as a multidimensional concept in which families and literacy are studied in tandem to inform and deepen our understanding of the intersections between the two areas of inquiry. Much of family literacy research and practice has focused on after-school family-time programs, parent–child book reading, home–school connections, and parent involvement in children's learning. However, a core of research seeks to understand families learning literacy in context – e.g., homes and communities, the relationships that foster learning in these contexts, and the role of the family itself in creating and sustaining literacy learning and engagement. A tension that has persisted in the field centers on conceptualizations of literacy as cultural and social practices, socio-contextual factors, and social change versus discrete skills that assume universality of interests, needs, and backgrounds of learners. Drawing upon selected works representing different areas of inquiry, this review focuses on developments and shifts in family literacy over the past 50 years, the persistence of tensions and problems, and the possibilities that are emerging within and across language and literacy theory, research, and practice.

Early Developments and Major Contributions

Case studies on the teaching and uses of reading and literacy in the USA have focused on families from the eighteenth century (Monaghan 2007) into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when increasing attention was given to literacy rates, schooling, and child welfare. Data from these periods reflect changes in societal practices, such as the end of slavery and indentured servitude and the implementation of child protection laws.

However, the concept of family literacy has a more recent history, beginning in the 1960s, with the earliest developments found in reading research. By the 1960s, amidst social unrest, commissioned studies such as the Coleman Report (1966) declared a sense of urgency regarding the school achievement of children from low-income African American homes and the role of government in ensuring equal opportunity. Reading was seen as a core educational value that was necessary in order for children to achieve in school, and reading researchers were being asked to explain the poor school achievement of minority children from low-income homes.

In response, a wave of research about language, literacy practices, and learning emerged that formed ongoing debates in reading and literacy over the next 25 years. Research discussions often pointed to parents' and families' literacies as predictors of children's school achievement and reading readiness and focused heavily on parents themselves as the primary socializers of children. Parents were constructed as both the source of and antidote to the problem of children's low reading achievement. Despite the implication that parents' low literacy contributed to children's struggles in reading print, little was known about the reading, or literacy, practices of the low-income families and low-income families of color who were typically the focus of this research.

An early challenge to the depictions of low-income and working-class parents as uninvolved or unevenly involved in their children's early literacy was Durkin's (1966) study. Although conducted prior to the 1960s, Durkin's study on young children who read early was among the first to take note of the broader contexts in which children learned and the salience of families and home experiences, finding that parents, including those in working-class homes, engaged their children consistently in multiple practices associated with school-based teaching and literacy learning. Other studies weighed into the national debate about the influence of verbal language in reading and literacy, addressing questions of whether the degree to which or in what ways the use of nonstandard dialects such as Black or African American Vernacular English (AAVE) affected children's reading development, specifically the reading of poor, urban minority children.

In short, language and literacy practices in low-income, African American homes and communities were seen as being at odds with language practices and literacy expectations of schools. Rather than resources upon which to draw, the cultural and social practices of these families and communities were considered disadvantages, and a series of "deficit-oriented" paradigms ensued to explain the linguistic and literacy experiences of African American children from low-income homes and communities. In contrast, "difference" paradigms (e.g., Baratz 1969a, b; Labov 1965) positioned AAVE as one dialect among many spoken dialects by African American children and sought to determine whether it interfered with reading development. Reading researchers such as Goodman and Buck (1973) and linguists such as Smitherman (1977) were concerned also with the discomfort of teachers who were unfamiliar with the dialect of large numbers of African American children.

The emphasis on reading as a social process (Bloome 1985; Bloome and Green 1984) brought together theoretical and empirical work that took note of the socio-cognitive, sociocultural, and socio-contextual domains of literacy and expanded definitions of adult literacy to not only reading and writing but also to numeracy, problem-solving, and day-to-day functioning. Adult literacy researchers and practitioners referred to the countless adults with relatively little school-based reading and literate abilities but who nonetheless were succeeding as parents, workers, and citizens (Lytle and Schultz 1989; Reder 1987). Taylor's (1983) seminal volume, *Family Literacy: Young Children Learning to Read and Write*, gave recognition to the relationships that exist between adults' engagement with children's early knowledge generation and the reciprocity of learning between parents and children.

Focused on six middle-class white families and their children, all of whom were successfully learning to read, the study's findings questioned accepted ways of thinking about who succeeds in formal literacy learning and the contexts for their success. It complicated perspectives regarding the practices that contribute to learners' success, the ways that children and families take up the acts and processes of literacy learning, the inherent dangers of limited perspectives on teaching and learning literacy, and the nature of learning in home and school contexts when homes do not mirror the practices of schools (Gadsden 2009).

In the same year, Heath's (1983) *Ways with Words* also raised questions about the continuity of literacy, cultural and social practices, and context, focusing on language and literacy exchanges between and within home and school. Drawing upon work in a black and white working-class community and a white middle-class community in the Piedmont Carolinas, the study found that the practices of the middle-class families and the school matched but that the practices of both the white working-class and black working-class families did not match the school's practices. On the surface, this finding may not be surprising. However, the nuanced differences that Heath detected in the practices of the white and black working-class communities and the commonalities across the families and communities demonstrated the multidimensionality of class in understanding literacy practices, behaviors, and interactions. Heath found that teachers expected children to enter school with the same predispositions to engaging in school literacy activities as those of middle-class children and did not use the knowledge and literate abilities from the children's cultural experiences to create dialogue and meaning-making for and with them.

In the next year, Street's (1984) work on multiple literacies and autonomous and ideological models of literacy offered a complementary framing of the issues of literacy and context (for a more recent work, see Rogers and Street 2012). Autonomous literacy, Street argued, assumes that literacy in itself will lead to a range of cognitive practices that will enhance the well-being of individuals and that literacy is a unilinear concept common across contexts. Ideological literacy, on the other hand, presented a view of literacy as a social practice influenced by the different contexts in which it is used and the purposes for which it is used.

The expertise of Taylor, Heath, and Street as anthropologists contributed to the repositioning of family literacy not simply as a series of discrete skills that parents should teach their young children but more as a core of intentions and interactions within families and homes that are engaged in meaningful social and cultural practices. Their work provided insights into the processes of literacy learning within culturally and economically diverse homes and highlighted ethnography as a viable approach to uncovering the diversity of patterns in households. Both Taylor and Heath demonstrated the role of race, class, and family cultural practices in constructing classrooms as sites that engage all students in learning and the dissonance that results when students' experiences are not familiar to or valued in the school setting. Street's analysis contributed to subsequent work on context and literacy as local and global. In other work building on the impetus of these studies, Teale and Sulzby's (1986) study on emergent literacy further expanded our understanding of the multiple sources of literacy practices by suggesting that children are

aware and have knowledge of reading and writing prior to their actual ability to produce either.

By the end of the decade, the stage was set to promote an in-depth analysis of the relationship between home interactions and children's academic achievement and to revise what were commonly described as deficits and limitations as the basis for literacy practices for adults and children within families. Several other works in the 1980s contributed to the broader, encompassing perspective on family literacy, language, and learning: e.g., Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines' (1988) study of the literacy contexts of poor, inner-city African American families and their practices and traditions with oral and written texts; Michaels' (1981) study of children's narrative processes that demonstrates the disconnectedness of home, culture, and teacher pedagogies and classroom practice; Gee's (1989) work on associative stories as linguistically complex in literary structures; Delgado-Gaitan's (1987) work on the continuity between home and school for immigrant children and families and the diversity and integration of oral and written texts in the daily lives of Mexican American families; and Auerbach's (1989) review of ethnographic research on poor and language minority families, which concluded that the homes of linguistic minority students were typically literacy-rich, with parents and families who held high expectations for the possibilities that literacy would create for their children.

Several of these studies were reinforced in similarly ethnographic and culturally focused studies in the 1990s by, among others, Purcell-Gates (1995) who focused on the literacy practices of a mother and son learning literacy and Gadsden (1998) who examined the intergenerational literacy practices of African American families. Edwards (1995a, b) had used a combination of approaches in studies with teachers and low-income African American parents to improve the reading achievement of their children. Strickland (1995) and Morrow (1992) were focusing on struggling readers and the role of parents and teachers. Paratore (1992) expanded upon her work that begun in the late 1980s on English literacy learning of immigrant parents and their children. At the same time, an emerging framework was being named, New Literacy Studies (NLS), which built on earlier work by opposing a traditional psychological approach to literacy and seeing it instead as primarily a sociocultural phenomenon that was best understood and studied across social, cultural, historical, and institutional contexts as well as cognitive (Gee 1990).

These and other studies were being published as family literacy was becoming increasingly well known in research, practice, and policy communities. Because of the practice and policy significance of family literacy, much of the work written focused on programs in the same way that K-12 discussions focus on schooling. As research was expanding, family literacy programs were already entrenched in the public's lexicon. A range of national and local efforts resulted in an increase in programs. The PACE (Parent and Child Education) program in Kentucky is widely thought to be the first family literacy program supported with public funds and served as an impetus for the federal initiative, Even Start (Padak et al. 2002). Subsequent programs were mixed in the ways that they referred to parents, some arguing that parents and families had to be taught how to support children (and often minimizing parents' and families' knowledge) and others acknowledging parents'

knowledge and building upon their cultural and social practices, often described as working from a strengths perspective. While not ignoring the second perspective, policy efforts focused more heavily on the first, which was associated with deficit perspectives.

Several programs were established in response to national attention to family literacy. The Kenan Model developed by the National Center for Family Literacy became the most widely known of the programs created and continues its work into the present. Other curricular models were created: e.g., the Edwards' Parents as Partners program (1995), the Missouri Parents as Teachers program (Winter and Rouse 1990), and the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY). Parent–child reading curricula and on-site programs, much of it initiated in the 1980s by family literacy specialists such as Nickse and her colleagues (1988) and by Handel and Goldsmith (1989), were implemented and refined. By the end of 1990s two prominent reviews were in full circulation: Nickse (1990) and DeBruin-Parecki et al. (1997). DeBruin-Parecki and her colleagues noted several limitations in teaching, curricula, and assessment in programs.

Since 2000, research studies have drawn from different methodological approaches: evidence-based studies, quasi-experimental studies, ethnographic research, discourse analysis, and case studies, to name a few. Studies are likely to take place within specially developed programs for parents and children or in homes (Rogers 2003), where practices of families are examined to understand the nature of social interactions, cultural and social practices, and the role of context in literacy practices. Studies advancing these ideas provided a provocative analysis of the relationships that exist between language and literacy, within and across contexts, and among learners in and out of school.

In contrast, several other initiatives have aimed to demonstrate success or significant achievement outcomes, primarily for children but also for parents. The typically modest to small gains in children's test performance was disappointing to many who sought empirical support for the efficacy of one approach or another. As the evaluations of Even Start suggest (e.g., St. Pierre and Layzer 1999), the findings from studies on the effectiveness of family literacy programs were mixed, at best, for child achievement outcomes. This may have been the result of overzealousness in the field to find quick approaches to complex issues, or it may have been the result of misplaced conceptualizations of the problems facing families and the failures of research to learn more about the literacy practices of those studied before attempting to eradicate their problems. Other arguments (e.g., Taylor 1990) have suggested that the focus on child achievement itself is too narrow given the complexity of factors influencing the lives of low-income families; the reliance in family literacy on conceptual frameworks, epistemologies, and pedagogical and assessment models used in K-12 schooling; and a tendency to ignore signs that the progress occurring was more incremental than robust.

Over the past 50 years, several shifts in literacy have created a path for our current understandings of family literacy. Much of the work continues to be situated within three areas that refer to school-based activities and learning outside of traditional

schools as well as attention to families in adult literacy. First, parent–child literacy still occupies a significant place in the study of family literacy. Research and practice in parent–child literacy examine the nature of parent–child interactions around reading, writing, and everyday learning and uses of literacy. The quality of parent support for children's learning is studied typically in relation to children's school achievement outcomes. Second, home literacy practices and literacy as social and cultural practices have emerged as increasingly critical areas of inquiry framing family literacy research. Families' ways of communicating with each other and the literacies that they use are studied independently and in combination. Third, intergenerational literacy, initially focused on two generations, has come to denote the pathways and patterns of literacy learning and practices in families within and across multiple generations and over time. Adult literacy focuses on both individual learning within diverse settings such as the workplace and home and the influence of different settings in which adults learn with others.

Recent Work and Work in Progress

Much of the scholarly writing, research, and practice on family literacy in the past 10 years reinforce the focus in earlier studies by Taylor and Heath; extend to diverse language and native ethnic groups as well as immigrants; and offer a perspective on the values and practices of families who are the targets of family literacy programs. However, the more direct emphasis on skills development also continues. In addition to past work, the focus in research and practice may be divided loosely into five broad categories: (1) English language learners; (2) early and emergent literacy; (3) curricula and assessment; (4) new perspectives on parents, families, and fathers; and (5) digital literacies/technologies. Across all of these categories, issues of teaching, assessment, immigrant status, intergenerational learning, and program development warrant examination.

Found in journals and texts ranging in focus from early childhood to adult literacy, several studies in the past 10 years have examined issues of English language learners (ELLs) within families. Most have focused on migrant, Spanish-speaking families in early childhood programs such as Head Start (e.g., Boyce et al. 2010; Caspe 2009) and have drawn on work in bookmaking and book reading, finding a relation between book sharing styles and child and parent language and literacy. Other studies focus on vocabulary (e.g., O'Brien et al. 2014) and seek to provide families of children Prek-3 with approaches to enhancing children's vocabulary. Still others work on storytelling and seek out ways to build upon the existing cultural and social practices of families.

A second area that has been the focus of considerable work over time is early/emergent literacy and early child development. Studies in this area often overlap with work on ELLs. For example, Caspe (2009) focuses on low-income Latino mothers' book reading styles and found that some maternal book reading styles appeared to contribute to young children's language and literacy development.

Edwards (2014) studied maternal literacy in relation to toddlers' emergent literacies from middle to upper socioeconomic groups. Many of the studies focus on (im)migrant families and aim to link home, community, and school (e.g., Marcella et al. 2014), while others (Dudley-Marling 2009) study both African American and immigrant ELL families. Some studies draw upon work in programs and are as likely to examine the curricula of the program. Some focus on successful practices and issues of parenting, and others offer broader conceptual analyses and critiques.

Curricular issues constitute an area of continued complexity and interest in family literacy. DeBruin-Parecki et al. (1997), among others, pointed to the problem of curriculum as well as assessment. In more recent years, several curricula have been adapted for family literacy programs, and they have met with mixed and, in some cases, promising results. For example, Purcell-Gates and her colleagues (2012) developed a methodological approach that has been used in the *Literacy for Life* project, focused on real-world activities, and that they designed and implemented over a 12-month period in collaboration with immigrant and refugee families in Canada. Working with early literacy classes for preschoolers as part of an intergenerational literacy program, Anderson et al. (2012) defined real-world literacy activities as reading, writing, or listening to real-life texts for real-life purposes which were integrated into existing whole class and small group classroom formats.

Enhancing our understanding of the role and literacies of parents and other family members, supporting parent learning, and assisting parents in helping their children continue to be a core purpose of family literacy research and practice. However, this purpose may assume different meanings and expectations in research versus practice and in the types of studies conducted in both. Nevertheless, the issue of supporting parents has resonance outside of family literacy as national efforts around early childhood are heightened throughout the USA. In almost every family literacy study published in the past 10 years, parents have been a primary focus, whether in survey efforts (Hindman and B. A. Wasik 2010), early learning (Steiner 2014), or discussions about language and culture (Reyes and Torres 2007). Among the new issues being addressed with purpose is work on father involvement in family literacy (Gadsden 2012; Morgan et al. 2009; Saracho 2008, 2010).

Lastly, some of the newest work in family literacy attempts to look carefully at digital literacies and the use of technology. Several scholars have focused on technology and new literacies in the USA and abroad, while others offer interesting conceptual analyses for the future of technology and family literacy (see edited text by McKenna et al. 2006). Much of this work has used case study approaches, but increasingly it examines larger numbers of families and family members. Lewis (2010), for example, offers an interesting analysis of the experiences of a mother and son and has begun studying fathers' uses of technologies and digital literacies to sustain engagement with their children. Despite rapid movement in technological advances, this work is still emerging in family literacy, but offers a compelling lens to consider the issues, from cultural and social practices to programmatic instruction.

Problems and Difficulties

A challenge noted by family literacy researchers and practitioners has been addressing culture and ethnicity appropriately and critically in programs (see Padak et al. 2002 and B. H. Wasik 2004). This challenge is grounded in research that attends to the intersection between family and culture and the ways in which culture is embedded in the practices of individual family members who are learning literacy in programs and in the family unit itself (Gadsden 2004). Most of these studies use cultural frames of reference to examine family literacy and acknowledge their importance in accessing and engaging families, as well as for determining what learners know, what they want to know, and what they are willing to invest. One example can be found in the interchanges between the protagonists, Jenny and her son, Donny, in Purcell-Gates' (1995) book volume that captured the ways Jenny and Donny negotiated literacy and personal events in relation to the cultural markers that were influenced by their social class, geography, and family folklore and values about learning, schooling, and societal options. Drawing upon work in international settings, Bhola (1996) proposes a model of family literacy in which the family is at the center of the model. The family is located in a network of mutual relationships with multiple institutions such as schools and workplaces. Gadsden (2004, 2012) suggests that the understanding of culture, family cultures, and the inextricability of culture and literacy are under-discussed and poorly interpreted in most programmatic efforts and daily instruction. Mui and Anderson's (2008) study of the Johars records the experiences of immigrant families when their family cultures are inconsistent with accepted Western perspectives on who constitutes family and takes responsibility for children in a household.

These researchers and others argue that curricula reflecting familial and community interests and integrating cultural artifacts are a first step, and there is some reason to believe that many programs have achieved this chapter point. However, curricula that promote interchanges around the uses of knowledge, perceptions of the world, and engagements in critical dialogue about opportunities to learn (real and perceived barriers), social inequities, discrimination, justice, and the role of schooling are often seen as inappropriate for basic instruction in programs, in large part because of the discomfort they create for some practitioners who have not been prepared to examine these issues and who find the topics to be risky within program and policy mandates. Tensions between approaches have resulted in the perception that sociocultural approaches to the study and practice of family literacy do not result in children and families learning to read or build upon knowledge of children's oral language and literacy (Purcell-Gates 2004). To some degree, such tensions are misplaced and misinterpret the broad focus of sociocultural approaches, which do not simply address diversity but also the multidimensionality of literacy, learning, teaching, and uses of changing modalities to engage learners.

A complementary argument focuses on the populations most often studied in family literacy, disproportionately low-income families of color, many of whom are ELLs and immigrant. Research studies reflect this focus, as do programs. Yet, only a few examine closely how literacies within these families are influenced by and

influence their cultural and social practices or the role of context. Several researchers (e.g., Klassen-Endrizzi 2000; Strickland 1995; Taylor 1997) challenged programs' emphasis on eradicating low literacy within poor families, describing the programs as too narrow and misdirected, not focusing enough on research about how different families use cultural knowledge to promote literacy. Thus, a mismatch continues to exist between family literacy research that focuses on the processes of learning and family literacy programs that appear to emphasize the products of learning primarily. Family literacy, unlike most other areas of research and practice, has been building upon selected evidence and, even with modest progress, has not begun to explore the options and possibilities for constructing an integrative framework that both addresses and responds to the issues of culture, race, and difference among children and families or (dis)continuities between home and school.

There are several neglected issues in the study of family literacy programs, and the subtle disconnects between socially and grounded theoretical frameworks for family literacy research and the practices of family literacy programs persist. Lee's (2005) analysis of students' use of African American Vernacular English may be a useful frame of reference to situate the inherent contradictions and difficulties in family literacy and to connect the problems of research, practice, and policy. She notes that the complex issues involved in understanding how students' discursive practices in their families and communities are taken up to support learning to read and write are still understudied. Lee argues that "the problem may not be so much the limitations of language use in the families of children from low-income backgrounds who speak vernacular dialects [but]. . .with the ability of the research community and teachers to recognize what in these language practices may be generative for literacy learning" (p. 251).

In a series of texts from 1990 to the early 2000s, Taylor (1990, 1993) discusses the need for structural change in the social and political hierarchies that govern institutions and that work against the inclusion of historically marginalized groups. She suggests a shift in the responsibility for change, in which families and communities play an important role in effecting. Parents and other family members' knowledge would be important in planning and strategizing programs, increasing opportunities for them to identify, grapple with, and respond to pressing social problems affecting them, the education of their children, and the goals of their families and communities. We are seeing incremental change in studies such as the Canadian study by Purcell-Gates, Anderson, and their colleagues, as well as others in the USA and abroad. Unique to these efforts is a refusal to adopt simplistic definitions of the universalism in family literacy, recognizing the field as both small and broad.

Future Directions

The promise for the future of the field lies in part in our taking note of knowledge from the past. To organize assumptions, goals, and practices in the field (Auerbach's (1995, 1997) description of three models, intervention/prevention, multiple

literacies, and social change, still holds currency. These assumptions offer a backdrop to describe possibilities and directions. The intervention/prevention approach is consistent with historical efforts to eradicate low literacy among poor, undereducated parents, through a series of programs and approaches designed to replace home practices with school-like approaches. The multiple literacies approach takes up this sociocultural perspective in a particular way by examining the much-discussed mismatch between the expectations and practices of school-based literacy learning and the home practices of children who are not achieving in school. Supporters of a multiple literacies model "see the solution as investigating and validating students' multiple literacies and cultural resources in order to inform schooling" (Auerbach 1997, p. 156), using a range of approaches – from utilizing community resources and cultural artifacts in the classroom, to engaging parents as co-constructors of the research and inquiry process, to learning about family histories and experiences as a precursor to teaching, to immersing teachers in the home contexts of parents. Social change is focused on multiple literacies but also highlights the role of power hierarchies in sustaining political and social structures that alienate rather than engage learners and their cultural histories. Failure to attend to these imbalances of power reinscribes inequity and inequality.

Auerbach's assumptions have never been translated to hypotheses and theory in research in family literacy. However, as the assumptions suggest, the future of family literacy lies largely in its ability to reconceptualize its goals in light of rapid changes in society, including the growing influx of immigrants, the issues of documented citizens versus undocumented Americans, the persistence of poverty among cultural and ethnic minorities and the young, and the widening gulf that exists between the poor and wealthy in the USA. We use this work to revisit historical areas of neglect and emerging areas of promise:

- *Focus on and analysis of culture in families*. While we have seen efforts to study different cultural and ethnic groups, we have seen less about how research and practice understand the families and their backgrounds. Despite regular references to culture, the field still examines it in relatively narrow terms, often categorizing by ethnicity or race. The compact categories of the twentieth century should be revisited if not revised with greater access to knowledge around the world. New approaches to this work might consider what is to be learned from the families about their cultures, their histories, and their goals and would focus on these issues not as an introductory activity but as an integrated dimension of a longer-term, sustained effort of reciprocity of knowledge and understanding.
- *Classroom instruction*. If the field is to grow, it must address issues of instruction. Classrooms that take an inquiry approach (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 2001) allow for an expansive and encompassing approach to learning and teaching, addressing issues of culture and difference as well as the learning needs of the diversity of children, adolescents, and adults who enter family literacy programs.
- *Gender*. Once the purview primarily of mothers, family literacy programs serve fathers as well, and a growing core of research focuses on father involvement. The issue of gender identity has entered into our understanding of who constitutes

families and the roles of fathers and mothers, men and women (see Gadsden 2006). Changes in marriage laws require that the field rethinks what constitutes families and suggest new ways for family literacy efforts to engage family members in the acts and processes of learning.

- *Diversity of learning environments.* Work in the field must reflect the diversity of environments in which families learn as well as the different forms of participation and uses of learners' linguistic and literacy repertoires. It will need to consider the ways in which intersections of identity and learning are a part of the classroom discourse. Such learning environments will by necessity need to focus on technology and offer an opportunity for the field to explore uses of technology and digital modalities in building on the knowledge of families to teach and study families.
- *Immigrant and language minority families*. The possibilities that exist along with the tensions that have been manifested portend new ways to define and identify the border crossings of these families. The issues facing the field are not limited to their numbers but also their capacity to contribute to rich understandings of the nature of language and literacy practices.

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Women, Literacy, and Development: An Overview

Anna Robinson-Pant

Abstract

Women's literacy has been seen as the key to development, supported by statistical evidence of the links between literacy rates and health indicators such as fertility rates. Consequently, Governments, NGOs and international agencies have promoted women's literacy learning as the entry point to a range of development interventions, including agriculture and health. This early approach led literacy providers to focus on women's reproductive role as mothers, and researchers continued to analyse the impact of women's literacy on development. The shift from a WID (Women In Development) to GAD (Gender and Development) approach drew attention to literacy as a gendered field and promoted a rights, rather than an instrumental, perspective on women's literacy. Feminist frameworks of analysis and the 'ideological' model of literacy based on a continuum of literacy to orality and recognition of multiple literacies and languages has opened up new research questions and methodologies. Recent ethnographic studies have pointed to the importance of informal learning within communities and challenged the dominant paradigm around 'schooled' literacy. Researchers are now taking a gendered lens on the multiple literacy practices and learning in which both women and men engage throughout their lives in the context of social transformation beyond development programmes.

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Introduction

The belief that women's literacy is the key to development has informed government and international development agency policy and programs around the world. In the poorest countries, there has continued to be a significant gap between male and female literacy rates: UIS (2013) notes that 64% of the 774 million illiterate adults are women. Within basic adult education, policy makers have focused on increasing women's as opposed to men's access to literacy, through programs designed particularly around women's reproductive role. Over the decades, researchers have focused on finding statistical evidence indicating positive connections between female literacy rates, health indicators such as decreased child mortality and fertility rates, and economic participation. UNESCO (2012, p. 196) cites evidence that in Pakistan women with good literacy skills earn 95% more than women with weak literacy skills, whereas there was only a 33% differential amongst men. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 91% of literate women know that HIV is not transmitted by sharing food compared with 72% of nonliterate women; and in Nepal, 49% of literate mothers have a skilled attendant at birth compared with 18% of nonliterate women (UNESCO 2013).

The assumption that illiterate women lack health awareness or cannot participate fully in development programs has led to literacy classes being set up as the entry point to health, nutrition, income generation, community forestry, and family planning interventions. This objective has often influenced the curriculum: many women's literacy programs adopt a functional literacy approach, linking literacy learning with vocational skills training, health education, and "awareness raising" about social issues such as alcoholism. Partly because of the importance of these nonliteracy program elements, there is a tendency to use the term "literacy" synonymously with "adult women's basic education." For instance, evaluation reports on the benefits of women's literacy frequently emphasize the social aspects of confidence building, group solidarity, improved health practices, and community action as compared to reading and writing outcomes.

Early Developments

The WID (women in development) approach of the early 1970s promoted the idea that women needed literacy skills in order to catch up with men and become equal partners in development. The research agenda was influenced by the "efficiency"

policy approach (Moser 1993) to women's development at that time, which stressed the economic benefits of educating women and girls. Women's literacy rates were found to be inversely related to fertility rates (Cochrane 1979) and child mortality rates (Caldwell 1979). King and Hill's (1993) book, *Women's education in developing countries: barriers, benefits and policies*, was a landmark in bringing together statistical studies on health linkages as well as on the links between literacy and income and employment (Schultz 1993).

This body of research shared the starting point that literate women had different characteristics and behaved in different ways from illiterate women (LeVine et al. 1991), perpetuating a stereotype of the "blind" illiterate woman to be found in many policy documents (see Robinson-Pant 2004). The statistical evidence appeared to support Summer's (1993) proposition that the "vicious cycle" of poverty could be transformed into a "virtuous" cycle through increasing women's access to education. Although these statistical correlations were often used to justify the need for adult women's education, many studies had failed to disaggregate between those adult women who had learnt to read and write in school as compared to those who had learnt as adults. As Bown (1990) pointed out, the female adult literacy rates were actually a composite measure of the impact of girls' schooling as well as adult education programs. Bown's (1990) report *Preparing the future: women, literacy and development* was one of the first attempts to distinguish between the impact on women of learning in an adult literacy class as compared to school. By contrast with this earlier literature, much recent research on the relationship between women's education and development indicators has focused on the effect of school education: for instance, Gadikou (2013) analyzed the differing impact of secondary as compared to primary schooling for women on child survival.

The policy objective of integrating women into development through literacy meant that planners were concerned with overcoming the barriers that prevented women from attending adult literacy programs. Ballara (1991) and Lind (1990) identified the obstacles to women attending classes as structural (around location, timing, and lack of childcare facilities) as well as social barriers, such as male teachers, limited mobility, and lack of support from other family members. The factors preventing women's participation in literacy courses could also be seen in similar terms to the reasons for girls not enrolling in schools. These were related to women's low status in society and the lack of priority afforded by communities and families to educating women. Many of the early literacy programs included an "awareness" component on the importance of women's education. This was expressed in terms of the value of literacy in making women better wives and mothers, reflecting the fact that the literacy curricula focused almost exclusively on women's reproductive role and that development policy took a "welfare" approach towards women. Literacy primers often overlooked women's significant productive role outside the home, in agriculture for instance, depicting instead a stereotype of women as primarily active in the kitchen and looking after children (Bhasin 1984).

The early work in women's literacy was greatly influenced by research attempting to measure the impact of women's literacy on development. The main aim was to

enhance adult women's access to education through tackling the structural and cultural barriers to participation rather than to look at the quality and relevance of literacy programs to their lives more broadly.

Major Contributions

The shift to the gender and development (GAD) approach in the 1980s meant that the impact of literacy programs was no longer measured only in relation to women. Men were also brought into the picture. In research on the links between women's literacy and fertility rates, Basu (1999) looked at a third variable – marriage – and analyzed how educated women's choice of partner influenced the couple's decisions about family planning. This was partly due to the growing understanding that the linkages between girls' schooling (as well as women's literacy) were in fact more complex than previously believed. Bledsoe et al's (1999) *Critical perspectives on schooling and fertility in the third world* moved the debate on from identifying linkages to look at the reasons why there might be statistical correlations between education and fertility. Similarly, studies of the impact of adult literacy programs on health outcomes suggested the need for a more holistic approach to research and evaluation (Robinson-Pant 2001b).

The feminist debate that informed the GAD approach brought a new critical perspective on literacy. Freire's "conscientization" approach to literacy was extended to include not just awareness of class oppression but also to make women more aware of their subordinate position in relation to men. Stromquist (1997) suggested that Freirean literacy programs can enable women to develop "the ability to think critically" about their situations. Using a feminist framework of analysis, researchers began to identify patriarchal structures that prevented women from participating fully in literacy programs. Rockhill's (1993) research on the gendering of literacy practices in Hispanic communities in Los Angeles gave insight into the ways in which women's literacy classes could appear to threaten men's identities. In particular, through "deconstructing the homogeneous woman" (Mohanty 1991), feminist writers drew attention to women's multiple identities and the diversity of women attending literacy classes. A "one size fits all" approach to literacy programming (such as had been promoted through functional literacy and literacy campaigns) failed to respond to the differing needs of young unmarried girls and older married women. Detailed case studies have revealed how literacy programs can be shaped by and meet the needs of specific groups of women. For instance, in Yemen, the Literacy Through Poetry Project (Adra 2008) drew on the poetic traditions of older women to encourage younger women to revive and reclaim women's poetry as a way of addressing and raising awareness of gender inequality.

The policy objective for promoting women's literacy is now often discussed in terms of literacy as a human right, influencing the kind of research questions asked. From researching "How can women's contribution to development be enhanced through literacy?" (the efficiency approach discussed earlier), studies have adopted an empowerment approach, asking "what does empowerment mean to individual

women in this literacy class?" (Robinson-Pant 2004). In the Belem Framework for Action, governments from around the world recognized the rights and specific gendered experiences of women in its commitment to improving "access to and participation in, the full range of adult learning and education programmes for women, taking account of the particular demands of the gender-specific life course" (UIL 2010, p. 8). In India, Joshi and Ghose (2012) identified changes in the policy discourses, from "education as a universal good for men and women" in the 1950s and 1960s to "functional literacy" in the 1970s and literacy for empowerment in the 1980s and 1990s. However, in the twenty-first century, they note that the "socially transformative agenda" is being replaced by a marketization discourse with an emphasis on skills training to prepare adults for formal employment. In times of economic crisis, this trend is likely to be dominant elsewhere in the world too.

The influence of the new literacy studies has meant a move away from the notion of "literacy" as a technical fix (for instance, as the variable that will make the difference between adopting family planning or not) to a concern with researching what literacy means in the lives of the women participants. The symbolic value of literacy for women has emerged – that a woman may want to learn to read and write in order to feel "educated" like her brothers (Flores-Moreno 2004). Ethnographic studies of literacy programs have found contradictions between the instrumental objectives of the policy makers and the objectives of women who attend literacy classes (Betts 2004; Robinson-Pant 2001a). Case studies of individual women (Kalman 1999; Kell 1996; Egbo 2000) have countered the notion of the "illiterate woman" being ignorant and needing to be literate before having a voice in the community. This ethnographic body of research has given more insight into the gendered nature of literacy practices in everyday life (see Zubair (2001) work in Pakistan on women's personal literacy practices such as diary writing) and how literacy programs can build on these in the classroom.

While adult literacy teaching in many countries is still dominated by the functional literacy approach, many programs have responded to the reasons why women want to learn to read and write. Legal literacy programs have become increasingly popular – aiming to provide women with information about their legal rights in relation to issues such as marriage, dowry, and land ownership. For instance, Shajani Shiksha Kendra set out to make women aware of their legal entitlement to work and equal pay under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India (Nirantar in UIL 2013b, p. 25). Similarly, literacy programs have recognized that many women wish to learn to read religious texts, rather than development information. Mainstream literacy and development approaches, such as REFLECT, have attempted to address unequal gender relations by facilitating discussion, for instance, about different gender workloads through mixed groups of men and women constructing a PRA (participatory rural appraisal) seasonal calendar (see Attwood et al. 2004, p. 148).

On the other hand, many women welcome single sex literacy classes as an unusual space where they can discuss issues of concern with other women. In order to overcome the difficulties of attending literacy classes on a nightly basis, some programs have established residential literacy camps for women (see Nirantar

in India, Joshi and Ghose 2012). Here the women are able to study more intensively and build up close relationships with the other participants and trainers, without the burden of domestic work that they would have at home. "Each one teach one" approaches (where women are taught on an individual basis at home) have also proved useful for communities where women have limited mobility to go out and attend a class.

The feminist perspective on women's literacy has raised the question about how far literacy programs challenge women's traditional roles (Dighe 1995). Stromquist (1990) suggested that women are encouraged to adapt within the patriarchal education system, rather than transforming those structures. On a micro level, there have been many examples of literacy programs that aim to counter gender stereotypes. This has involved supporting nonconventional occupations for women – such as Nirantar's Khabar Lahariya program in India (UIL 2013a, p. 47). A pool of female journalists was created through providing training to local women in news gathering and production, including ICT, enabling them to set up a low cost weekly paper in Hindi and Bundeli (local language). By facilitating "journalism by the village of the village for the village," this initiative enabled women to break into male-dominated socioeconomic spaces and to tackle gendered issues, particularly gender-based violence.

In the context of women's literacy programs, there is growing recognition that promoting literacy instruction only in participants' mother tongue could be seen to promote gender inequality. For instance, literacy trainers in the HIL literacy program in Nepal (Robinson-Pant 2001a) responded to women's request to learn to read and write in English and Nepali rather than their mother tongue (Newari language). The women saw that their brothers and husbands had learnt to read in a second language at school and wanted to challenge the local assumption that women could only learn to read their mother tongue. Language choices about the medium of instruction within literacy programs can be related to issues of power and status rather than being seen only in terms of educational effectiveness (see Vol. 3).

Work in Progress

Feminist and "ideological" approaches to literacy, informed by the new literacy studies, have continued to influence the kind of research undertaken in the field of women's literacy and development. In particular, researchers have challenged the dominant policy discourse on literacy and development through exploring women's own discourses on literacy. Chopra's work in India (2011) shows how so-called "illiterate" women can "speak back" to the dominant discourse through their narratives. Research of this kind has contributed a critical dimension to concepts that were treated as unproblematic in the early literature, such as "motivation," "drop out," "empowerment" and even "literacy." For instance, women's motivation can be seen in terms of the tension between the dominant and local discourses around literacy and development.

Through her stance that "literacy is a feminist issue," Horsman (1996, p. 65) expanded the earlier debates about the "barriers" to women's participation and the reasons for "drop out." Her research in Canada revealed how women's experiences of violence often contributed to early failure in learning and made it difficult for them to remain in literacy programs. Her suggestion (Horsman 2006) that educators need to "break the silence" about violence as a barrier to learning has since been taken up by researchers and policy makers. Stromquist (2014) points to the impact of the feminist movement in implementing study circles or CR (consciousness-raising approaches) to discuss "women's personal experiences with male oppression" through meetings of small groups of women in private homes. The informal learning process promoted by women-led NGOs contrasts with formal classroom-based women's literacy programs.

Though ethnographic research has revealed how literacy practices are gendered, there is still little evidence in the policy arena of large-scale literacy programs – particularly national literacy campaigns – adopting a gendered perspective. Many of the key policy documents are concerned with women's literacy but seldom look at processes of learning and teaching – the ways in which the literacy curriculum may support or challenge traditional gender relations and gender-stereotyped roles. Back in 2006, Rogers (2006) and Rao and Robinson-Pant (2006) noted the lack of gender awareness and engagement with a gender equality discourse in the fields of lifelong learning and indigenous adult education respectively. Though literacy programs for indigenous adult communities have been successful in addressing the oppression of minority indigenous groups, there is still little recognition of the differing experiences and needs of indigenous women as compared to men. Similarly, though research has pointed to the difficulty of assessing changes in gender relations (see for instance, DFID 2012 which conceptualizes women's empowerment as "a journey not a destination"), many policy documents overlook such complexities in an attempt to measure statistically the impact of women's literacy.

The growing recognition of a "rights perspective" on women's literacy has turned attention to how women's literacy is connected to citizenship. Stromquist (2006) discussed a more holistic (and less instrumental) approach to citizenship within literacy programs where women can learn new forms of leadership to tackle with gender discrimination in access to land, credit, capital, and legal structures. For literacy to challenge gender relations, she argues that "women's rights need to be embedded in a visible and conscious political project" (ibid: 151). Her recent discussion of Freire's work from a gendered perspective (Stromquist 2014) emphasizes that awareness raising is not sufficient and highlights the importance of women's organizations. Empowerment is "multidimensional... demanding the development of skills and strategies to engage in political action" (ibid: 548).

Seeing women's empowerment in terms of gender relations has meant that men too have been brought into the picture. Lind (2006) argued that more attention should be given to encouraging men as well as women to attend adult basic education classes. Taking a wider perspective on "gender equality" than simply increasing women's access to education, Lind suggests that projects need to deal with issues around male roles and masculinities. This contrasts with the earlier

approaches to women's literacy (and Lind's own early seminal work) that focused exclusively on the skills and attributes that women needed to gain through literacy in order to "catch up" with men. For instance, in Senegal, the Tostan literacy program worked with men and women in communities to address issues around women's empowerment, particularly female genital cutting, but also to identify areas of oppression affecting men too, such as young boys begging in Islamic schools (UIL 2013a, p. 27).

Responding to the rapid spread of mobile phones and the Internet in many areas of the world, researchers have begun to explore the impact of new technologies on gender relations, literacy practices, and livelihoods in rural areas. Research into young people's livelihood and learning in two communities in Egypt revealed that young women were only able to own mobile phones after marriage due to parents' concern that they might start illicit relationships (IFAD-UNESCO 2014). In Ethiopia, nonliterate young people learned to use mobile phones through informal support from their literate peers and adapting visual symbols to represent numbers (ibid). Research on digital literacies has shown how processes of informal learning can be gendered in the same way as formal learning – shaped by young women's relative lack of mobility and access to resources (such as mobile phones).

Research exploring processes of women's empowerment within communities, rather than starting from planned literacy interventions or educational programs, offers a sharp contrast with policy-focused accounts of the barriers and benefits of women's literacy (see Robinson-Pant 2014). By taking a gendered perspective on social, economic, and political structures and looking at informal learning within communities, researchers explored how women spontaneously developed opportunities to address gender inequality (DFID 2012). For instance, women in a *taleem* class in Bangladesh (discussion group on religious texts) wanted to gain a textual understanding of Islam in order to understand and critique traditional practices. To develop new perspectives on women's literacy, we might be advised to look outside research in the education sector.

Problems and Difficulties

A major problem in the area of women, literacy and development is the continued focus on girls' schooling at the expense of adult women's education – particularly in terms of the allocation of resources. In policy-focused research, this is reflected in the continued failure by many education ministries to disaggregate between girls' and women's literacy rates. Given the under-resourcing of adult education (less than 1% of national education budgets, UNESCO 2012) and the fact that classes consist overwhelmingly of women, literacy tends to be seen as a second-class educational option as compared to formal education. This reinforces women's subordinate role in society since the better-resourced schooling becomes associated with boys and men. Partly due to the lack of funding, most literacy programs depend on volunteer part-time facilitators and community contributions for materials and class facilities (see examples in UIL 2014). Many facilitators are women and the lack of career structure

within literacy programs – notably those with a campaign approach that move from district to district – make it difficult for facilitators to develop their teaching skills; in particular women, compared with men, lack mobility to teach in another area. Just as the classes are seen as a second-rate education, the career of literacy facilitator is often regarded as suitable for women because it is low paid and part time. In many cases, the poor quality of education offered in literacy classes and the lack of linkages with the formal sector contribute to high drop out rates, perpetuating the idea that women are unable to learn effectively.

As noted earlier, women-only programs have been demonstrated to have many advantages, such as providing a safe environment for women to speak freely and develop their confidence. However, the fact that a program is staffed by women may impose its own constraints: women's limited mobility and lack of access to quality education means that few experienced and well-qualified female facilitators are available. In addition, the local women available to teach often promote gender-stereotyped activities such as sewing and kitchen gardening as part of functional literacy programs, since they themselves lack experience of nonconventional occupational skills. The question of how to tackle gender bias in materials and primers is also problematic. As Stromquist (1997) observed in her research on women's literacy programs in Brazil, the women wanted to learn to read women's magazines that promoted images of subordinate women in traditional domestic roles. If programs are to adopt a participatory approach to curriculum design, there is a tension around how to develop materials that promote an idealized image of gender relations, yet build on women's existing literacy practices.

The potential of women's literacy classes to strengthen group activities, such as social action and income generation activities, has long been recognized. However, research insights into the differences between women as a group (their differing experiences according to age, family situation, language, ethnic, and caste group) has also pointed to the importance of recognizing diversity within literacy classes. The problem is that "we [researchers, educators] are concerned about *diversity* in literacies, in women's interests, in locales and methods of literacy learning, while policy makers with costs in mind, are concerned about *uniformity*" (Bown 2004, p. 248). This issue is not of course unique to women but has particular relevance, as literacy programs are targeted mainly at women. There is still a tendency for policy makers and planners to generalize about the needs of the "homogeneous woman" and to neglect to take their multiple roles into account in planning.

Future Developments

The traditional paradigm of women's literacy still dominates policy and planning debates. However, the slow movement towards a rights perspective on literacy and growing popularity of qualitative research approaches within this area suggest that a gendered perspective on literacy and development may be more evident in the future. The current debates on the post-2015 agenda and sustainable development goals indicate a shift from the concern with access to basic and secondary education, to an

emphasis on improving quality and equity (UNESCO 2014). As literacy has often been seen largely in terms of increasing adult women's access to basic education, there has been less attention to the questions about what kind of education is provided, whether these programs are as well resourced and have the same status in society as the educational programs that men participate in. Advocacy work on girls' education and the stronger role of women's organizations in promoting gender equality within education should lead to a more radical approach to promoting adult women's rights through literacy in future. Similarly, the current focus on improving the quality of formal education may impact on the nonformal sector too, with particular relevance for women.

In future, the "ideological" approach to researching literacy (cf Street 1984) may raise new questions for policy makers about the assumed linkages between women, literacy, and development. For instance, a gendered perspective on debates about language policy (see Vol. 1, chapter "Language Policy and Political Issues in Education") raises the question – what are the implications for women of learning to read in their mother tongue as compared to an official language? In terms of class structures and approaches that promote literacy in the community, we can ask: what do women (as compared to men) lose and gain by no longer meeting as a group to learn literacy? How far does the structure of a literacy class provide a socially acceptable (in the eyes of their husbands) reason for women to meet and talk together? The challenge at the present is for researchers to translate ethnographic findings from in-depth local studies into questions that policy makers can begin to address (cf. Rogers and Street 2012). As Bown (2014, p. 675) notes: "It is hard for policy makers to accept alternative approaches to women's literacy, with a school style being inappropriate and adults desiring greater autonomy in, for instance, choosing content relevant to themselves." Moving beyond nonformal and formal educational programs for women, the importance of informal learning for addressing gender inequality and opening up new spaces for economic and social empowerment has become more evident, particularly with the spread of mobile phones. Unless literacy providers recognize and respond to people's spontaneous and informal learning around such new technologies, there is a danger of "gender blindness" with regard to the impact of new literacy and communication practices on gender relations.

The more holistic approach to adult education in general has drawn attention to the importance of supportive development and employment policies. In the field of women literacy and development, there has been long recognition of the need for improved access to services such as credit, health care facilities, and agricultural extension, if women are to be able to use the knowledge and skills learnt in literacy courses. The current policy shift towards education and sustainable development points to the need to strengthen inter-sectoral linkages and promote a more holistic approach (UNESCO 2013). As well as the need to explore the links between women's literacy and the economy, there is an increasing interest in how societal discourses shape literacy and development programs. The above account of the early and main developments has shown how gender relations in society influence not only the curriculum and structure of literacy classes but also the resourcing and the status of women's literacy programs.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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Developing Literacy, and Identities, in Multiple Languages

Nayr Ibrahim

Abstract

Major socio-cultural and socio-political developments in the last century have spread languages, literacies, and identities throughout the world and accelerated the advent of complex multilingual societies in the twenty-first century. On the one hand, adults are confronted with alternative literacy practices in various social contexts, where different languages and ways of meaning are learnt and new identities are forged. On the other hand, children are born into multiple language contact situations, in binational families and multilingual communities. As they develop literacies in their languages, children enact identities in both culturally specific and culturally hybrid spaces and learn to live between their multiple and concurrent worlds.

Implied in these macro- and microinteractional processes are ideological standpoints that fuel linguistic power struggles: individuals' rights for self-expression in their languages versus the coercive power of the majority language; access, or not, to different literacies; the need to negotiate identities in these contested spaces. There has also been a causal rapprochement between literacy development and identity affirmation in the literature, which is due to a shift in the conceptual framework of both identity and literacy from unitary, fixed entities to socially constructed processes.

This chapter traces the growing importance of identity in the development of literacy in multiple languages, over the last 60 years. This journey, not linear but overlapping and recursive, spotlights the shift from a monoglossic to a heteroglossic approach in research and practice, foregrounding the everyday practice of local, situated, as well as transnational literacies, and recognizing and valorizing the ensuing hybrid language identities.

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Contents

Early Developments

Even though learning to read and write in more than one language can be traced to ancient times (García 2009), research on literacy in multiple languages has only come to the fore in the late twentieth century as schools, the workplace, and communities acknowledge the growing linguistic heterogeneity in society. As a result of modernist ideological frameworks of the early twentieth century, this phenomenon was viewed and critiqued through the monolingual lens. The ultimate aim was to develop literacy in the dominant language of a particular socio-political group in a designated geographical-national context, supporting the one-language-one-nation paradigm, and dissociating the learner from his or her linguistic community and identity. However, the failed education of children in postcolonial contexts, being educated in the colonial language, made researchers and practitioners look to the mother tongue as the best medium for teaching and learning as it is the psychological and sociological base for communication and identification. A tenuous psycholinguistic and socio-cultural/socio-political association started pervading language learning and literacy studies.

Early references to literacy in more than one language address issues related to developing reading and writing in a second language, usually the language of a majority community. Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976), reporting on the mother-tongue education of minorities, shift the focus of Finnish migrant children's school achievement, or lack thereof, from the narrow confines of the classroom to an analysis of the global socio-cultural situation of migrant families. The authors describe the link between language and identity as "unbreakable" (p. 7) and demonstrate how the forced or unintended assimilatory policies of majority groups impact negatively on both the learning of the mother tongue and the language of the host country. They argue for developing proficiency in both languages: the mother tongue as a prerequisite for cultural transmission and the language of the community to facilitate structural integration into mainstream society. Cummins (1979, p. 224), based in Canada, also concludes that the "aspects of the child's identity which are associated with his L1 and home culture are seldom reinforced by

the school." As the L2 is learned in a cultural void, individual voices are silenced, identities are straightjacketed and language education fails.

However, the importance of developing self-esteem through the positive identification with one's minority culture for the process of education to be successful is ever present and a fundamental pillar for the preservation of ethnic identities, maintaining and enhancing linguistic and cultural diversity, and elevating all languages to equal status. Grosjean (1982, pp. 208–220), without referring to the process of literacy per se, reviews the effectiveness of monolingual, transitional, and immersion programs. For example, Hobart and Brandt (1966) compare the Canadian and Danish approach to educating children in the Western Canadian arctic coast and Greenland, respectively. They describe the effects of airlifting children from their small communities to residential school hostels to learn English, as an alienating, destructive process, whereas the more holistic Danish approach attempts to blend local practices with Western type approaches and includes reading and writing in Greenlandic and Danish. This study concludes that education in Greenland is more successful as it seeks to make available to the student two identities. For Grosjean, the "immediate submersion" or "sink or swim" approach of monolingual education and the "slow integration" (p. 215) of transitional programs lead inexorably to cultural and linguistic assimilation and result in a clash between the values, attitudes, and lifestyle of the majority group and the home community. On the other hand, maintenance and immersion programs make children functionally bilingual, develop their self-esteem, and prepare them for life in multilingual societies.

The use of the term biliteracy begins to appear at the beginning of the 1980s. Fishman (1980) uses the term "biliteracy" in the title and throughout the article as he compares five "biliterate school-and-community settings in New York" (p. 51). Even though his definition focuses on the "the mastery of reading in particular, and also writing, in two (or more) languages" (p. 49), his article explores biliteracy in the home, the school, and the community. Different roles are attribute to the languages: English is the functional language with a link to the "outside world," and ethnic language literacy is an important symbolic and sentimental anchor, facilitating socialization into the ethnic community and ensuring ethnic continuity. Fishman's conclusions that "societal biliteracy is relatively unproblematic" (p. 59) reflect a community that enjoys and values reading as well as strong parental, family, and community support for biliteracy.

Niyekawa's (1983, p. 98) definition also focuses on mastery: "an advanced state of bilingualism where the person can not only speak two languages fluently but also read and write these two languages." Niyekawa couples biliteracy to positive self-concepts, acceptance of a dual identity, and pride in the ethnic cultural heritage. Niyekawa describes the "biliterate ethnic-minority person" as a resource to the community, serving as "the link, the translator-interpreter between two peoples" (p. 121), characterizing abilities that are required in an increasingly interdependent world.

The narrow culture-identity link, based on social structuralist approaches, prevalent in the early twentieth century, is operative in these initial stages. Consequently,

the tight literacy-identity link becomes a vehicle for valorizing the minority culture, while developing potential bilingual-biliterate individuals.

Major Contributions

Effective literacy development in more than one language has depended on the shift from a negative conceptualization of bilingualism, resulting in academic under-achievement, to additive approaches to bilingual education. Cummins' (1979, p. 47) posits that "if *optimal* development of a minority language child's cognitive and academic potential is a goal, then the school programme must aim to promote an additive form of bilingualism involving literacy in L1 and L2." Equally important is fostering positive attitudes to students' language and cultural identities. Cummins makes the causal link between psycholinguistic aspects of language and sociological and socio-political orientations explicit: when pedagogical principles encourage students to affirm their identities in the learning process, academic achievement is promoted.

This turning point came as a result of Cummins' work on the interdependence hypothesis and the BICS and CALP distinction. Cummins (1981) refutes previous theoretical assumptions in the development of literacy in L1 and L2. For example, the Separate Underlying Proficiency model attributed the low level of academic achievement among immigrant and minority language children to deficit student input (Cummins 1981, p. 133). This attitude views bilingualism as a contributing factor to children's educational difficulties as it causes confusion and emotional instability and language delay. However, longitudinal evaluations of a number of bilingual programs in the 1960s reveal that children were capable of developing literacy in the minority language without any loss to the development of the majority language and even performed better than their majority language-speaking peers in some cases. Cummins (1981) argues for a Common Underlying Proficiency model, which "emphasises the interdependence between the cognitive/academic language proficiencies underlying L1 and L2 skills" (p. 142).

Cummins (1981) discovered that the conflation of bilingual students' conversational fluency, known as basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and their cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), resulted in inaccurate assessment of bilingual students and the inappropriate placement of students in special bilingual programs (see Cummins, chapter "▶ BICS and CALP: Empirical and Theoretical Status of the Distinction," Vol. 2). Cummins postulates that different aspects of language proficiency develop at dissimilar rates throughout one's life and depend on a variety of factors; for example, BICS depends on context-embedded communication, whereas CALP, the context-reduced communication of the oral and written academic register of schooling, "refers to the dimension of language proficiency which are strongly related to literacy skills" (p. 140). Cummins' work transfers the focus from the individual as a problem to a deficit educational treatment of students and alters the conceptual framework of literacy development in bilingual contexts.

Developing literacy in a social and cultural vacuum has transformed potential multiliterate individuals into individuals who have become literate in the dominant language only, as it disregards the multifaceted characteristics of literacy as a social construct. The New Literacy Studies, Street (1984, 1995) shifted the focus from a narrow, neutral, skill-based approach to considering literacy as social practice. Street qualifies the autonomous model as an a-social, a-historical, and a-cultural understanding of reading and writing, located principally within the individual and the classroom setting. The ideological model, more holistic and inclusive of diversity, locates literacy in the lived experience of the individual, taking account of home, community, and transnational literacies. This social turn in literacy theory and research focuses on the roles of texts as tools for constructing, narrating, mediating, enacting, performing, engaging, or exploring identities. Literacy as social practice allows individuals to bring their own experience of different literacy practices to the text, affords them the power to accept, reject, or negotiate, and not simply be subjected to another's worldview, thus, the importance of agency and identity affirmation in developing multiple literacies.

Another major contribution is the work of Hornberger (2003), from the University of Pennsylvania, on the continua of biliteracy. Firstly, Hornberger's (p. 35) definition of "biliteracy" attempts to go beyond the narrow confines of reading and writing in two languages only and widens the scope to "any or all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing." Hornberger (2007, 2012), quoted later in the article, uses the continua of biliteracy to accommodate multilingual, transnational contexts and practices. Hornberger's continua of biliteracy is an attempt to capture, in a theoretical framework, the complexity and interrelatedness of biliteracy development, and requalify polarized opposites (oral vs. literate, monolingual vs. bilingual, L1 vs. L2) into a continuum, thus redressing the power balance of an either-or approach, and giving voice to different literacy identities. The continuum highlights the less powerful ends of the various continua (minority, disenfranchised, rural, multidialectal communities) and allows for the movement along the various continua as a nonstatic, fluid approach to biliteracy. This gives students a voice, valorizes minority ways of knowing, speaking, and writing and acknowledges ethnic, social, and student identities (see Hornberger 2003).

Even though by the mid-1980s ideologies of bilingualism were evolving, the discourse of the establishment continued to typify education in multiple languages as a problem. An overview of language-in-education policies of successive UK governments (Issa and Hatt 2013, pp. 32–57; Safford and Drury 2013) points to the hegemony of the discourse for developing the national language. Despite examples of successful bilingual education initiatives, for example, the Welsh/English programs, that reveal a correlation between rising levels of achievement in the introduction of bilingual polices (Williams et al. 1996), national governments in the UK paid lip service to developing bilingual education policies. In 1992, a report on SAT results of Key Stage 1 minority children still blamed the children's underachievement on the fact that they spoke a language other than English at home (Shorrocks et al. 1992).

Consequently, this fuelled the development of literacy in other languages outside the school system as language minorities reclaimed their linguistic rights and developed their own bilingual education programs, thus maintaining their cultural and linguistic identity (Jabari Mahiri, chapter "▶ Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth," Vol. 2). According to Ricento, (2000, p. 208), "it seems that the key variable which separates the older, positivistic/technicist approaches from the newer critical/ postmodern ones is agency, that is, the role(s) of individuals and collectivities in the processes of language use, attitudes and ultimately policies." The Leicester Project (Martin-Jones and Bhatt 1998) documents the complex multilingual practices of young Gujarati-speaking people growing up in an urban area and "how they draw on their literacies as cultural and symbolic resources for expressing different identities" (40) (see Gregory, chapter "▶ City Literacies," Vol. 2). This project, together with a number of similar studies in the 1990s, demonstrate that developing literacies occurs on a daily basis in rich and varied cultural and historical contexts. It allows young people to affirm difference and that literacy, as well as identity development, is fluid and changeable.

In their article, Martin Jones and Bhatt dedicate a whole section to the need to review the terminology related to literacy studies in multilingual contexts. They reject "the time-worn and rather inadequate terms" (p. 39) of *native speaker* and *mother tongue* to replace them with Rampton's (1995) distinction between *expertise* and *allegiance* and his further distinction of *allegiance* into *inheritance* (allegiance to the language[s] of one's cultural inheritance) and *affiliation* (allegiance to one or more other languages). This article also uses the term "multilingual literacies," which Martin-Jones and Jones (2000) later use as the title of their publication where they gather research carried out in different multilingual settings in the 1990s. This signals a shift from considering individual language repertoires to consist of one or two languages and literacies to "capture the multiplicity and complexity of individual and group communicative repertoires" (p. 5–8). This not only includes "the languages and literacies associated with their cultural heritage, the regional variety of English spoken in their local neighbourhoods and some form of standard English" (p. 5), but also the communicative purposes and choice in the languages used as an affirmation of different identities; the multiple paths to the acquisition of languages and literacies and the varying degrees of expertise in these languages and literacies; and the multiple ways in which individuals draw on and combine their multiple codes for specific communicative purposes (p. 5). For example, Chaps. 2, "Work or Play? 'Unofficial' Literacies in the Lives of Two East London Communities," and 3, "Power Relations and the Social Construction of 'Literacy' and 'Llliteracy': the Experience of Bangladeshi Women in Birmingham" in Martin Jones and Jones (2000) describe the Sylheti-speaking community in the UK, who speak Sylheti from the Sylhet region of Bangladesh but read and write Bengali, the national standard language. In the UK, they speak the English variety of the communities they have settled in, the English variety of East London, or the West Midlands variety of English in Birmingham. Sylheti-speakers see Bengali as a more prestigious language, and the appropriate language for literacy, yet Sylheti continues to be used as an emblem of identity.

Throughout the 1990s, researchers went beyond literacy to consider other social factors related to language, for example, academic achievement, social integration, and identity affirmation. Literacy in the minority languages became the vehicle, not only to ensure the survival, at an individual and group level, of that language. It also encouraged feelings of rootedness, self-esteem, self-identity, and empathy towards other cultures and traditions.

Work in Progress (500-1000-946)

The end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first century witnessed an explosion of interest in language/literacy and identity studies. Researchers questioned the dominant idealized model of society as monolingual, monoethnic, monoreligious, and monoideological (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998), with "monolingualizing tendencies" (Heller 1995, p. 374), to portray the reality of heterogonous societies.

Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) give an overview of identity in different theoretical frameworks. The concept of identity evolves from the more static, rigid, essentialist viewpoint in sociopsychological and interactional sociolinguistic approaches to a poststructuralist framework, where language is a site of identity construction. This ethnographically orientated framework emphasizes the view of identity as fluid, dynamic, shifting and constructed within ideological structures and linguistic interactions. Language, as a place for negotiating identities, adopts the positioning theory (Davies and Harré 1990, p. 48), which is "the process by which selves are located in conversation as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines, informed by particular discourses." Reflective positioning or self-chosen identities are in continuous conflict with interactive positioning as others attempt to position or reposition individuals or groups differently.

This poststructuralist world creates potential sites for developing literacy in multiple languages, which start to emerge in the research field of Heritage Language Education (Brinton et al. 2008), Complementary Schools (Lytra and Martin 2010), and the conceptualization of schools as multilingual spaces (García 2009). These sites of literacy development have not only drawn attention to considerations of language use and attitudes as well as considerations of power and social inequality but have given the research participants in the various language-literacy contexts the possibility of displacing, subverting, and even manipulating the need to belong to a predefined language-identity community. This is reinforced in Rivera and Huerta-Macías (2008) as "biliterate individuals develop language and literacy as well as ways to interact with their worlds that are socially and culturally appropriate" as well as "effective and efficient" (p. 20). They quote two studies to illustrate this: Belfiore (2004), where Sergio, uses his English and Spanish literacies to make notes at work, and Reyes (2001), where Iliana, a first-grader, uses her knowledge of Spanish writing to write a letter in less-than-perfect English to a monolingual Santa Clause (p. 14).

Furthermore, the dominant discourse, which relies on equating community, culture, and ethnic identity, has been subverted. Baumann (1996, p. 2) comments on the often quoted cliché of cultural minorities being "divided by" or "caught between" two cultures: "I do not see why they should be seen as suspended between, rather than be seen to reach across, two cultures." Wallace (2008) uses the metaphor of the bridge, "reaching across," or a "vantage point, a better position from which to survey, not discrete cultures so much as a variegated multicultural landscape" (p. 62). This fluidity of multilingualism also gives the individual a choice of identities: students in Etxeberría-Sagastume's study (2006) in the Basque country choose Basque, as opposed to Spanish, as the identity language: "To speak Euskara has made me feel Basque. Yet, Spanish has never really made me feel Spanish. If I speak Euskara I feel Basque and I like that because its our language" (p. 129). Kenner (2004) describing children's use of their multiple literacy resources in different educational contexts prefers to see children as experiencing "simultaneous worlds," sometimes mixing literacies, sometimes switching between literacy traditions. "The experience of biliteracy meant that children always had more than one set of resources available when writing. At some moments children drew on both sets at once, whilst at others they switched from using one set to using another (p. 44)."

The concept of the hybrid space or hybridity (García et al. 2006) starts permeating the literature as multiliterate individuals develop complementary rather than competing identities (Saxena 1994). Access to multiple languages and literacies enables multilingual and multiliterate individuals to explore identities, representative of languages, cultures, and communities, but also within the hybrid or in-between spaces.

Definitions of literacy become more complex and multidimensional. Langer (2001, p. 838) defines literacy as a "multilayered history of experience with language and content, cutting across many contexts, [an] amplified view of literacy, acknowledging the interconnectedness of cultural experience." García et al. (2006), based in North America, build on and extend the concepts of biliteracy and multilingual literacies to include the complexity and interrelatedness of twenty-first century living and learning by proposing a pluriliteracies approach. This emphasizes literacy practices in sociocultural contexts, the hybridity of literacy practices afforded by new technologies, and the increasing interrelationship of semiotic systems or multimodal practices, that is, "written-linguistic modes of meaning are intricately bound up with other visual, audio and spatial semiotic systems" (García 2009, p. 339).

The text "written, spoken, signed, visual, musical, dramatic, or a combinations of multimodal form" (Cummins 2006, p. 60) becomes a form of semiotic interaction in multiple language contexts and the site for negotiating identities. Drawing on the concepts of identity investment and imagined communities (Norton 2000, 2013) and multiliteracies (Cope and Kalantzis 2009), they describe identity texts as "products of students' creative work or performance carried out within the pedagogical space orchestrated by the classroom teacher [and that] represent a powerful pedagogical tool to promote equity for students from marginalised social backgrounds" (p. 3 and 4). Agency takes center-stage where literacy ceases to be about skills and competence and becomes the co-construction of meaning. Through these active

transformative processes, students are more engaged, as it builds on their cultural and linguistic capital and "technology acts as an amplifier to enhance the process of text production and dissemination" (p. 3).

Problems and Difficulties (750–641)

Despite the vast body of research into literacy development across multiple sites in multiple languages and the development of the identity-literacy tandem, bilingual and multilingual pedagogies (García 2009) are still rather absent from the mainstream classroom. As we have seen in a multitude of settings, literacy is never a value-free enterprise – it is embedded in ideologies and institutional contexts in which power relations between ethnolinguistic groups are asymmetrical and where languages are more or less maintained or lost. As a social act, literacy is always representative of a particular worldview and always contentious.

According to García, et al. (2006, p. 34), "very few schools are building on the variability, hybridity and sense-making processes that characterise out-of-school multilingual practices today, especially as languages that had been previously relegated to private domains access public domains, including the Web." National education systems are still defining language as a technical isolated system, stubbornly promoting monolingual pedagogies and highlighting the value of a single language. These monoglossic ideologies (García 2009) legitimize monolingual practices, the idealized native speaker, and the compartmentalization of languages. Ultimately, developing literacies still signifies developing the literacy practices of dominant as opposed to subordinate groups, and identities are reconstructed, amalgamated, or assimilated over time and space. Policy-makers use the excuse of the cost and complexity of implementing these programs to maintain the status quo.

Safford and Drury's article (2013) describes educational practice that still refers to multilingual children as "problems" in educational settings. The lack of engagement and training of staff silences children in one context, even though they can be competent language learners in another. Nazma demonstrates no identity investment in her nursery school setting and is described by the teacher as "stubborn" and "refusing to speak" (p. 76). Yet, observation in the home environment reveals an active child participating fully in family life and activities.

Andrews (2009, p. 9) call for "large-scale studies, longitudinal studies, studies with a balance of qualitative and quantitative data and comparative studies." Safford and Drury also suggest looking to the "early years and non-statutory complementary settings as unique and groundbreaking in making contact with children, families, home and communities" (p. 78). Yet another recommendation is to use children's/learners' voices in interactive, participatory processes, for example, Clark's (2005) Mosaic Approach allowing children to voice their perceptions and experiences of living and learning in multilingual contexts. Gregory et al. (2004, p. 19) use ethnography as a "means of making visible cultures that are close to home and distant, that are complex and internally varied, that change, that merge and re-emerge syncretically and are shaped in creative ways by participants."

Training of teachers in multilingual pedagogies and recognition of the valuable contribution bilingual staff can make in bridging linguistic and cultural gaps in the educational setting is also important. Teachers need to understand multilingual pedagogies (García 2009) that acknowledge the different socio-political conditions of school systems and heterogeneity of languages found in most classrooms today. Hornberger and Link (2012, p. 263) list a number of scenarios, where students and teachers across the world "engage in translanguaging and transnational literacies, border crossing communicative practices that are becoming more prevalent in an increasingly globalised world."

However, in order for institutional changes to be effective, parent education is also fundamental. Drury (2007, p. 8–9) states that Nazma's mother "had little understanding of how children learn by play at nursery and wholly believed that the school would give Nazma all the educational skills she required." Edwards (2009) stress the important of parents and the home environment in mediating children's emerging literacies and identities and describes a successful project that aims at promoting bilingualism, using marketing tools, to parents in the Welsh context (p. 41–43).

Future Directions (750–738)

Baynham and Prinsloo (2009, p. 1), reflecting on the future of literacy studies, refer to the "*third generation* empirical work which is pushing the boundaries of literacy research in a number of key directions: the focus has shifted from the local to the translocal, from print based literacies to electronic and multimedia literacies and from verbal to the multimodal." This unprecedented revolution is challenging both researchers and practitioners as they attempt to make sense of a fast moving, dynamic, and interconnected world. Blommaert (2010) refers to the "sociolinguistics of mobile resources," focusing on language-in-motion rather than language-in-place. This necessitates a more flexible understanding of the "dynamic, hybrid, and transnational linguistic repertoires of multilingual (often migrant) speakers in rapidly diversifying urban conurbations worldwide" (May 2014 p. 1) and the impact it will have on educational systems and practices.

There is an interest in understanding the multilingual/multiliterate/ multicompetent individual. Multilinguality describes "the inherent, intrinsic characteristics of the multilingual" (Hoffmann and Ytsma 2004, p. 17): it goes beyond a mono/bilingual lens and is far from being linguistic-related. It characterizes the individual in a holistic manner, taking all aspects of this identity into account – emotions, attitudes, preferences, anxiety, cognitive and psycholinguistic aspect, personality type, social ties and influences and reference groups, languages in contact situations, idiosyncrasies, peculiarities of communicators, legacies, specials needs, such as dyslexia, career choices and opportunities, upbringing and education background (p. 18).

Literacy moves out of the traditional linear text to inhabit various forms. The multiple paths to literacy learning and constructing multilayered identities need to

include a "multiplicity of communications channels and media and the increasing salience of cultural and linguistic diversity" (Cope and Kalantzis 2009, p. 5). They propose "a pedagogy of multiliteracies" (p. 165) as a response to the ever-changing, fast-moving social world, as it brings two dimensions together – the multilingual and the multimodal. Multimodality, based on a social semiotic perspective, describes communication in the widest sense, including gesture, oral, and written performance, drawings, digital and electronic content, graphs and illustrations, and objects. Melo Pfeifer and Schmidt (2012) use drawings, combined with writing, to explore Portuguese-German children's HL representations and identity based on the instruction: "Draw yourself while speaking the language your know" (p. 7). Edwards (2009) examines six scenarios of children around the world developing literacy in very different contexts, in and out of school, two of which include children writing and illustrating bilingual stories using multimedia.

Pahl and Rowsell (2010, p. 9) describe the construction of texts as the sedimentation of identities in texts, which describe "how students bring their own ways of being, doing, and feeling-their acquired dispositions-into writing." The text, through its materiality, reflects the previous identities and the developing identities of the meaning maker. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) also develop the notion of "artifactual literacies" where everyday objects, as an embodiment of lived experience, are infused with meaning and become "potential sites of story, community building, and identity performance" (p. vii). Ibrahim (2014 p. 50) uses "physical artifacts, chosen by the children, with a threefold function: they represent their different languages/cultures; they act as physical anchors for the children imagination; and serve as a springboard for the discursive exploration of their multilingual world."

In order to redress the balance between monoglossic educational practice and the reality of heterogeneous lived experiences, the interrelatedness and hybridity of everyday literacy practices should be made visible in educational practices and curriculum reforms and thus reflect and enhance the reality outside the classroom (see Viniti Vaish, chapter "▶ Biliteracy and Globalization," Vol. 2). There has been a growing interest in exploring emerging literacy practices in the early years across multiple sites, multilingual experiences, cultures, and modes. This offers opportunities for understanding how children's knowledge is intertwined within their developing literacies as well as understanding the process of identity construction and identification before difference becomes conscious. When literacy/identity journey begins in the early years, children can construct a positive self-image and a strong multicultural identity. Consequently, researchers and practitioners need to look for "multifaceted approaches that best reflects children's unique ways of expressing their creativity and conveying meaning" (Ibrahim 2014, p. 50).

The confluence of the local, the transnational, and global contexts together with the incursion of new technologies, social media, and multimodality presents the challenging phenomenon of refracted and plural, cross-boundary, and concurrent literacy-identity experiences that researchers are tackling today. The restricting culture-identity-literacy link is severed in these sites of mobile multilingualism, as researchers concentrate on the overlapping, intersecting, and ever-changing characteristics of literacy and identity.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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"Context(s)," Literacy and Education

Reflections from Case Studies in Brazil

Maria Lucia Castanheira

Abstract

In this chapter, I will focus on two case studies of writing in working class families in Trombetas, a *bairro* on the outskirts of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, to examine how taking different views of context has implications for understanding different facets of literacy as social practice. The first case study was developed in the late 1980s and the second is still in progress, and both carried out an ethnographic perspective to examine changing meanings and values associated with literacy within local and globalized networks. I will point out different ways in which the notion of context can be explored in the study of literacy as social practice and will discuss implications of such meanings for account of literacy as social practice and of education. The aim is to examine directions for the future of literacy studies by articulating and making visible layers of complexity and contradictions in pursuing these new directions and raise additional directions for consideration in the future of literacy studies.

Contents

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A Starting Point for Discussion: Notion(s) of Context

One of the challenges for researchers that adopt a view of literacy as social practices is to understand meanings of literacy associated with different uses, power, identities, and the connectedness of a local context to sociohistorical influences, political processes, ideological questions, or material consequences (Baynham and Prinsloo 2008; Luke 2008; Brandt and Clinton 2002; Street 2002, 2006, 2012). In this scenario, the assumption that meanings of literacy are context dependent and vary across contexts seems to be largely adopted by researchers associated with the literacy as social practice (LSP) or new literacy studies (NLS) approach. However, as indicated by caveats presented by Mishler (1998) and by Rex et al. (1998), the equation "meaning as context dependent" is not simple, easy to grasp or to explain.

In a paper published in 1979, entitled "Meaning in context: is there any other kind?" Elliot Mishler appealed for the importance of considering the relationship between context and meaning in the process of research and educational practice. He stated:

> (...) this ordinary and common sense understanding of meaning as context dependent has been excluded from the main positivist tradition of theory and research in the social and psychological sciences and in the application of this tradition to educational research. Theorists and researchers, in this perspective tend to behave as if context were the enemy of understanding rather than resource for understanding which it is in our everyday life.

At that time, Mishler pointed out that developing research approaches needed to challenge the positivist perspective and instead to work with an interpretivist approach that would consider context as a resource for understanding and not enemy for understanding. In this line, he was emphasizing a developing view of research as an interpretative process in which reflexivity plays a fundamental role in understanding a particular context and meanings produced within this context. In the field of literacy studies, this interpretative research approach has meant adopting a social perspective on literacy practices "in context," proposing views of what counts as context (e.g., multiple contexts across time and space) and building understanding of researcher's and participants' perspectives.

Two decades after Mishler's caveat, Rex et al. (1998) developed his argument by examining the ways in which words such as context was explored by literacy researchers. They did a Semantic analysis of this term in articles published in *Researching in Teaching of English*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, and *Journal of Literacy Research* (5 years in RTE, and 1 year in JLR). After this analysis, they identified what they called a *confounding effect* that resulted of various ways in which words "even seemingly less resonant ones like context" (Rex et al. 1998) were

used across disciplines and areas of study or in individual studies that take up an interdisciplinary perspectives. According to them, the concept of context was been used in so many different ways (or not even in clarified ways) that in order to avoid this confounding effect researchers needed to make their assumptions more explicitly.

The caveats presented in these authors (Mishler 1998 and Rex et al. 1998) make visible the centrality and capillarity of the notion of context within the literacy field as well as challenges faced by literacy researchers. How to deal with the relationship between context, meaning, and interpretation? How is context defined in a particular study? And what the implications of different views of context for understanding a particular phenomenon? In order to reflect about these challenges, I will contrast data from a research in Brazil that examines the meanings of literacy among members of working class families that live in Trombetas, a neighborhood in the city of Ibirité, a city of approximately 140.000 inhabitants that is part of the commuter belt of Belo Horizonte that has 5 767 414 inhabitants, according to 2011 census. In the first case study, developed through 1988 to 1991 (Castanheira 1991), I examined the ways in which children from these families had access to writing *in* and *out of* school. The second case study was initiated in March 2009, after identifying the current addresses of families that participated in the previous research; it aims to examine the consequences of the social changes that took place in the last decades in shaping the ways in which participants use writing *in* and *out of* school and the relationships between these uses. In the last years, I have had the opportunity to interview members from families that participated in the previous case study. The current project makes it possible to compare the living conditions across three generations of these families: children interviewed before are now adults, have children of their own, and, in some cases, live with or close to their parents. The pictures presented below help to construct a view of Trombetas in two points in time, 1988 and 2009 (Pictures 1 and 2).

In the next sections, I will reflect on different ways the notion of context can be explored to reflect on the complexity of the interpretive process of examining meanings of literacy in local context and links to global. In this perspective, I will examine *Research program as context and Indexical signs in the landscape.*

Research Program as Context for Action and Interpretation

From an interpretivist perspective, the researcher themself is a central instrument in the process of examining and understanding a particular phenomenon given that it is from her/his point of view that the analytical process unfolds. Therefore, the researcher's social, cultural, and theoretical knowledge, values and experiences are resources that support her/his interpretation of *what is going on* in a particular social group in a given time, event or across times, spaces, and events. A researcher becomes part of a particular *research program* (Strike 1989) and learns ways of

Picture 1 Trombetas in 1988

observing, describing, talking about, classifying, or reporting findings. According to Strike (1989), a research program is characterized by a set of governing assumptions that guide and support research actions and interpretation. He points out that these assumptions, among other things, provide the context in which theoretical and empirical terms are defined and enable us to distinguish relevant from irrelevant phenomena. That is, this set of assumptions inform us as to what phenomena a given enterprise is expected to deal with, and they tell us what sorts of questions are appropriate to ask about them, providing the perceptual perspectives and categories by means of which the world is experienced and what is to count as a well-formed or appropriate account of phenomena.

Departing from this view of a research program, Strike proposed the concept of *expressive potential* of a research program (Strike 1989). According to him, the choice of language used by members of a research program places limits on what can be discussed and what aspects can be described in and through that language. This framing *constitutes the elements of language* (discourse) that a research community uses.

If we take Strike's notion of *expressive potential* of a research program into account and assume that what can be known is what can be articulated through a particular research language, then a reflexive concern for understanding our own

Picture 2 Trombetas 2009

lens, processes, and procedures, and those of our research colleagues through the languages they are represented become important. Ultimately, a research program can be seen as a constitutive element of the context in which a research endeavor is developed. On this line of argumentation, Green and Bloome (1997) states that a researcher creates a *logic of inquiry* by drawing upon conceptual frames which are then applied in specific concrete process of research. In each moment of research, the researcher proposes certain kind of questions that guide their inquiry and frame what can be known about a phenomenon.

At this point, as a way of supporting a view of a research program as context for action and interpretation, I compare words, concepts, ideas, works (research language) available in two points in time (1988, 2008) when I developed the case studies on writing in working class families. By contrasting elements of research languages available at these two points in times, I make visible contextual elements that shaped what could be asked, and how it was asked at each point in time. This contrast does not aim to be comprehensive but only to point out a few but key aspects that were influential in Brazilian educational research context at each point in time, and based on that demonstrate how they contributed to the construction of research questions and of a logic of inquiry.

Until the middle 1980s, the majority of Brazilian research on *alfabetização* (the teaching of reading and writing) was devoted to prove which method (analytic or synthetic) was better for teaching (Soares 2004). The research focus was, then, on the *methodology of teaching* and no much consideration was made about how a learner learns to read or write. In 1985, the publication of Emilia Ferreiro and Ana Teberosky's Psychogenesis of Writing (Ferreiro and Teberosky 1985) in Brazil can be seen as a mark of changes of the predominant focus of research in the methodology of teaching. In the

middle 1980s, many Brazilian researchers follow the path open by Ferreiro and Teberosky's book to examine questions related to how a child "construct" their knowledge about the writing system. It is also interesting to note that at that point in time a word correspondent to the English word literacy did not existed in Brazilian Portuguese. Such word in Brazilian Portuguese – letramento – would appear in a Brazilian academic publication in the late eighties and would be included in a Brazilian dictionary for the first time in 2001. For instance, there was a period in which we would see the dispute between alfabetismo e letramento when the second expression became predominant while alfabetismo would be "closer" to alfabetização. There is no need to go further in this discussion here, but Soares (2004) does provide a history of the term in different languages including in Portuguese. It was also around the middle eighties that Shirley B. Heath's *Ways with words* (1983) and Brian V. Street's *Literacy in theory and practice* (Street 1984; see also Heath and Street (2008) became available in a few Brazilian research institutions. Although these seminal pieces were not translated into Portuguese and access to them was limited, they represent a body of work that brought to attention the world outside school and the need to investigate the social uses and meanings of literacy from an ethnographic perspective. Other key discussion available at that time was related to the work of William Labov (1972) that challenged the linguistic deficit theory and was a resource for redefining negative views of speakers of nonstandard Portuguese. The work of Pierre Bourdieu also figured as influential for understanding the role of schooling in reproducing social inequalities (cf Blommaert 2005).

It was within this changing Brazilian educational research context, in which new research programs were taking shape that I began to develop the first case study considered here. Going back to the written work presented as a master thesis in 1991, it is possible to recognize traces of the research languages available at that point in time and how it shaped the question that guided the study and the scope of what could be learn through it.

In the final report, I recalled that after working as a research assistant in a child care center organized by a Woman's association in Trombetas for 2 years, and following up the lives of Trombeta's children in and out of this child center, I was intrigued by what was going on inside school in contrast with what could be observed outside schools.

> There is a need to compare two moments of the **relationship** of working class children **with writing**. The first, the moment in which the child interacted with writing by the **mediation** of their family and their social group, before their entry into elementary school. The second moment, immediately after the child enters school, when his/her **relationship with writing** becomes, mainly, mediated by the school. (. . .) W**hat was going on** there, early in the *alphabetization* process, leading these working class children to different paths than the ones that were expected? **Why** did these children have difficulty to continue to **discover** and **construct their knowledge** about writing? (Castanheira 1991, p. 6)

In a nutshell, the words in bold in the previous paragraph are traces of research languages that contributed in the shaping a particular way of looking and describe

what was going on with the kids in and out of school in Trombetas. Children were seen as "constructors" of their knowledge in a process of *alfabetização* while interacting with writing. The main focus was oriented to the relationship between children and writing. This study, as many others at that point in Brazil, moved from the aim to investigate "what is the best teaching method?" to "how do children construct knowledge?" Note that, if there was a move to understand literacy outside school, and to consider the social nature of writing, the "social" was *defined* within the boundaries of a psychogenetic or social cultural psychological approach. In this sense, the key was to observe children interacting with writing and the mediation of family members and peers in this process. The word *letramento* was still not currently in use even in academic contexts, and the examination of *what was going on* outside school would take as reference for juxtaposition the schooling process of *alfabetização*.

Two decades later, when the second case study was initiated, the Brazilian Portuguese *letramento* was already spread, dictionarized, and used in various domains beyond the academy, and distinction and analysis of alfabetização and letramento were made explicitly (Soares 2004). Theories of power, identity and discourse, and works representatives of an understanding of literacies as social practices and ethnographic perspectives in education were also much more present and explored (to cite a few: Street 1984; Gee 1990; Bloome and Egan-Robertson 1993; Green et al. 2002; Heath and Street 2008; Castanheira et al. 2001). The set of governing assumptions present in this period of time gave shape to different questions in the second case study: **How local** literacy practices are **influenced by** social, political, historical factors, and ideologies? How to examine **local changes** and their relationship with changes in distant contexts and **global** movements? What are the **implications** of this analysis for our understanding of **literacy** in general? Again, these questions present traces of research language available and explored in the second case study. From this theoretical frame, the understanding of the social and ideological nature of literacy implies in different choices of words, questions, and focus (e.g., from children relationship with writing to examination of the relationship between local writing practices to global).

This brief contrast between concepts, words, or ideas available and explored, and the questions that guided these two case studies allow to demonstrate how a researcher's work is situated within and in relationship to research programs that offer a particular language to interpret the world and the phenomenon in focus. Thus, a research program or research programs can been seen as a kind of intellectual or epistemological context in which the research find him/herself. The account of the "local context" under study, then, will be initially shaped by conceptual resources brought by researcher (outsider). Thus, understanding meanings of literacy in a local context requires recognizing and acknowledging the central role of researcher's ontological and epistemological principles in the construction of the phenomenon under study and the expressive potential of a research language explored in processes of studying literacy practices.

Landscape as Context: Interpreting Indexical Signs

I reflected elsewhere (Castanheira 2013) about returning to Trombetas after many years for the developing the second case study. The process of reentering the field made me aware of how my inferences about *what is going on in Trombetas* were grounded in various sources of *indexical signs* (Wortham 2001) of change. It is argued by Gumperz (1982) that relevant aspects of a context are used by participants to make inferences about *what is going on* in a particular context and to guide their participation within a group. According to Silverstein (2006), indexical signs can be seen as cues explored by the participants to make inferences and to ground their understandings of the context in which they participate. The concept applies not only to the participants in this situation but also to the researcher who engages in the same process of interpreting cues or indexical signs to construct his/her understanding of *what is going on* in a particular research setting.

In the case of this study, it was through contrasting different sources of information that I could identify and begin to interpret indexical signs of change: I contrasted Trombetas' current landscape with my memories of the past, pictures and field notes and interviews from both case studies. As an outsider (re)entering the research field, I based my initial inferences about changes from rural to urban economy, for example, in the observation of an expressive presence of written signs in Trombetas' streets nowadays against my memories that I rarely saw written signs on Trombetas' streets many years ago. Also, the massive presence of neo-Pentecost churches in the area in 2009, sometimes three or four of them in two blocks, in contrast to the absence of any kind of church 20 years ago, were taken as indexing changes with respect to the role of religious practices in this neighborhood.

Initially, this exploration of the constant comparative ethnographic principle (Heath and Street 2008) in identifying and interpreting indexical signs of changes in Trombetas led to the identification of changes in two domains: economic and religious. Subsequent research actions and questions were then guided by these initial understandings. Reflecting on initial process of interpretation of landscape, indexical signs can helped to identify themes to be re-examined with research participants in order to move from a predominant outsider perspective toward the construction of an understanding that takes insiders' perspective into account (emic/etic). The indexical signs inscribed in the landscape (physical environment or context) gained meaning as I engaged in this constant comparative and contrastive process of experiencing, observing, registering, and talking with research participants. Thus, we can argue that a local context (here in the sense of a physical context, the landscape) is not a given, clear, or defined entity but is a constructed representation that results from an interpretative process that is reflexive by nature. In this sense, a researcher engages in a process of *contextualizing* the world around him. This understanding has implications for researching and reporting on literacy as social practices: it challenges researchers to taking into account his/her own engagement in an interpretive/reflexive process for "contextualizing" the world (physical and social) and to make this process explicit to others as ways of offering elements for evaluating the validity of a constructed logic of inquiry and proposed representation(s) and interpretations of local meanings.

Conclusion

I conclude this Chapter, then, with a brief summary of key points in the field that my particular research, I believe, highlights. Firstly, the consideration of *research program as context for action and understanding* makes visible how a researcher's endeavor is itself historically situated, supported, or constrained by the theoretical frameworks, concepts, or ideas that are available and are explored in particular times and spaces for making sense of what is going on in a social setting. Adopting an ethnographic perspective on the study of literacy practices requires a reflexive stance that takes into account how a researcher's theoretical and institutional contexts contribute to the definition of what problem should be investigated, how it should be approached and reported. Secondly, the consideration of *landscape as context* exemplified the exploration of a constant comparative principle in contrasting indexical signs as a process in which the researcher plays a central role. In this sense, a particular social context is not a given but involves constructed representations of how meanings of literacy are inscribed in a particular social landscape. This initial discussion around these two issues has demonstrated different ways in which the notion of *context* can be explored in the study of literacy as social practice, and such issues and understandings are, then, key to research practice and presentation of data and present some of the ways that an ethnographic and social practice perspective views the notion of "context."

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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A Community Literacy Project: Nepal

Bryan Maddox

Abstract

The concept of community literacy is based on the idea that local meanings and uses of literacy should inform the design and implementation of adult literacy programs and that literacy programs should respond and be flexible to people's expressed needs. The in Nepal was informed by the sociocultural model of literacy developed within the "New Literacy Studies" (Street 1995) and was funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The New Literacy Studies is informed by sociolinguistic and ethnographic studies of literacy. Rather than viewing literacy as an autonomous "skill," these approaches view literacy and literacies as a diverse social practice embedded in local contexts, institutions, and practices (Collins and Blot 2003; Street 1993). This perspective assumes that literacy programs can provide a public space for the articulation and debate over local "situated" meanings of literacy and provide practical mechanisms to help people to learn and use literacy in real-life situations. The paper discusses some of the tensions between the articulation of "local" meanings of literacy within the wider national and international discourses of development and some of the creative responses that emerged.

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Contents

Introduction

The concept of community literacy is based on the idea that local meanings and uses of literacy should inform the design and implementation of adult literacy programs and that literacy programs should respond and be flexible to people's expressed needs. The *Community Literacy Project* in Nepal was informed by the sociocultural model of literacy developed within the "New Literacy Studies" (Street 1995) and was funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).[1] The New Literacy Studies is informed by sociolinguistic and ethnographic studies of literacy. Rather than viewing literacy as an autonomous "skill," these approaches view literacy and literacies as a diverse social practice embedded in local contexts, institutions, and practices (Collins and Blot 2003; Street 1993). This perspective assumes that literacy programs can provide a public space for the articulation and debate over local "situated" meanings of literacy and provide practical mechanisms to help people to learn and use literacy in real-life situations. The paper discusses some of the tensions between the articulation of "local" meanings of literacy within the wider national and international discourses of development and some of the creative responses that emerged.

Going Local

> The Community Literacy Project responds to the expressed literacy and numeracy needs of local groups and communities. The approach is flexible, and allows people to learn literacy and numeracy that is directly linked to their daily life and livelihoods. ("Community Literacies" newsletter, Issue 7, July 2002)

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[1]The Community Literacy Project ran between February 1997 and September 2003. It was initially managed by the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) and then by World Education Nepal (WEN). Project staff changed during the course of the project. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors.

One of the strongest claims of the New Literacy Studies has been that there is both a democratic and pragmatic rationale for localizing our understandings of how literacy is learned and used (Collins and Blot 2003). In recognizing the existence of "literacies" and the multiple ways in which written media is used and made meaningful, we can avoid imposing dominant models of literacy that are unwanted or that lack local relevance and utility. Localized perspectives offer the opportunity to engage with dominant literacy practices or to develop vernacular skills and practices. In the Nepali context, this is particularly challenging, not only because of extensive cultural and linguistic diversity but also because of the ways in which discourses on literacy (and education in general) are framed by nationalist and development concerns (Ahearn 2001; Robinson-Pant 2001; Rogers 1999). In such a context, it is not always clear that local aspirations can be articulated. The "gift" of development aid normally comes wrapped in nationalist and donor-inspired conditionalities and is accessed and expressed through an unyielding and omnipresent developmentalist discourse (Pigg 1992). In this case, such politics were also complicated by the intellectual agenda of the project, influenced as it was by a radically new perspective on literacy which was often perceived as being alien to Nepal. This presented some significant challenges to the project which had explicitly wanted to localize provision and to "empower" local communities.

Changing Literacies

The concept of localized provision was influenced by wider processes of change occurring within Nepal during that time and by broader changes in development discourse and priorities. The national context was in the process of rapid social change, as democratic parties, civil society organizations, and left-wing Maoist revolutionary forces attempted to replace the elitist, caste-based polity and ideology with a more inclusive and radical politics (Mainali 2005). These processes involved a radical democratization of communication media including literacy practices, as silent majorities claimed a voice in these processes of change (Holland 1995; Maddox 2001). These changes included more decentralized and democratic access to radio broadcasting and TV and the promotion of language policy and practice in education, media, and governance that recognized linguistic diversity within the country (Maddox 2003).[2]

Local Literacies: Wall Newspapers

The Community Literacy Project supported local community organizations in Nepal to produce regular community newspapers. The "wall newspapers" (literally, local

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[2]Nepal is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world, with 127 spoken languages and many major language groups.

Fig. 1 Women in an eastern
hill village reading a
community wall newspaper

newspapers stuck to a notice board or wall) were handwritten by community groups.
They discussed a range of community issues, information on resources and politics,
as well as cultural activities. The wall newspapers were written in multiple languages
and scripts reflecting the high linguistic diversity in Nepal. The newspapers
challenged the hierarchical modes of media being produced in and for the local
communities. Nonliterate community members were able to "write" for the wall
newspapers with the support of scribes (Fig. 1).

   These new forms of communicative politics challenged the discriminatory forms
of literacy practice and the lack of transparency often practiced by government
institutions in a country where according to 2001 census data 56% of adults cannot
read and write (Ministry Education and Sports 2002) and where case-based
ideologies of social hierarchy remain pervasive.

   In addition to these shifting cultural politics, the donor priorities and expectations
also changed, from an initial concern with localized community development to a
rhetoric of "livelihoods" and "poverty reduction." These changes in national and
international politics and priorities provided an important backdrop for
understanding the work of the project and influenced and gave it shape, as it tried
to "localize" and operationalize the concept of community literacy.

   This paper describes some of the main activities of the project, the mechanisms
and processes it developed for localizing literacy activities, and the way in which it
developed from small-scale pilot activities in a few communities to a large-scale

Fig. 2 A woman being interviewed during a live broadcast on the community "audio tower" (audio broadcast via loudspeaker), Dhankuta District

program covering ten districts of Nepal, with some 70,000 beneficiaries and 139 partner organizations.

Literacy, Communication, and Access to Information

The *Community Literacy Project* developed through three distinct stages, which we can retrospectively describe as those of exploration, consolidation, and expansion. The first exploratory and experimental stage involved in-depth participatory and ethnographic research in a few communities in the east of Nepal. Working with local partner organizations, lengthy "baseline studies" and initial pilot programs were conducted using a combination of ethnographic research and action research methodology. Many of the initial activities of the project had a broader remit than many conventional literacy programs, and many were not considered as "literacy" at all. This entailed activities to support people in literacy use, communication, and access to information in applied in situ social activities such as in saving and credit groups, health promotion, community broadcasting, community forestry, and community newspapers.

In these activities, the focus was often on informal literacy support rather than formal literacy instruction. In fact, formal instruction was often avoided, as it distracted attention from the applied nature of the activities and people's tasks and goals. As the project consolidated its approach, it developed a distinctive ethos and approach. The project literature promoted an approach based on the idea that "literacy is something that is used and learned in the community, rather than just being the activity of the literacy class, and communication and access to information can be enhanced through oral, visual, and literacy based practices" ("Community Literacies", 2001) (Fig. 2).

This approach to literacy was, however, not widely accepted within Nepal, and the project faced significant criticism from a number of areas in early evaluation reports. The criticism centered on the failure of the project to promote and support formal

literacy instruction and the limited geographical coverage of the project activities. The unconventional approach adopted by the project clashed with the conventional model of literacy instruction.

Managing Diversity

Following this criticism, the project consolidated its activities and prepared to deliver them on a wider scale. The second stage of the project can be described as consolidation and involved learning from the initial phase and developing and testing the project's approach, methods, and products. The project invested heavily in developing its human resources (and those of partner organizations), and the strong and very committed team became the mainstay of the work. The project prioritized three clear areas of activity:

1. *Literacy support (scribing, mentoring, mediation) to help people to access and engage with necessary literacy texts and practices*
2. *Tailor-made packages of literacy and numeracy instruction based on specific sets of literacy tasks*
3. *Training packages of "communication audit" to help institutions to review and modify their communication (and literacy) texts and practices to make them more inclusive and suitable for nonliterate groups and those who speak minority languages* (source: "Community Literacies" newsletter)

The process of project consolidation also involved a shift from lengthy processes of action research to a more clearly structured and goal-driven activities. These activities included training packages of literacy support, for example, in legal literacy and scribing for literacy mediators and materials for "tailor-made" literacy teaching and learning materials based on people's uses of literacy in particular social and economic activities (such as in vegetable production and marketing, saving, and credit activities). These activities, which had been developed in the exploratory phase of the project, were developed for delivery on a large scale, but with mechanisms for adapting them for local variations in content, language, and script and for different geographical and cultural locations. Local language and multilingual formats were developed. In a radical move, partner organizations were trained in the principles of community literacy and encouraged to innovate and adapt materials kept on CD, to suit the expressed needs of local communities. In that way, local variations in language, script, and literacy use could be accommodated.

Scribes and Legal Literacy

One of the most popular activities of the project involved training local people in legal literacy and in scribing (or literacy mediation). This activity which was

developed in a direct response to a community-based request was not focused on "making people literate" but in helping people to access and manage the many necessary formal literacy tasks involved in encounters with government bureaucracy. These literacy tasks included applications for citizenship, registration of births, deaths and marriage, women's property and inheritance rights, police cases, and so on. The governance-related literacy texts that were used for public communication or notification of important official announcement were too complex and virtually inaccessible even to literate people, let alone partially literate and nonliterate people. It was in such a context that the locals acknowledged the significance of the project-trained literacy scribes, not only for literacy support but also to become familiar with the relevant official documents. Many of these local scribes were young women who spoke local languages, and this helped to address the gender and linguistic imbalances and inequalities in many of these official uses of literacy. The training of scribes was complimented by the production of easy-to-read booklets on legal rights describing the associated forms and literacy requirements of the activities. Scribes were also used to help people to access written information and engage with literacy tasks in community forestry management and public health. Although these activities had a local focus, and were responsive to local languages, the texts and practices that they engaged with had a more national orientation and significance.

Tailor-Made Materials

The *Community Literacy Project* was initially weary of promoting formal teaching and learning activities and materials, viewing them as insufficiently flexible and lacking a focus on in situ application of literacy in daily life. It became clear though that while literacy mediation activities were often sufficient for occasional interaction with formal institutions and access to complex legal or technical texts, other activities were better suited to more conventional literacy instruction. These activities were often the "vernacular" practices that people required in their daily lives.

In response to requests for literacy training related to vegetable production and marketing and credit and saving activities, the project involved several communities in a process of action research where they identified literacy texts and practices and developed dedicated sets of teaching and learning materials. These materials were not generic in nature. Instead they focused specifically on the skills and tasks required for those activities. At the same time, the materials provided a foundation of literacy skills and practices that people could develop. For example, the vocabulary for vegetable production (names of vegetables, numeracy associated with calculation, record keeping, weighing, and measuring) provided applied instruction including familiar vocabulary, the alphabet, and basic numeracy. This literacy instruction materials can be viewed as an outcome of the donor's agenda of "literacy and livelihoods" (Chitrakar et al. 2002; DFID 2000) and, as such, are quite different to the literacy activities in scribing and governance (discussed above).

Fig. 3 Tailor-made literacy
materials based on literacy and
numeracy tasks in vegetable
production and marketing

तरकारी उत्पादन समूह - १

सामुदायिक साक्षरता परियोजना

Fig. 4 Learning and using
literacy. Women using the
"tailor-made" literacy and
numeracy materials on
vegetable production and
marketing

In the "tailor-made" materials, the focus was on the direct application of literacy learning in daily activities. The materials were developed in local languages and multilingual formats in response to the requests of different communities (see Figs. 3 and 4). The materials (and visual diagrams and pictures) were stored on personal computer and CD, and so they could easily be modified to suit variations in language and dialect, different types of literacy practice, and cultural variation. Teaching and learning activities were conducted in special classes and mentoring, and support was provided in the classes and during in situ application of the learning. These materials provided the opportunity for nonliterate people to quickly learn and apply literacy and numeracy in their daily lives, and different sets of materials were developed to suit levels of ability. The course of instruction was only 3 or 4 months (much shorter than many conventional literacy programs), as the literacy learning (initial literacy) and application of learning (post-literacy) aspects were fused. Within 3 or 4 months, people were able to intensively practice and develop their skills on a daily basis. At the same time, what was very striking about the materials was that they tended to avoid the narrative literary form of conventional materials. The materials focused on the basic literacy and numeracy tasks and vocabulary (with the emphasis on people's application and sustained use of literacy, e.g., as expressed by the learners themselves,[3] being able to read and/or write minutes of group meetings, constitutions of forest users' groups, legal documents, etc.), rather than jumping rapidly to the narrative text and development messages that are often contained in literacy primers.

Going National

In the final phase of the project, the activities were scaled up to ten districts of Nepal involving some 70,000 beneficiaries. This was achieved through some standardization of the approach and by training of partner organizations in the principles and practice of community literacy. The project produced sets of training materials on each of its activities, focusing on training of scribes in legal literacy and in the use and production of "tailor-made" literacy materials. This standardization of the approach and rapid expansion of the program came with some risks. To try to ensure continued responsiveness and flexibility, the program developed a participatory monitoring and evaluation system and trained local partners in participatory needs assessment and baseline studies and in how to adjust literacy materials to the expressed needs of different communities.

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[3]One of the striking examples had been the folk songs that a women's savings group composed in Bardiya District, which included verses of their joyous feeling of being able to fill up bank vouchers and write and read group minutes and the very songs they composed.

Promoting Community Literacy Scribes

The need to promote the development of community literacy scribes was first expressed by an elected chairman of a rural Village Development Committee[4] (VDC) within a district from East Nepal. The severity of illiteracy in local communities, even among the elected heads and members of the executive boards at the most local political entity known as ward, posed a serious challenge for the VDC to realize the spirit of local self-governance act and decentralization (Chhetri 2003). The local administration could not handle the officially required means of communication, i.e., in writing, while providing services to its people and also to report to the higher authorities. Therefore, the VDC chairman came up with the idea that the local people with basic ability to read and write could be mobilized as the literacy mediators if they were to be trained in procedures of the local governance and the use of the official documents. The VDC and CLP worked collaboratively to organize such training program and promote the concept of community literacy scribes. Many local people, mostly women who had left school after completing primary grades, showed interest to be trained scribes. In a period of less than a year, each of the nine wards had four or five community literacy scribes already helping the neighbors not only with their official literacy needs but also to learn to read words from the available documents and forms.

As the project expanded its activities to ten midwestern and far-western districts, the local civil society organizations there showed great interest in community literacy scribes. The good practice in this field, which was started at Dhankuta District, was later adapted by local women at Rupandehi District. Two grassroots-level women (Amrita Thapa and Krishna Maya Karki), among others, continued with their pursuit to promote community literacy scribing through women who had dropped out of school and who they persistently trained and organized into a local network.

Local Literacy Materials

The production and use of local literacy instruction materials became a favorite activity of the 139 partner organizations from the ten midwestern and far-western districts as the project scaled up its activities. The community interest groups involved in varieties of group initiatives such as microfinance, honey production, community forestry, health service, combating domestic violence, social discrimination, and bonded labor analyzed their own literacy contexts with the help of CLP-trained resource persons from the local support organizations. Material contents and learning modality were then decided. Unlike in the tailor-made

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[4]There are almost 4000 Village Development Committees in Nepal, each of which oversees the governance and development activities of the nine wards. A ward is the smallest political unit comprising of about 300 households.

Fig. 5 Women using the
"tailor-made" materials

materials (TMM) development process at Dhankuta district during the initial phase, the design and production time was less lengthy, with less fuss made about the quality of paper and printing. Most of the materials were printed or photocopied locally not putting too much emphasis on making the content grammatically or linguistically "correct," which otherwise would have delayed the use of the materials. The fundamental consideration remained to link literacy learning and use with the daily lives of people and their group processes.

Issue of Institutionalization and Mainstreaming

Some hard lessons were learned with respect to the project institutionalization process. The project's efforts to mainstream its innovative practices in the national system of literacy and nonformal education and formal education program were neither adequate nor entirely successful. There may be lessons here for other projects following the approach in other parts of the world.

Despite a heavyweight project steering committee headed by senior education ministry personnel (with membership from the National Planning Commission,

Ministry of Finance, and the donor representative from the UK Department for International Development), the National Non-Formal Education Centre did not mainstream any of the approaches or methods developed by the project, despite these promising achievements (Fig. 5).[5]

At the end of the project, most of the materials, reports, and website of the project were left with the local management NGO. Although some of the project staff and NGO partners have continued to work in the education field, much of the information and resources developed by the project (including the information and reports stored on the website and written in Nepali) are no longer available for public access. Some of the approaches were adopted within a new donor project, but this largely retains the approach within the sphere of "donor" control. The process and the politics of this "closure" raises significant questions about the effectiveness of the project and the role of the donor community in supporting local ownership and sustainability of the approach and its resources.

Conclusions

The experience of the *Community Literacy Project* shows, nevertheless, that it is possible to respond to the expressed literacy tasks and needs of local communities while working with large populations. The use of ICT for flexible and responsive production of literacy learning materials enabled such responsiveness on a large scale. The willingness to listen and respond to the expressed literacy and communication needs of local groups and communities was the key principle that informed the approach. The focus on collective practice (of communities, institutions, self-help groups) enabled shared learning, support, and mentoring that is noticeably lacking in conventional literacy programs that focus on individuals. The focus on people's real-life literacy texts and practices helped to make the project responsive to the expressed needs and to improve the sustainability and impact of people's learning. Unlike many conventional literacy programs, these activities had very low rates of "dropout" and a high level of application in people's daily lives.

The process of developing the approach was extremely challenging for a number of reasons. There were few role models on which the project could base the approach, and much of the early activities were conducted on a trial and error basis. The demands of being a "development project" brought with them tremendous pressures – both in terms of delivering "goods" to local communities and in terms of the donor and government's legitimate desire to have a wide-scale impact. It is questionable whether the government ever fully supported the ideas behind the project, and as a result, resistance from government and lack of buy-in and institutionalization was an ongoing factor that project staff had to deal with. The project staff often had to deal with the uncertainty and self-doubt associated with such a process of innovation,

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[5]The project's external evaluation report rated highly its performance and potential for scaling up the products it came up with.

while attempting to protect themselves and the project from sometimes heavy criticism from outside. That was not always the ideal environment to ensure an open and deliberative process. As the project developed, a demarcation began to develop between the more radical politics and risk taking of popular education and attempts to control and manage the more "risky" activities of the project (e.g., advocacy on language policy in governance, women's legal literacy activities, decentralized production of materials), which were often inherently political and did not conform to the conventional view of adult literacy.

On reflection, much of the resistance reflected the wider politics of education and communication within Nepal. Literacy and language are part of ongoing aspects of inequality and social injustice, which the Nepali state and donor community have been either unable or unwilling to effectively tackle. This became clear as the project became more integrated into civil society organizations and activities. What began as a community-based activity focused on local groups and organizations gained national resonance, and as it did, it became clear that national and international politics are central in shaping communication practices and people's access to literacy.

In that sense, the term "Community Literacy Project" is both accurate and misleading. We can look at each of those terms, beginning with the concept of *community*. While the project always attempted to respond to the expressed needs of local communities, many of the "dominant" literacy texts and practices people have to engage with are defined and given shape at the national or international level. As a space for social change, the project was inevitably influenced by national and international concerns, development discourse, and the concerns of government, overseas managers, and donor organizations. As such, it could equally be described as the "Global Literacy Project in Nepal." At the same time, managing these multiple concerns, discourses, and priorities was as much an issue of local organizations and communities as it was for the centrally funded project staff. Rather than a discrete entity, "local" communities were always shot through with these national and international politics and institutional politics.

The term *literacy* is also only part of the picture. The activities of the project extended to other forms of communication media (numeracy, spoken and visual communication, radio, audio tower). The literacy and numeracy activities were often embedded in wider social practices and were not always experienced as "literacy" promotion. Examples such as the wall newspapers illustrate this point nicely, since there was a heavy literacy and literacy learning content, but the participants did not view the activity as being primarily one of "literacy" learning.

Finally, the logic of the development *project* presented many difficulties, not least because of the expectations that it created about delivering development goods and the impact of ever-changing donor agendas. Despite the agendas of poverty reduction and good governance, the development agenda can become depoliticized, and this created certain tensions within the project as we moved toward closer links with civil society groups more committed to social activism. This was clear as the project attempted to link local and national spheres by contributing to social movements in literacy and language policy. As an innovative

project, such tensions were perhaps inevitable, and this itself should perhaps be one of the key learnings. Adult literacy promotion, as Paulo Freire has reminded us, is essentially a political project as one that challenges us to change the social and cultural norms, patterns, and relations.

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Community Literacy Practices and Education: Australia

Trevor H. Cairney

Abstract

It is a truism to state that literacy is important to life; it is impossible escape it. In an age where literacy - even just as written text - is delivered via media as diverse as clothing, signs, bodies, music, rap, screens and paper, it cannot be missed. But it is still common when we speak of literacy to assume that we are thinking simply of words in a limited range of contexts and genres. As well, when we investigate it as a practice, we often do so simply in formal and institutional contexts. It is obvious that literacy is embedded in all of life, and that institutional and formal literacy can never be truly separated from the literacy practices of the world beyond school. This is not a new idea, but in the last 20 years, we have developed a richer understanding of what this might mean for the literacy practices sanctioned, supported, and used within schooling. Earlier discussions of the importance of community literacy by administrators, schools, and teachers, were generally framed by a recognition that the literacy experiences of home and community have a significant impact on literacy success at school. But much of this interest has been in how families and their literacy practices serve school agendas, with interest driven by limited definitions of literacy and at times deficit views of learning. This restricted view of the relationship between literacy practices in and out of school, has constrained attempts to build stronger relationships between schools and their communities. As Schultz and Hull state (see Schultz and Hull 2015, chapter "Literacies in and Out of School in the United States," Vol. 2), our students are never simply in school or out of school, for their identities move with them, and their practices are carried with them across contexts. And yet, we still know far less than we need to know about the way literacy touches lives in surprising contexts and in varied forms. There is so much

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more to know, and hence we require need new ways to help us understand literacy's varied forms, purposes and uses. And we need to widen our contexts and arenas for exploration.

Keywords
Community Literacy • Family literacy • Literacy

Contents

Introduction

It is a truism to state that literacy is important to life. It pervades all the varied situations in which people experience life. However, often when we think of literacy, we assume that it is a practice that occurs in formal and institutional contexts. Literacy becomes something narrowly defined and seen as operational (to use the descriptor from Green's 3D model of literacy[1]), and hence it is easily decontextualized. It is obvious that literacy is embedded in all of life and that institutional and formal literacy can never be truly separated from the literacy practices of the world beyond school. This is not a new idea, but in the last 20 years, we have developed a richer understanding of what this might mean for literacy practices sanctioned, supported, and used within schooling. Earlier discussions of the importance of community literacy by administrators, schools, and teachers were generally framed by a recognition that the literacy experiences of home and community have a significant impact on literacy success at school. But most interest has been in how families and their literacy practices serve school agendas with interest being driven by limited definitions of literacy and at times deficit views of learning. This restricted view of the relationship between literacy practices in and out of school has limited many attempts to build stronger relationships between schools and their

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[1]Green ([1988](#)) discusses what he terms a 3D model of literacy. As a sociocultural practice, literacy requires operational skills that are always situated in a cultural context. The learning of the skills of literacy should always recognize the relationship of language to cultural meaning and the distribution of power. Literacy is always selective and embedded and hence requires interpretation and critique.

communities. As Schultz and Hull state (see Schultz and Hull 2015, "Literacies in and Out of School in the United States," Vol. 2), our students are never simply in school or out of school, for their identities move with them and their practices are carried with them across contexts.

Prior to the 1980s, most interest in nonschool literacy was focused on how parents might support children's print literacy learning and, to a lesser extent, how nonschool literacy[2] might have an impact on school literacy learning. This work paid little attention to variations in literacy practices across diverse communities and appeared to assume that literacy was a unitary skill, rather than sets of practices that vary depending on the communities of which they are part. Many sought simply to develop strategies, programs, and initiatives that helped children to succeed at a limited range of school literacy practices.

A shift in this perceived place of community literacy practices was related to the work of researchers like Heath (1983) and others[3] who began to challenge educators to consider, describe, and understand the variation that occurs in literacy across specific groups. Heath's early anthropological work considered talk associated with literacy within the home and found that it is related to differences in culture and language. Motivated by this work, other researchers began to examine the literacy practices of home and school more closely and noted increasingly that the way teachers shape classroom discourse can be limited in scope and not reflective of the diversity of student language and culture (Breen et al. 1994; Cairney et al. 1995; Cairney and Ruge 1998; Freebody et al. 1995; Street 1984).

In parallel to the above work, three other key and related areas of inquiry began to inform home and community literacy research. One fruitful area has reflected the growing understanding that literacy in the world is much more multimodal than was once thought (Cope and Kalantzis 2000). Such work has considered variation in literacy practices that reflect the increasing complexity of the way meaning is received and communicated to others. The changing nature of communication, growth in multimedia, and pervasiveness of social media and video have caused almost a seismic shift in the way we think about literacy and text. Limited definitions of literacy have increasingly been discarded for the richer concept of multiliteracies. This work has led researchers and practitioners to consider whether the more restricted literacy practices of schooling have effectively excluded a vast array of literacies that fall outside the boundaries of traditional school literacy.

A second area of related interest has been stimulated by the fields of critical theory, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies and has stressed the need to recognize that power relationships are also part of literacy practices (see Freebody (2008), Critical Literacy Education: On Living With "Innocent Language," Vol. 2). There

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[2]This concern was primarily with how environmental print has an impact on early literacy development.

[3]There are numerous researchers whose work has contributed to the growing understanding of literacy diversity and its complex relationship to culture, ethnicity, and class. See, for example, Halliday (1975), Street (1984), and Lareau (1989).

are multiple ways that language can be used to "...understand, act in and on, and appraise the world" (Freebody 2008), and this calls for new forms of educational effort and disruptive practices, beyond those that support existing inequities. This work demonstrates that literacy is not value neutral and disconnected from other human activity, particularly the complex tapestry of relationships that characterize human existence. The theoretical research has also highlighted that some families and individuals are disadvantaged (and others advantaged) by power relationships that fail to value the funds of knowledge that they bring to school (Moll et al. 1992). This collective work has helped us to identify "the social practices by which schools, families and individuals reproduce, resist and transform hierarchies of social relations and their positions within them" (Solsken 1993, p. 7). Furthermore, it has enabled research and educational initiatives concerned with family literacy to be critiqued in new ways.

A third area of inquiry, which cuts across the first two categories, is worthy of mention. This group of studies has added an increasingly nuanced understanding that neat typologies and categories never capture the rich diversity of the literacy practices of our world. The research often takes the form of ethnographies or case studies of specific people groups to help us understand the rich nature of literacy for these groups. Heath's (1983) work was arguably the greatest stimulus for this type of fine-grained study, which looks at what gets counted as literacy, and how it is shaped within specific contexts. For example, the work of Li (2009) and others who have conducted research on immigrant families helps us to understand that the acquisition of literacy also requires the development of specific knowledges, attitudes, and understandings about the functions and purposes of literacy in specific social contexts. Another recent example is the work of Dickie (2011) that considered the literacy practices of Samoan children enrolled in a New Zealand primary school. What this study highlighted was the fact that the literacy of school and community had conflicting values that children needed to negotiate each day. Similarly, Watkins et al. (2012) considered the literacy practices of Karen people.[4] This work highlighted how closely literacy was integrated with the resettlement of refugee families with an impact ultimately on well-being. What specific ethnographies of this kind help us to understand is how school literacy and the literacy of other communities is very much interdependent.

One more recent area of research that has pushed the boundaries further in relation to the way literacy is defined and experienced has been suggested by Pahl and Khan (2015). They argue that objects such as books can hold "family values and ideals" that somehow are passed intergenerationally (p. 117). This of course resonates with the work of Kress (2010) who suggested that semiotic processes mediate meanings across time and place, as well as "through" people and the very objects implicated in acts of meaning.

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[4]The Karen people are a Sino-Tibetan language group who came primarily from the state of Karen in Myanmar (formerly Burma). A large number of these people migrated to Thailand and from there have migrated to various countries around the world.

All these areas of study help us to understand how children from varied cultural and linguistic groups might continue to have difficulty in achieving school success. Many students struggle to cope with dominant pedagogical approaches that are based on "narrow understanding of school knowledge and literacy, which are defined and defended as what one needs to know and how one needs to know it in order to be successful in school and society" (Willis 1995, p. 34).

Remarkably, in the 6 years since the second edition of this volume, the complexity and diversity of literacy practices has increased within communities, and in the research literature, while school literacy has shifted less than would have been hoped. When I wrote an earlier version of this chapter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, FaceTime, Skype, Pinterest, and Twitter did not exist. And yet social media like these, and many other forms, have transformed the way we communicate with one another. They have also had an impact on how we negotiate meaning and co-construct texts of varied forms using social media and the many tools that are part of this phenomenon. It is now easier for children to publish their written texts for global audiences, but as well, they can now find numerous tools to produce videos, animation, graphic novels, and multimodal texts that integrate words, image, sound, and interactivity for readers and consumers of our texts[5] (see also in this volume chapter by Leander and Lewis).

Collectively our research in the field of community literacy has demonstrated that while the community literacy practices that children experience beyond the walls of classrooms have changed dramatically, what goes on in schools has still not shifted enough. This chapter is a review of what research has taught us about literacy beyond the school walls and the relationship of these diverse practices with what happens at school. It is assumed for the purposes of this chapter that "community literacy" refers to those social practices outside schools that involve the use of multiple sign systems to create and share meanings in whatever form is available (see also Maddox in this volume on chapter "▶ A Community Literacy Project: Nepal"). However, as this is a volume on language and education, there is a special interest and focus on how the reading and writing of text is part of such practices. While not denying the importance and impact of informal education and the increasingly blurred lines between the literacy of school and the literacy of life, education in this review is taken to mean that which is part of educational institutions for children.[6] In other words, the chapter seeks to look at the embeddedness of literacy within community, the community within the school, and the relationship between both.

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[5]I have written about some of the ways we witness this increased multimodality in my blog "Literacy, Families and Learning" for a general audience. These posts describe some of the forms this takes – http://trevorcairney.blogspot.com.au/search?q=multimodal.

[6]This review does not attempt to address the significant work done in relation to adult literacy and workplace literacy. While each body of work is significant in understanding broader community literacy practices, a full discussion of each is outside the scope of this chapter that focuses primarily on the literacy worlds of children.

In the review that follows, there will be three major considerations: First, early foundational research efforts that explored community literacy practices as well as the relationship of this work to major theoretical traditions; second, significant recent and current explorations that have acknowledged more complex definitions of literacy and community, with special consideration of work in Australia; and, third, the need to problematize the existing research literature in this area and map out possible future directions.

A Brief Look at Early Research of Relevance

Early interest in community literacy practices was primarily motivated by a desire to enhance school success by ensuring that families supported school literacy. Some of the most significant early interest in the relationship between education and nonschool literacy practices occurred in the UK. The Plowden Report (Department of Education and Science 1967) was one of a number of stimuli that encouraged schools to become more concerned with the relationship of home to school learning. Plowden argued strongly for partnership between home and school. Such notions of partnership were primarily concerned with what families could do to support schools and lacked the richness of more recent attempts to build partnerships between home, school, and community (Cairney and Ruge 1998 for a fuller discussion of this issue).

The 1970s and 1980s saw a number of high-profile program initiatives take place that were judged to be successful at supporting school literacy. Many of these were programs designed to help parents support children at home in relation to school learning, particularly those experiencing reading problems.[7] However, typically, these early projects assumed a deficit view of families and sought to rectify what were seen as barriers to children's educational success (Cairney 2003). One well-known program in the UK, the Haringey Reading Project, found that some of the children whose parents were involved in their program made significant gains in reading achievement irrespective of reading ability. This project was to be a stimulus for other initiatives focusing on story reading strategies for parents and the provision of books to families (Tizard et al. 1982).

While not wanting to dismiss these early attempts to address the relationship between school and nonschool literacy practices, what is obvious is how such work was limited by the definitions of literacy that framed the work. Developments in other countries tended to parallel the UK experience. In the USA, interest in considering the impact of home and community literacy practices on schooling was a little slower to emerge, but by the 1990s, it was estimated that there were more than 500 family literacy programs alone in the USA (Nickse 1993).

In Australia, the early interest in the literacy practices of home and community was again primarily to obtain support for school learning. Curriculum documents during the 1970s and 1980s stressed the importance of parents and a supportive

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[7]See Cairney (2000) for a more detailed review of this early work.

home environment in children's learning. Common to these early efforts was a desire to encourage parents to become more involved in school and support school agendas, rather than building on the rich literacy practices of home and community.

In a federally funded review of Australian initiatives, Cairney et al. (1995) identified 261 major initiatives and over 100 small-scale projects that showed an interest in using the relationship between the literacy of school and community to strengthen the school success of students who were struggling. This study showed that 76.3% of these projects were initiated by schools and were largely designed to fulfill school purposes and transmit information about schooling. The report concluded that more effort is needed to be given to understand the richness of family and community literacy practices and how this could be seen as a rich resource informing and supporting school-based literacy education. Almost 20 years later, it seems that this is a lesson still to be learned for many. The literacy of school for many children seems to have failed to adapt to the growing complexity of community literacy practices. While the literacy of the world has become increasingly more complex, multimodal, and cross-cultural, the literacy of schooling has changed a little.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, one of the first researchers to seriously explore the complex relationship between the literacy practices of community and school was Heath on the Piedmont Carolinas in the USA (1983). She found that there was variation in the acquisition of oral language, and the manner in which parents introduced children to literacy and its purposes, and was able to document significant differences in community styles of literacy socialization and the impact that this had on school success.

The work of Heath and others resonated well with earlier theoretical work on early language and literacy development[8] that had already challenged views on the role adults and families play in early literacy learning. The 1960s and 1970s had seen the emergence of important changes in our understanding or oral language development that were eventually to lead to a number of significant literacy studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. For example, Harste et al. (1984, p. 56) demonstrated that preschool children were actively attempting to understand the nature of the language spoken around them, making predictions and testing hypotheses about how language worked, and demonstrating rich literacy understandings embedded in everyday reading and writing experiences. This work was a serious challenge to maturational theories of child development that had previously confined literacy learning to the school years. Early literacy researchers embraced the term "emergent" literacy to describe the significant literacy experiences that preschool children were encountering at home and in community settings.[9] These new insights helped researchers to

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[8]Clay (1966), Halliday (1975), and Vygotsky (1978)

[9]Hall (1987) provided one of the earliest syntheses of the emergent literacy research and did much to translate this work into a form that could inform early childhood practice. However, this new view of preschool literacy had its roots in the work of many researchers including Clay (1966), Wells (1982, 1986), Harste et al. (1984), Mason and Allen (1986), and Teale and Sulzby (1986).

begin to view nonschool literacy experiences as relevant and significant to school success, and yet, the process of change has been slow.

Almost in parallel to the development of emergent literacy was the emergence of constructivist theories based strongly on the work of Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1983). Rich literacy experiences, scaffolded support (Bruner 1986; Rogoff 1990), and encouragement of meaning making and risk taking were increasingly recognized as a vital part of child language learning. What this work again reinforced was the way literacy and language were constituted, defined, and used within communities of practice.

Sociolinguistic theories of language also contributed a great deal to our growing understanding of literacy diversity beyond school. Scholars like Bahktin (1929/1973,1935/1981) and Halliday (1975) built upon the basic understanding that language is made as people act and react to one another. Cook-Gumperz (1986) argued that spoken language and literacy are cultural tools that shape individuals as they grow and transform behavior as it is internalized. This work informed the view that people learn to be literate primarily in groups as they relate to others and seek to accomplish social and communicative functions. Literacy was seen as purpose driven and context bound, with people acting and reacting to the actions of others as well as to set patterns of group interaction.[10]

This work raised new questions about definitions of literacy and of how these definitions were being applied to community and family literacy. Street (1984) challenged what he called traditional "autonomous" models that he saw as dominated by "essay-text" forms of literacy and proposed an alternative "ideological" model. This model was concerned with the specific social practices of reading and writing, recognizing the ideological and culturally embedded nature of literacy. He argued that the meaning of literacy depends upon the social institution within which it is embedded, and he called for the use of the term "literacies" rather than literacy to recognize the social complexity of the practices. Street was one of a number of researchers seeking definitions that considered literacy as a set of social and cultural practices, not a unitary skill.

One final influence was the emergence of "critical literacy." This perspective drew heavily on the work of critical theorists, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies and attempted to critique and problematize the relationship between literacy and factors as diverse as school success, parental support, self-identity, gender, and family life. The work argued that:

- Differences between the discourses of home and school can make a difference to the success of some children (Gee 1990).
- An acceptance of cultural differences between home and school can lead to more responsive curricula that offer all children greater chances of success in learning.

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[10]There are many key studies and publications including the critical work of Bloome (1987), Cazden (1988), Cook-Gumperz (1986), Street (1984), and Wells (1986).

- Some people are disadvantaged by power relationships that fail to value the funds of knowledge that some children and their families bring to school, while others are advantaged (see Freire and Macedo 1987; Gee 1990; Moll et al. 1992; Street 1995).

The combined and overlapping impact of the above quite disparate scholarly traditions was to bring about a significant shift in the way literacy was defined and studied and an increased understanding of the relationship between the literacy of home and school. In the following section, major contributions to this emerging understanding are discussed.

Major Contributions

Studies That Describe Literacy Practices in the Home

While a great deal is known about early literacy development, there are few studies that have provided a detailed description of literacy practices within a wide range of families. Denny Taylor has conducted some of the most significant work in the USA in the last 30 years. Taylor's (1983) detailed ethnographic research spawned the term "family literacy" and provided some of the most detailed insights into the nature of literacy practices within homes. Her series of studies began in 1977 with a detailed description of a single family. By 1979 her ongoing observations had grown to include six white middle-class families living in suburban New York City.

Taylor's close involvement in the families contributed a number of critical insights. She argued that literacy is implicated in the lives of family members and found that parents mediated literacy experiences in varied ways across and within families and that older siblings helped to shape younger siblings' experiences of literacy (see Gregory, this volume). She also observed "shifts" in parents' approaches to the "transmission of literacy styles and values," coinciding with children beginning to learn to read and write in school (Taylor 1983, p. 20). Literacy experiences within families she argued were rich and varied, surrounding family members as part of the fabric of life. Finally, she observed that children's growing awareness of literacy involved experiences that are woven into daily activities (Taylor 1983, p. 56).

Taylor's early work informed a number of later studies, most notably her work with Dorsey-Gaines in conducting an ethnography of black families living in urban poverty (Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines 1988). The combined work of Taylor and her colleagues challenged notions of what effective parent support of literacy involves and attempted to move beyond white middle-class definitions of effective parenting. Their work showed that within the poor black families studied, there was a richness of literacy experience that previous studies had not been able to recognize. This finding was later given support by the work of Auerbach (1989, 1995).

McNaughton's (1995) work in New Zealand is also relevant to this discussion. Based on case studies of 17 families in New Zealand, he concluded that families are

a critical determinant of children's early literacy development. His description of the literacy practices of Maori, Samoan, and Pakeha families whose income earners were from nonprofessional occupations provided a picture of resourceful families able to support their children's early literacy learning. McNaughton was able to describe the complex ways in which families use time, space, and varied resources to help preschool children to learn literacy. He noted that families used three different ways to support literacy learning: shared joint activities between the children and significant others, personal activities (e.g., scribbling or writing), and ambient activities where literacy was immersed in life.

Arguably the most extensive study conducted in Australia in the last 20 years was undertaken by Cairney and Ruge (1998) and sought to examine the relationship between home, school, and community literacy. This 2-year study employed school and community-based case studies across four varied settings and subsequently conducted an ethnography of 37 children from 27 families, observing and describing their literacy practices at home and school. The focus children were of primary school age, but within the families, there were approximately 20 additional preschool children. The participating families were asked to collect a range of data including audiotape literacy events, an audit of home literacy resources, a log of all reading and writing activities, and photographs of significant literacy events in the home (using disposable cameras supplied by the researchers). One member of each family was also asked to act as coresearcher and was trained to help record a range of home literacy events.

Cairney and Ruge (1998) identified four distinct purposes for literacy in the homes and classrooms in their study: literacy for establishing and maintaining relationships, literacy for accessing or displaying information, literacy for pleasure and/or self-expression, and literacy for skills development. All four purposes for literacy were active in relationship to one another and at the same time, cut across varied home and school contexts.

One critical finding from this study was that specific literacy practices may contribute to, and constitute part of, different literacy events in different contexts depending on the understandings and purposes of the participants. For example, the intended purpose of a newsletter from school may be to give parents access to information about school policies or activities. Alternatively, the intended purpose may be to maintain communication between home and school and thereby develop the relationship between families and the school. However, in reading the newsletter at home, families may have very different purposes and "use" the newsletter in different ways (e.g., one family used it for oral reading practice). This is consistent with the work of Street (1993) and his contention that different domains can place quite different demands on participants for literacy.

Cairney and Ruge (1998) also found that the families in their study differed greatly in the extent to which literacy was visible in everyday life. Similarly, families varied greatly in the amount and types of literacy resources available to them.

One of the striking features of literacy practices in the homes of many of the families in the Cairney and Ruge study was the extent to which "school literacy" appeared to dominate family life. That is, the particular types and uses of literacy

usually associated with schooling were prominent in many families. This prominence was manifested primarily in the amount of time spent on homework activities (up to 3 h per day in some families) and, to a lesser extent, siblings "playing schools." As well, there was evidence to suggest that the literacy practices privileged right from the birth of a first child are strongly shaped by the parents' experience of school literacy as well as the desire to prepare the preschool child for later schooling (Cairney and Ruge 1998).

Studies That Attempted to Bridge Home, School, and Community Contexts

While there have been a significant number of studies that have observed literacy practices within the home, there is less evidence of research that has been able to tap into children's experiences of literacy outside the family and the school. Putting to one side a few seminal studies that have managed to tap the home, school, and community contexts (e.g., Heath 1983 and this volume) and studies of "local" and "heritage" literacies[11] that are concerned primarily with the maintenance of culturally unique adult literacy practices, what we do have falls into two main categories.

The first group contains cultural ethnographies that have provided insights into the role that written language and other sign systems play within community and family life. This body of work has also helped us to understand the cultural variation that occurs across communities and families. One of the most significant early studies to document cultural variations in literacy acquisition was the work of Scribner and Cole (1981), who found that the Vai people of Liberia used three different writing systems for different purposes. Arabic literacy was learned by rote as part of religious practices, English was learned as part of formal schooling, and finally, the Vai language was learned informally at home and in the community and for personal communication such as letters. Each of these "literacies" was acquired and used for different social and cultural purposes.

Similarly, in an ethnography within the South Pacific, Duranti and Ochs (1986) found complexity and that this had an impact on how children coped with literacy at school. They observed that the children of families in a Samoan village needed to cope with different forms of interaction across home and school settings.

However, while anthropology has been a major stimulus for new directions in literacy and culturally sensitive accounts of literacy within communities, Street (1995) argues that such work has often been framed by traditional limited definitions of literacy. He suggests, for example, that early ethnographies like that of Clammer (1976) in Fijian villages assumed "autonomous" models of literacy in framing the study and failed to question the power relationships of the institution (in this case, the

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[11]The term "local literacies" has been used by Barton and others (see for example, Barton and Hamilton 1998) to describe the literacy of everyday life. They observed that in everyday lives, people inhabit a textually mediated social world, bringing reading and writing into most activities.

church) in introducing literacy, thus failing to problematize the role that literacy played in the colonization of these people, although more recently ethnographies of literacy have adopted a broader social practice frame (as many contributions to this volume indicate).

One additional area that needs further attention is the very definitions of family that shape much of the research conducted. While many children are introduced to literacy within traditional family groups, far less research has sought to include less traditional family structures. For example, several studies have observed the practices of extended and alternative family structures. Reyes and Torres (2007) observed children who engaged with home-based literacy practices with extended family members, including aunts and uncles, cousins, in-laws, and grandparents. Whereas Rowe and Fain (2013) chose children who read regularly with any family with whom they had a strong personal bond.

In Australia, the federal government has funded a number of significant national studies over a 10-year period that have sought to understand the complexity of literacy practices in varied contexts, with a particular concern for the implications of this work for school literacy success. The work by Cairney et al. (1995) and Cairney and Ruge (1998) discussed above was part of this broad sweep of projects. However, other studies have explored the literacy practices of children undertaking schooling by distance education (Louden and Rivalland 1995), the experiences of children and families in the year prior to school as well as the first year of school (Hill et al. 1998), the literacy practices of urban and remote rural communities, and variations in literacy practices across rural and urban communities (Breen et al. 1994).

Breen et al. (1994), for example, conducted community-based case studies of 12 urban and 12 rural families and observed that "all children, regardless of specific language background, are very likely to enter school with different repertoires of language knowledge and use which express their initial communicative competence" (Breen et al. 1994, p. 35). They concluded that even when literacy practices across families appeared similar, they could have different meanings and values.

Similarly, Hill et al. (1998) found that Australian children come to school with diverse prior-to-school experiences. The 100 children who were studied were growing up in very different communities, families, and homes. The researchers suggested that their observations indicated inequalities in contemporary Australia that have an impact on children's early lives. Schools they argued need to construct a more appropriate curriculum which explicitly builds on children's existing cultural capital and preferred ways of learning.

Studies of Indigenous Literacy

Australia's Indigenous population has experienced special issues with literacy. A recent OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) report indicates that 15-year-old Indigenous students scored 82 points lower, on average, than non-Indigenous students in reading literacy. This is more than one proficiency level, or more than two full years of schooling, below non-Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous students also performed significantly lower than the OECD average. Only 2.4% of 15-year-old Indigenous students reached grade level 5, and there were even fewer Indigenous students (0.3%) who were placed at level 6 (ACER 2010).

Some of the earliest and most influential attempts to understand issues associated with Indigenous literacy were conducted by Harris (1984) and described traditional indigenous learning styles among communities in the Northern Territory of Australia. He found that learning styles were often context specific and person orientated and were dependent on observation and imitation, as well as personal trial and error.

Subsequent studies in this tradition have pointed to the failure of existing pedagogy to accommodate aboriginal learning styles. Malin (1990) was able to demonstrate that conflicts between aboriginal home socialization practices and teacher expectations had a significant effect on Indigenous success at school (cf Susan Phillips' 1983 seminal study of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in the USA).

Other researchers have also highlighted the significant linguistic diversity of Indigenous learners and observed that Indigenous students in both urban and rural areas speak aboriginal English in informal community contexts and then have to switch to standard English. Such work has argued for the valuing of the community English that Indigenous learners bring to school and the impact that such actions has on the central relationships between teachers, their students, and communities (see, for example, Munns et al. (1999).

Understanding the Impact of Culture on School Achievement

Studies of Indigenous literacy in Australia reflect international research that acknowledges a new valuing of the richness of community and family literacy. Critical to this has been the growing understanding that literacies vary depending on purpose and life "domains" (Barton 1994). Researchers have begun to argue that there are many forms of literacy, each with specific purposes and contexts in which they are used. They conclude that to understand literacy fully, we need to understand the groups and institutions through which we are socialized into specific literacy practices (Gee 1990).

A key focus of research has been to identify why and how people learn through participation in the practices that make up specific groups and communities. How do communities organize their resources, and how does participation in the culture shape identity? As Moll (1993) has suggested, this has represented a move away from viewing individual learners to viewing learning as participation in funds of knowledge as part of a community of practice. Consequently, a number of American researchers have explored differences in the suitability and impact of curricula and pedagogy on minority groups. For example, Foster (1992, p. 303) concluded that "... many of the difficulties African-American students encounter in becoming literate result in part from the misunderstandings that occur when the speaking and communication styles of their community vary from those expected and valued in

the school setting" (p. 303). James Gee's (1990, 2008) work on primary and secondary discourses helps us to partially understand some of the issues operating here to create disadvantage. Our language and literacy practices are an extension of who we are, not just what we know or our operational understanding of language and literacy. Our primary discourses of home and community have a relationship to the secondary discourses of schooling. To understand this is to understand some of the challenges that children face within classrooms.

A deeper understanding of this clash of discourse practices can be seen in the work of researchers who have investigated the impact of differences between the cultural beliefs and expectations of Native Americans and those of mainstream cultures (Deyhle and LeCompte 1994; Locust 1989). For example, Locust (1989) examined traditional Native American belief systems, including their holistic approach to life and death, their emphasis on nonverbal communication, and their valuing of visual, motor, and memory skills over verbal skills. She investigated the ways in which these beliefs conflict with the education system and argued that traditional psychological education tests reflect the dominant culture resulting in Native American children achieving low scores and being treated as learning disabled.

However, Cummins (1986) has argued that the educational success or failure of minority students is related to more than just curricula mismatches, suggesting that it is "a function of the extent to which schools reflect or counteract the power relations that exist within the broader society" (p. 32). As a result he has argued for the incorporation of minority students' culture and language in the education of their children (see Cummins, chapter "▶ BICS and CALP: Empirical and Theoretical Status of the Distinction," Vol. 2).

In a related Australian study, Cairney and Ruge (1998) conducted case studies of four schools judged effective at acknowledging community language and cultural diversity. They found that within each of these schools, five basic premises drove curriculum:

1. Staff believed that all children could achieve school success irrespective of language or cultural background.
2. Language was used in an integrated way across the curriculum.
3. Curricula acknowledged that literacy development benefits from the maintenance of first language competence.
4. Success was seen as critical to learning and students were given opportunities to succeed as they learnt new skills.
5. Parents were seen as playing an important role in children's educational success and were actively involved in the activities of the school.

What the above research demonstrates is that an understanding of language and cultural diversity of a school's students and families is important. It also highlights the need to understand the complexity of community literacies in other than school terms and in ways that transcends "autonomous" models.

In a related research study, Street et al. (2005) have considered how nonschool factors affect school achievement. Adopting a sociocultural perspective on learning

the Leverhulme Numeracy Research Program was a 5-year longitudinal project that sought to examine the meanings and uses of numeracy in school and community settings. Another focus was the language practices associated with numeracy, namely, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. A key concern was the influence of home contexts on school achievement. The Leverhulme Program attempted to develop ways of measuring pupil progression across a 5-year period. The fieldwork involved observation of selected schools and classrooms and of informal situations in and out of school. It drew on interviews with teachers and pupils, analysis of texts from home and school, curriculum school policy documents, school programs and homework, and teacher feedback.

One of the most interesting insights from this research was that numeracy practices were often invisible to the researcher, with observations affected by how both the observers and the observed defined such practices. The question that this raised for the researchers was "what counts as numeracy?" The varied answers to this question impact not just on what is observed and recorded but what is valued and communicated between home and school. Street et al. (2005) found that when questions were asked of parents about numeracy that discussions often turned to school numeracy practices. This is very similar to the findings of Cairney and Ruge (1998) that also showed how school literacy pushed out and devalued other literacy forms or, at the very least, forced them "underground" or outside the classroom.

Street and his coresearchers were left with the key question "how are the borders between numeracy practices and other social practices constructed by researchers, schools, and families?" This led the researchers to ask a related question, "How damaging are any omissions?" Such observations and questions have relevance to the observation already made in this chapter that researchers have noted that school literacy practices dominate home practices. One critical question that obviously needs to be explored is whether observations of school literacy or numeracy practices at home may involve (at least in part) a masking of other practices that researchers or participants simply don't count or define as literacy or numeracy. This topic requires further research.

New Literacies

One of the obvious gaps in community literacy research has been the failure to adequately tap and understand the richness of nonprint literacy available to children outside school. Rarely have studies been able to identify, observe, and document use of multiple sign systems or even the relationship of multiple sign systems to print-based literacy. While early childhood studies have come closest to identifying the richness of children's early experiences,[12] few studies have adequately tapped the diversity of literacy practices experienced day by day within communities.

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[12]See, for example, Harste et al. (1984), Clay (1966), and Wells (1986).

The work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) has perhaps achieved more in challenging views on the impact of visual literacy and its different demands for the learner. The New London Group (NLG) (Cope and Kalantzis 2000) has also sought to retheorize literacy and challenge "authoritarian" conceptions of unitary literacy (see Leander and Lewis, chapter "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies," Vol. 2).

The NLG has proposed a metalanguage of multiliteracies based on the concept of "design" (Cope and Kalantzis 2000). Multiliteracies for the New London Group are based on the understanding that "language and other modes of meaning are dynamic representational resources, constantly being remade by their users as they work to achieve their various cultural purposes." They suggest that meaning is made in ways that are increasingly multimodal, and our world is marked simultaneously by increasing local diversity and increasing global connectedness.

What we do know is that children are being exposed to richer opportunities to encounter written text in diverse digital as well as print forms and that many of these have a relationship to visual, audio, spatial, and behavioral experiences.

What this work promises to deliver is research that will demonstrate the increasingly demanding and diverse literacy practices that are encountered in community settings. The work of researchers like Lemke (2002) suggests that there is much that we need to explore and understand. Having investigated hypertexts, he has concluded that there is great complexity in the processes required to combine words and images giving attention to sounds, music, graphics, hyperlinks, menu bars, hot spots, etc. If children are experiencing the richness of textual and visual forms outside the classroom, then one suspects that previous conceptions of the relationship between the literacy of home, school, and community will need to be revised. There may be ever-increasing hybridity of literacy practices as popular culture and new media merge with more traditional literary forms.

Problems and Gaps in Our Understanding

What the above discussion should have demonstrated is that there is much that we still do not know about community literacy practices. While the studies discussed shed light on the topic, there are a number of difficulties in moving forward.

One problem is that in trying to understand community literacy practices, it is difficult to separate out the impact of school literacy practices that have such a strong impact on families and attitudes toward what counts as literacy within the wider community (see Cairney and Ruge 1998; and Freebody et al. 1995). Alongside this must be held the questions raised by Street et al. (2005) about the invisibility of some practices.

A second (and related) problem is the limitation of the methods that have been used to examine community literacy practices. Rarely have studies of family and community literacy managed to achieve an "insider" view of literacy practices. This should not surprise us as it is difficult to observe family and community literacy practices, and the researcher's presence makes a difference to that which is observed.

Rarely have in-depth observations been made of natural settings, and except for a small number of significant ethnographies and case studies, most research has involved limited time with small numbers of families. Getting at the "invisible" literacy practices of home and community is one of the major challenges of researchers. The impact of multimedia and its prevalence poses special challenges for the researcher. What is counted? How is it observed? How are complex relationships between multiliteracies to be uncovered and understood?

As well as these generic issues, there are many specific issues to explore. We need, for example, more studies that consider how gender, social class, and culture interact with issues of literacy practice. Are the experiences of some students at home and school influenced by secondary factors such as language background, social class,[13] gender, and so on. We also need considerable attention to be given to the impact of school literacy on home literacy as well as the reverse. Rather than simply examining family and community literacy to gain lessons for school literacy, we need to consider the synergistic relationship between the two contexts and the roles that students play as mediators between them. Some of the early intergenerational literacy work may be a useful starting point for this exploration (see Cairney and Ruge 1998; Gregory, this volume).

Finally, we need to remember that literacy is not culturally and ideologically neutral (Street 1995). Hence we need to examine what this means for literacy acquisition and the relationship of family literacy to life and, in particular, public institutions such as schools. It is important to understand how family literacy practices and their relationship to school literacy are implicated in power relationships that affect life chances.

The research reviewed in this chapter provides an incomplete picture of community literacy practices. While the literature is rich in its findings concerning the importance of the family as the first and perhaps most critical site for literacy acquisition, less is known about the literacy practices that are part of children's lives outside school and how this relates to learning within school. Children experience a richness of literacy practices at home that is not replicated in school (Cairney and Ruge 1998). This richness may be even more significant when children's involvement in complex communities outside the home is considered.

Since I wrote this chapter for the first edition of the book, the literacy practices we experience in our world have changed in extraordinary ways. Digital literacies associated with print alone have undergone dramatic change, with an inevitable impact on the early literacy experiences of young children. Once we used to speak of children's first experience of print in their environment as the reading of signs, food packaging, and simple picture books. While these still remain, the toddler is more likely to be experiencing interactive play with print, image, and sound via iPads, televisions, their parents' phones, and other electronic devices in their world. In doing this children will be observing and interacting with a rich array of digital devices in the home and community from the first year of life. We need to continue to

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[13]One of the seminal works on this topic is the work of Lareau (1989).

ask what impact does this have on the literacy of schooling. Second, we need to keep asking what impact might this have on their future.

There is so much more that we still need to know. I see three areas of rich research opportunity that require further concerted action.

We need more ethnographies that uncover the richness of life as children experience and engage in the literacy practices of the multiple communities that they inhabit day by day.

We need more detailed thick descriptions of literacy life that interrogate the relationship between the language practices that represent literacy, the rich social contexts in which they are experienced, and the interplay of power, values, beliefs, and ideologies that are part of our world.

As well, as we observe the form and place of literacy changing in our world, we need to pay closer attention to the "materials" that Gee (2008) argues are the foundation of discourses, the "people, things, artifacts, symbols, tools, technologies, actions, interactions, times, places, ways of speaking, listening, writing, reading, feeling, thinking, valuing," and so on. We need better tools to do this and more time observing them. Deep embeddedness in communities is the only way that we will see what is going on.

It is only by understanding the rich diversity of practices that characterize the term literacy that we will be better placed to create and sustain equally rich educational contexts that will build on the knowledge, practices, beliefs, and experiences that students bring with them to school each day. In this way, we will create better opportunities to transform school literacy into something that approximates the richness of the literacy of communities outside the walls of the school. The communities of practice that we must understand are both physical and virtual. Our students live in and negotiate these daily, using literacy practices far more complex and diverse than we currently provide for them in our schools. We must learn from this and change our schools accordingly.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Joseph Lo Bianco and Yvette Slaughter: Language Policy and Education in Australia. In Volume: Language Policy and Political Issues in Education
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Literacies In and Out of School in the United States

Katherine Schultz and Glynda Hull

Abstract

Reading and writing stand front and center in a digital age. Yet the digital turn has yet to permeate schools in anything approaching transformative ways. In no area is this more evident than literacy education, where 20th century reading and writing practices are still the coin of the realm. We argue that literacy practices that occur outside of school, which are now largely digital, have outstripped long-held understandings of what literacy can be. If literacy in formal educational contexts, like schools, is to flourish, it must reach a rapprochement with the digital textuality that is part and parcel of twenty-first century communication. It must also embrace an ethical turn, recognizing the important role that contemporary literacy practices play in civic and democratic action. After reviewing the major theoretical traditions that have shaped research on the relationships and borders of literacy in and out of school, we introduce more recent perspectives that focus on the nature of textuality and authorship in a digital age, such as multimodality and design, and perspectives concerned with changing political and social contexts, including "super diversity" and local-global relationships. We preview what we believe will be the dominant influence on literacy and literacy pedagogy in the near-term future, and that is the global, as our world grows simultaneously smaller via digital connectivity and more divided via ideological and economic disparities. We suggest that literacy educators and researchers, both those whose focus is school-valued forms and those who celebrate youth-centered production of a range of types of texts out of school, should redouble their efforts to craft conceptions of literacy and to support instances of literacy practice that position

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youth to work to solve local and global problems and to become ethically alert and audience-sensitive communicators, as well as to develop their personal capacities for meaning making.

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Introduction

Reading and writing stand front and center in a digital age, as literate tools, genres, purposes, and motives spread, hybridize, and multiply, and more people than ever before have reason and means to create, consume, circulate, and socialize, all through textual form. Such developments have had broad and sustained impacts on everyday life, work, and play, and they interleave and influence extraordinary events as well, intersecting with economic, social, and political upheavals. Yet the digital turn, for all that it affords in terms of connectivity, access to information, and sociality, and for all that it disrupts in terms of traditional patterns of communication, participation, and learning, has yet to permeate schools in anything approaching transformative ways. In no area is this more evident than literacy education, where twentieth-century reading and writing practices are still the coin of the realm. We argue in this chapter that literacy practices that occur outside of school, which are now largely digital, have outstripped long-held understandings of what literacy can be. If literacy in formal educational contexts, like schools, is to flourish, it must reach a rapprochement with the digital textuality that is part and parcel of twenty-first century communication. It must also embrace an ethical turn, recognizing the important role that contemporary literacy practices play in civic and democratic action.

Research on literacy has long separated into two strands. School-based research has focused on reading and writing in formal classrooms, often by examining teaching methods, curricula, learning, and assessment, its goal being to improve students' academic performance. Out-of-school research, now dominated by an interest in the digital realm, has documented the myriad literacy practices that occur in a range of institutions and social spaces. The intent of the latter has been

to expand conceptions of what counts as literacy as well as to provide pedagogical bridges from out-of-school practices to school-valued ones.

In this chapter, we review the major theoretical traditions that have shaped research on the relationships and borders of literacy in and out of school, particularly the now longstanding influence of the ethnography of communication, cultural historical activity theory, and the New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Hull and Schultz 2002). We also introduce more recent perspectives that focus on the nature of textuality and authorship in a digital age, such as multimodality and design, and perspectives concerned with changing political and social contexts, including "super diversity" and local–global relationships. We preview what we believe will be the dominant influence on literacy and literacy pedagogy in the near-term future and that is the global, as our world grows simultaneously smaller via digital connectivity and more divided via ideological and economic disparities. If ours is a textual age, one in which we engage now more than ever before in the creation, circulation, and interpretation of ideas through a variety of types of texts, and if this process is now more fraught and uncertain but simultaneously more crucial than ever before, then literacy researchers have a very important task at hand. That is, literacy educators and researchers, both those whose focus is school-valued forms and those who celebrate youth-centered production of a range of types of texts out of school, should redouble their efforts to craft conceptions of literacy and to support instances of literacy practice that position youth to work to solve local and global problems and to become ethically alert and audience-sensitive communicators, as well as to develop their personal capacities for meaning making.

Early Developments

There are several research traditions and methodologies that characterize the early literacy research that connects school and out-of-school spaces. Sociolinguists introduced the ethnography of communication, grounded in a study of the patterns of language use and social interaction. This work began most notably with Hymes (1964, 1972), who emphasized that language cannot be separated from how or why it is used. The goal for Hymes and his colleagues was to describe patterns, functions, and uses of language in context in order to display its diversity.

Considered the inaugural volume on ethnography of communication, the edited collection, *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (Cazden et al. 1972), concluded that differences in school achievement could be explained by the differences in language use at home and at school. Heath's (1983; see also 2012) decadelong study during the 1960s and 1970s of three contiguous communities in the Southern United States is the best-known and most influential of the empirical work in this tradition. Her research demonstrated how each community – a black working-class, white working-class, and a racially mixed middle-class community – socialized its children into distinct language practices. It also explored, as did subsequent work, how teachers could rethink their pedagogies and curricula to use to advantage the fact

that children are differentially socialized into patterns of language use, viewing these differences as strengths rather than deficits.

The work of psychologists Scribner and Cole (1981) conducted in the 1970s represents a second important tradition of literacy research at the nexus of school and community settings. Drawing on the theoretical advances of Vygotsky (e.g., 1978), researchers in this tradition describe literacy as a socially mediated sign system. Examining the cognitive consequences of literacy, Scribner and Cole (1981) conducted paradigm-shifting research in Liberia, where they discovered that particular writing systems and literacy activities fostered specialized forms of thinking, which in turn led them to conceptualize literacy as varied or multiple and linked to specific contexts of use. This theoretical tradition, and the later development of cultural historical activity theory, focused researchers' attention both inside and outside of schools.

According to researchers in the third tradition, New Literacy Studies (NLS), literacy practices are multiple and situated in time, space, institution, and culture (e.g., Barton and Hamilton 1998; Street 2003). Research in this tradition emphasizes the interplay between the meanings of local events and an analysis of broader discursive, historical, geographic, cultural, and political institutions and practices (e.g., Barton and Hamilton 1998; Gee 1996; Hull and Schultz 2001; Street 1993). The use of this framework has led to many rich qualitative, ethnographic, and design-based studies of literacy practices in a wide range of settings. Street (1984), for example, grounding his theoretical conceptions of literacy in his fieldwork in Iran in the early 1970s, defined literacy as a social practice rather than a set of neutral or technical skills, the customary definition in schools, adult literacy programs, and mass literacy campaigns. Street's work, and the subsequent scholarship of literacy researchers in the NLS tradition (cf. Gee 1996), has theorized and detailed everyday literacy practices in a wide range of contexts, reflecting local belief systems and economic, political, and social and historical conditions.

With an emphasis on design, a responsiveness to diverse groups of people and contexts, and an attentiveness to the challenges of an increasingly globalized world, a group of scholars known as the New London Group (NLG) extended the work of the NLS to examine various channels, modes, and modalities, such as audio, visual, gestural, and linguistic resources, that they call multiliteracies. This work highlighted literacy practices as multimodal and opened up new possibilities for documenting new literacy affordances through digital tools (New London Group 1996).

Work in the tradition of "critical literacy" has paralleled and overlapped the focus of NLS. While both share a commitment to defining literacy in relation to power and identity, critical literacy has a stronger focus on praxis – action based on reflection – as well as schooling. Usefully defined by Luke and Freebody (1997) as "a coalition of educational interests committed to engaging with the possibilities that the technologies of writing and other modes of inscription offer for social change, cultural diversity, economic equity, and political enfranchisement" (p. 1), critical literacy offers a framework with an explicit political agenda.

These foundational ideas continue to inform literacy research that documents contexts of literacy practice. Much of this work, however, is located either inside of schools or in the community. In our own earlier work, we called for an exploration of the relationships between school and nonschool contexts in order to rethink schooling and inform literacy research. We asked, how can research on literacy and out-of-school learning help us think again and anew about literacy teaching and learning across a range of contexts, including school? We urged literacy researchers to investigate potential relationships and collaborations between schools and formal classrooms and the informal learning that flourishes in a range of settings out of school (Hull and Schultz 2001, 2002).

Major Contributions

Scholars have continued to look outside of classrooms to broaden conceptualizations of literacy and capture the full range and meanings of literacy practices. In addition, with the advent of new technologies and globalization, there has been a significant shift in how scholars conceptualize and study literacy in and out of school. These changing conceptions of literacy have dominated recent debates and advances in literacy research, as scholarship has simultaneously grappled with and celebrated the movement from page to screen and from text to image. While the New Literacy Studies (NLS) has offered a robust and generative frame for much of the recent research on literacy in out-of-school contexts (Schultz et al. 2015), scholars have raised important questions and critiques about this perspective (e.g., Brandt and Clinton 2002), including concerns that the NLS emphasis on the local obscures the importance of the global reach of literacy.

The work of Latour (e.g., 2005) in articulating actor–network theory (ANT) and of geographers such as Lefebvre (1991) and new advances in conceptualizing identity, agency, and power (e.g., Moje and Luke 2009) have been particularly important in these discussions. Elaborating Latour's theoretical stance, Brandt and Clinton (2002) suggest that the term "literacy in action" replace the commonly used notion of "literacy event" to emphasize how literacy events privilege human action. This move underscores the idea that literacy is not only produced in local practice – an emphasis of the older NLS research – but is an actor in the local context whose meanings have a life of their own.

Another important direction of recent research on literacy in and out of school is its focus on identity and the ways textuality fundamentally intersects with a sense of self (cf. Gee 1996). Scholars have documented the ways "people's identities mediate and are mediated by the texts they read, write, and talk about" (Moje and Luke 2009, p. 416). The notion of performance allows researchers to add the dimensions of time and place to literacy research. For instance, Blackburn (2002) uses the term "literacy performances" to bring together ideas from NLS and Butler's (1991) conception of performance. The notion of performance allows Blackburn to analyze literacy events over time and across geographical locations. She illustrates how literacy is

performed repeatedly in ways that both confirm and disrupt prior performances. Similarly, Leander and McKim (2003) argue for the need to trace practices across geographical spaces by emphasizing the continuity of online and offline practices and explaining that "multiple space-times are invoked, produced, folded into one another, and coordinated in activity" (p. 224). Their work raises questions about situatedness in descriptions of literacy practices.

Recent theorizing about literacy and language perforce responds to the impact of increased globalization or "the intensified flows of capital, goods, people, images, and discourses around the globe" (Blommaert 2010, p. 13). Emphasizing the ideological nature of literacy through the examination of "who has what kinds of access and engagements with transnational, regional and local flows of information, whether print or multimodal, artefactual or manufactured, vernacular or transnational" (p. 331), Luke (2004) notes the ways in which local practices are shaped by global flows. He suggests that researchers bridge home and school contexts in their work, while holding a simultaneous focus on the local and the global as well as "which languages and literacies, structured by which state educational systems and globalized institutions, have which kinds of material consequences in people's lives" (p. 334). He urges researchers to document the material consequences of literacy, bringing school-based literacy practice more centrally into the conversation among New Literacy Studies scholars.

Perhaps the most theorized aspects of the digital turn have been the phenomenon of multimodality (e.g., Kress and van Leeuwen 2001). People have always used multiple representational and communicative resources to make meaning, but tools and opportunities to engage with a variety of semiotic systems have increased in our digital age. People make meaning through images, sounds, writing, and speech and also gaze, body posture, gesture, and the like, and they draw on these available resources to make meaning in situated and global contexts for an ever-expanding range of audiences – distant, intimate, expansive, and diverse. Since different modes carry differing affordances for conveying meaning, there is increasing interest in and insistence on incorporating a variety of modes into literacy learning in school and out-of-school contexts (e.g., Jewitt 2012), as well as exploring the ways in which digital tools and contexts can facilitate multimodal composing and require new conceptions of authorial rights and responsibilities.

Drawing on these new theoretical perspectives and new sociolinguistic methods and insights, recent research in the NLS tradition has looked at literacy across global and local contexts and in relation to new media communication and technologies (e.g., Baynham and Prinsloo 2009). Recent work in this area (e.g., Lam and Warriner 2012) examines the movement of people and places and social and economic mobility. Blommaert and his colleagues (e.g., 2010) illustrate how multiple language practices guide how people use language and literacy across spaces in their urban immigrant neighborhoods. For instance, the residents of a Belgian neighborhood that the researchers studied drew on several sets of codes and norms to navigate across school, community, and home settings, such as mosques, cafes, playgrounds, schools, and bus stops. These community members used Arabic in transnational

Islamic communities and standard Dutch in the local schools, while negotiating language norms in community settings. Their practices were shaped and constantly shifted through transnational language practices and norms that are both local and distant. Blommaert (e.g., 2010) used the concept of sociolinguistic scale to illustrate the ways that power is infused in events and practices that move across geographical spaces. In this analysis, horizontal scales refer to geographical locations, while vertical scales refer to power differentials. These distinctions remind us that it is critical to understand how people navigate the multiple aspects of their lives locally and translocally.

Embracing the need to integrate all semiotic systems in teaching and learning in and out of school, Hull and Nelson (2009, p. 200) argue that being able to "communicate and understand across differences in language and other modes and media for communication, in ideology, in culture, and in geography is at the heart of what it means to be literate now." They call for a more expansive notion of what counts as texts, particularly in formal settings such as schools. Based on empirical work with digital storytelling and social networking, they suggest new directions for New Literacy Studies that include an increased focus on the implications of connectivity for designing meaning and on art and aesthetics. Hull and Nelson assert that the purpose of teaching literacy is to teach adaptive and generative capacities based on principles of design and everyday memories, emotions, ideas, and artifacts. This shift in emphasis is critical to understanding the multimodal texts and varied literate performances of youth in out-of-school settings and for noticing what exists and what is missing from school-based curriculum and pedagogies.

Works in Progress

Given the proliferation of new types of digital texts and genres, and, indeed, given the omnipresence of textuality in a digitally mediated world, it is no surprise that researchers currently are compelled to document and theorize new forms and means of literacy and communication. Blogs, tweets, and texts, with words, sounds, images, videos, and emoticons, conveyed via a variety of technological devices, have come to saturate the lives and constitute the social fabric and the symbolic means of many children, youth, and adults. It is important, then, to understand the new tools and genres, both their restrictions and their potential in terms of the functions they serve, and to consider their relationship to schooling and education. To provide a few examples among many, Lewis (2013) has recently studied a mother and son's texting practices, while Ellison and Kirkland (2014), joining NLS with black feminist theorizing, have examined how a microphone and a motherboard became for two individuals "technologies of the self." Kromidas (2010) explored how a diverse group of children in New York City navigated notions of difference on MySpace and how this digital environment seemed to thwart what she termed their "emergent morality of critical cosmopolitanism" (p. 234).

Researchers in NLS have frequently interested themselves in language – both the oral language practices that encircle texts in literacy events and the textual entailments of being bilingual and multilingual. However, in recent years, sociolinguists, applied linguists, and others have invigorated debates about the teaching of language by theorizing communication as translingual. Rather than old-school "monoglossic" approaches in which one language is considered at a time, scholars today focus on how speakers/writers alternate, blend, and hybridize languages as they communicate orally and through a range of semiotic means. A translingual orientation expects language users to draw on a repertoire of codes that they appropriate, blend, and mesh in their negotiations with other language users across continually evolving communicative contexts. Further, translingual communication may go beyond words to include diverse semiotic resources – oral, written, visual, and embodied – which themselves coalesce in meaning making (Canagarajah 2013). Makalela (2015) has demonstrated, in the context of sub-Saharan Africa higher education and primary school, how translanguaging practices advantaged multilingual students cognitively and socially (cf., Lizárraga et al. 2015).

Not only does current work expand our conceptualizations of tools and language, some literacy researchers have insisted as well on challenging traditional dichotomies used to conceptualize learning – contextual and institutional ones, such as school and nonschool, and epistemological ones, such as the Cartesian separation of mind and body. There has long been dissatisfaction with simple in school and out-of-school boundaries (Hull and Schultz 2001), for children do not leave their home lives, cultural resources, and increasingly, their digital devices at the door when they enter school, or their schooled dispositions and knowledge, when they go home. However, until recently, it has been difficult to cross these commonsensical boundaries in order to integrate the learning opportunities that exist across spaces, including home, school, community, work, and leisure (cf., MacArthur Foundation's Connected Learning Project https://www.macfound.org/press/from-field/website-connected-learning/).

Recently, researchers have pushed past these insights, as important as they have been in challenging a logocentric bias, to theorize the body's role in learning and to explore embodiment as a theoretical and pedagogical stance. In her edited collection, Katz (2013) both embraces multisensory ways of knowing and communication and reclaims movement and bodily perception as central to making meaning. She offers the terms "embodied literacies" and "corporeal pedagogies" as she and her contributors theorize and illustrate how "learning and teaching are simultaneously corporeal, intellectual, emotional, psychological and, of course, social" (p. 5). Taking as their point of departure the construct of "multiliteracies" (New London Group 1996) offered now 20 years ago, Leander and Boldt (2013) argue that this influential framework overprivileges texts and also that it overemphasizes the rationality of text design to the exclusion of emotions and sensations as literacy-related activities unfold. They examine a day in the life of a 10-year-old boy as he reads and engages with English translations of Japanese graphic novels or manga. They describe his engagement as "saturated with affect and emotion" and "fed by an ongoing series of

affective intensities that are different from the rational control of meanings and forms" (p. 22).

Problems and Difficulties

At the same time that there has been an explosion of new literacy practices in out-of-school spaces, especially those using new media and technologies, most schools have maintained their focus on traditional conceptions of texts, especially timeworn, but still valued academic genres such as argumentation. In response to pressures from the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of the Bush era, the Obama administration's Race to the Top (RTT) guidelines in the United States, and comparable legislation and state-regulated curriculum in countries around the world, schools and districts have increasingly emphasized test preparation in lieu of a deeper exploration of content, moving the curriculum further away from the interests and knowledge held by youth and so vividly displayed in out-of-school spaces. In the United States, the Common Core State Standards, which claim to be internationally benchmarked, were introduced to better prepare students for college and career readiness. Although the Common Core framework attempts to draw on more conceptual understandings that could provide teachers with openings to draw on youth's knowledge from outside of formal schooling, the initial high-stakes tests connected to the Common Core standards appear to reinscribe school-based knowledge and circumscribe teaching and learning inside of schools. This creates a wide gulf between school literacies and what we know and have learned through the documentation of out-of-school literacy practices.

Thus, a major difficulty in the literacy field remains the gap between older notions of texts and newer understandings of how literacy flourishes in a world increasingly shaped by new technologies and possibilities. The greatest challenge in the literacy field remains finding the key to engaging all youth in meaning making that both has relevance to their lives and positions them to succeed in institutions, work, and as citizens. Toward these ends, research on literacies should attempt to capture the movement and flow of literacy practices across boundaries such as those between school and community, but also across digital and print media and transnational boundaries. Multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995) has guided researchers to document practices in multiple settings. Researchers have experimented with new forms of documentation, often conducted with youth, to capture the complexity of the literacy processes and products. For instance, Vasudevan (2015) introduced the idea of multimodal counter-storytelling, a participatory form of research in which the youth's stories are placed at the center of the research. Questions about methodology, as well as ethics, should take center stage as researchers attempt to capture the wide range of youth's literacy practices, such as online conversations and text messaging, and consider the implications of "big data" for understanding literacy practices.

Future Directions

In the early days of 2011, the revolution in Tunisia was ignited when a vegetable seller set himself on fire. Word of his actions spread rapidly through social networks across the country, throughout the Arab world, and around the globe. Within hours of his self-immolation by fire, in response to the texts, tweets, and videos, there were youth protests across Tunisia signifying solidarity with his action and protesting the police repression that sparked it. The protesters demanded political freedom and freedom of the press, wielding literacy as a weapon and as a means of communication, despite the censorship that had previously silenced their voices. The revolt in Tunisia not only led to similar protests in the Middle East – the Arab Spring – but it also brought about a new form of social movement closely tied to social networks and social media (Castells 2015). In the United States, when an Oakland, California, labor organizer wrote a response on Facebook about the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the wake of the shooting of Trayvon Martin, the hashtag #BLACKLIVESMATTER came to symbolize a growing movement in which youth have seized social media to organize and make their voices heard.

Activists across the US have maintained the visibility of this movement and mounted pressures for reform and action through social media and a wide range of literacy practices. The youth movement in support of the DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) in the United States has similarly drawn on social media resources to organize and publicize their demands for an end to deportation. Uniting under the slogan "undocumented and unafraid," youth have organized protests and symbolic graduations, drawing attention to their actions through a range of social media including blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. In order to spur public support, they have created videos of youth who face deportation and turned to storytelling through digital media (Zimmerman 2012).

As these examples show, in recent years, youth have deployed social media to engage in political activity and register their outrage for the conditions of their lives. Their creative and expansive uses of social media for civic engagement suggest the need to rethink the assumptions about the functions and uses of literacy and to reexamine where, when, and how learning literacy occurs. New forms of civic engagement and renewed youth activism signal a future direction for literacy studies that is alert to issues of ethics and morality, and these concerns run across geographic, ideological, linguistic, and cultural borders. While such foci are just attracting attention in literacy studies, youth now point the way to a renewed emphasis in literacy studies on activism and social justice.

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Literacies in the Classroom

David Bloome and SangHee Ryu

Abstract

The phrase "literacies in the classroom" indexes a series of debates, discussions, and explorations of how written language is implicated in social, cultural and political ideologies that have implications for what constitutes knowledge, knowing, and rationality, for the relationship of classroom and non-classroom contexts, and for how people relate to social institutions. Literacy is not singular but plural referencing diverse written language practices whose significance and meaning derive, in part, from the complexities of classroom contexts. Classroom contexts of literacy learning are connected to social contexts outside the classroom including power relations.

Contents

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Introduction

At a surface level, "literacies in the classroom" refers to teachers and students engaging in reading and writing instruction and to teachers and students using reading and writing for academic learning. Reading and writing, at a surface level, are defined as a set of cognitive and linguistic skills, and the classroom is defined as a place where, over time, students acquire the skills of reading and writing to earn and learn later in life. There is a huge corpus of studies and theories framed by this surface level conception of "literacies in the classroom."

At deeper levels, the phrase "literacies in the classroom" indexes a series of debates, discussions, and explorations of how written language is implicated in social, cultural, and political ideologies that have implications for what constitutes knowledge, knowing, and rationality, for the relationship of classroom and non-classroom contexts, and for how people relate to social institutions. Literacy is not singular but plural (literacies) referencing diverse written language practices whose significance and meaning derive, in part, from the multiplicities and complexities of classroom contexts. From the perspective of these deeper levels, the surface level conception of "literacies in classrooms" is itself an ideological imposition albeit one that has become naturalized. Given space limitations, here we discuss some of the issues raised by this deeper level of defining "literacies in the classroom."

Defining Literacies Within the Contexts of Classrooms

The definitions literacy scholars and educators hold frame conceptions of literacies in the classroom. Following Street (1985), we categorize definitions of literacy as grounded either in an autonomous model or an ideological model of literacy.

Autonomous Definitions of Literacy

An autonomous definition holds that literacy is a set of cognitive and linguistic processes constituting reading and writing are a form of cultural capital to be acquired; the classroom is a prime place for its acquisition. Once acquired, literacy as cultural capital can be exchanged to obtain information and other cultural capital from written texts, and it can be exchanged for social, symbolic, and economic capital. Within this definition of literacy, there is debate regarding the constitutive cognitive and linguistic processes including debate about whether the set of cognitive and linguistic processes is the same when the modality is the printed page versus a screen (where the screen is enabled by digital technologies). Regardless of

modality, the definition of literacy as autonomous cognitive and linguistic processes raises questions for researchers and educators about:

- How and to whom do classrooms provide access to the cognitive and linguistic processes that constitute literacy?
- How efficiently do classrooms enable acquisition?
- How do student background factors (e.g., cultural, language, economic conditions), individual differences, teacher factors (e.g., teacher education, teacher attitudes, teacher expectations), and classroom factors (e.g., class size, instructional method, technology, etc.) influence access and efficiency of acquisition?

Ideological Definitions of Literacy

An ideological model of literacy defines literacy as diverse and situated social practices and social events in which the use of written language is nontrivial (e.g., Heath 1980; Street 1985). From this perspective, literacy is not something one acquires; instead literacies are sets of social events and practices involving written language in which one participates. Literacy practices can be defined as social practices in which written language plays a salient role, such as the social practice of composing a written argument in a classroom. That is, literacy practices can be defined as particular ways of using written language within a particular culturally and institutionally defined set of social situations and contexts. A literacy event can be defined as a specific, contextualized instance of literacy practices involving social interaction and the adoption and adaptation of extant literacy practices, such as a particular set of students and teacher interactionally constructing a written argument in a particular classroom lesson on a particular day. Literacy is inherently multiple; there are a broad range of differing literacy practices embedded in and influencing social situations and social events that are themselves embedded in broader cultural and social contexts including institutional contexts such as schooling. From this perspective, classrooms are less seen as places than as spaces in which the social institution of schooling contextualizes what literacy practices and events are constructed and promulgated, by whom, when, where, and how.

Although the institution of schooling exerts an influence, it is not totalizing or monolithic. Within each classroom, teachers and students continuously negotiate a set of shared expectations and standards for the organization of events, how people will relate to each other, how meaning and significance are assigned to actions and materials, and how spoken and written language is to be used within and across classroom events (cf. Green 1983). Variation within and across classroom contexts and in the schools and communities in which classrooms are located implicates variation in the literacy practices and events within those classrooms. Thus, from this definition of literacy, questions are asked about:

- What literacy practices exist in the spaces of a classroom?
- How do these literacy practices vary across different classrooms and within a classroom across different interactional contexts?

- How do teachers and students interactionally construct the literacy practices and events in which they engage each other with and through written language? What influences how they construct those literacy practices?
- How are students (and teachers) socialized into the literacy practices and literacy events of the classroom?
- How do students and teachers adapt the given and extant literacy practices in the classroom in ways that accommodate their particular needs, interests, goals, histories, social relationships and social identities, cultural and linguistic differences, imagination, and the agency they seek to exert on the worlds in which they live?

Pedagogization of Literacy Practices

One of the key issues in locating literacy practices and events in classrooms concerns the centrality of pedagogy in defining literacy practices and events. Street and Street (1991) label pedagogically contextualized literacy practices as *school literacy practices* and describe their attributes as involving the objectification of language and an emphasis on metalinguistic practices. What gets foregrounded in school literacy practices is not what students learn *to do* with written language, but their display of fidelity to a particular model of written language and their explicit display of a particular discourse for referencing engagement in written language. Students are held accountable for identifying, producing, and displaying the appropriate forms, genres, and structures of written language.

However, it is not the case that all literacy practices and literacy events in all classrooms at all times are pedagogized "school literacy practices." Some classrooms may eschew school literacy practices and foreground literacy practices that emphasize reading and writing for enjoyment, the expression of emotions and views, critical analysis, and community building and activism. The classroom context in these cases is one in which students are invited to participate in literacy events and practices where function and use are foregrounded. Through their participation in diverse literacy practices and events, over time, students are socialized into diverse ways of using written language within and across diverse social situations (e.g., Bloome et al. 2009; Duff 2010; Meachin 2013; Ochs and Schieffelin 1986). The future utility of such participation is through abduction and recontextualization (e.g., Dyson 2001; Van Leeuwen 2008).

The Relationship of Literacy Practices Outside the Classroom to Literacy Practices Inside the Classroom

The warrant for examining relationships among literacy practices outside of the classroom to those inside of the classroom derives from recognition that students have lives outside of the classroom that may affect how they engage in literacy practices and literacy events in the classroom. A long-term ethnography of language

and literacy practices by Heath (1983) in three culturally and economically different communities showed that the ways in which children use spoken and written language are derivative of both the communities' specific literacy practices and of broader cultural themes integral to each respective community. As such, when children approach any social event, including literacy events in the classroom, the expectations and participatory frames they hold for what constitutes appropriate and effective use of spoken and written language derive from their experiences in analogous social events in their families and communities and in the broader family and community context. When the expectations and participatory frames for classroom events are foreign to the children – as may occur when their expectations and frames are derived from and grounded in a different set of cultural experiences than those on which classroom literacy practices are based – the children may not participate appropriately, effectively signal their competence with spoken and written language, nor understand what is being expected of them, its import, or the basis for how their actions are being interpreted by the teacher. Such cross-cultural differences are especially likely for students from nondominant cultural and linguistic communities, potentially resulting in misevaluation and inappropriate instruction. The negative interpretation given to cross-cultural differences in participation in literacy practices and events in the classroom derives from the promulgation of deficit models and a priori frameworks assuming that there is a single model of literacy classroom practices, a model typically associated with how members of the dominant social and cultural group participate in classroom literacy events. Deviation from that model may not be interpreted as difference but as a deficit in intelligence, culture, or language (for related discussions, see Carter 2006; Cazden et al. 1972; Leung 2005; Michaels 2013; Valencia 2010; Willis et al. 2003).

Recognition of cross-cultural differences as well as the low academic achievement of students from many cultural and racial minority groups (when compared to their white, middle-class counterparts) has raised questions about how classroom literacy practices as part of pedagogical practice might be organized. Shifts in the participatory organization of instructional practices so that they more closely resemble and take advantage of analogous practices with students' home communities have been shown to enhance participation and achievement (e.g., Au 1980). Taking a broader perspective, Ladson-Billings (1994), Gay and Banks (2000), Lee (1997), Moll et al. (1992), and others have argued for culturally responsive pedagogies that include but go beyond the participatory organization of classroom literacy practices and incorporate broader cultural themes and interpersonal relationships consistent with students' home cultures. As such, classroom literacy practices are embedded in a broader cultural context focusing on interpersonal relationships among teachers, students, parents, and other community members; and this broader cultural context can be viewed as reframing the meaning and significance of participation in classroom literacy practices.

Part of the dynamic addressed by culturally responsive pedagogy involves eschewing a priori constructions of students as having a deficit in their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The concept of "funds of knowledge" has been used to emphasize that the homes and communities of cultural and linguistic minority

students are not deficit in social, linguistic, and cultural capital but rather that teachers need to design curriculum and instruction in ways that provide opportunities for students to bring to their participation in classroom literacy events the funds of knowledge available in their households and communities (Gonzales et al. 2005; Moll et al. 1992). Similarly, Lee (1997) and Richardson (2003) argue for pedagogies for literacy learning that incorporate students' language and experiences in bridging to academic learning. At issue is not access to literacy as an autonomous set of cognitive and linguistic processes. Rather, it is the interactional and situated construction of classroom contexts and literacy practices reflecting diverse and hybridized cultural, social, and political ideologies (cf. Gutierrez et al. 1995; Gutierrez 2008). The significance and meaning of these literacy practices, in part, is in reconstituting the relationship of culturally, linguistically, and economically marginalized students to the social institution of classroom education and, in part, in redefining extant classroom literacy practices.

Knowledge, Knowing, Rationality, Globalization, and Literacies in the Classroom

As teachers and students interact with each other in literacy events in the classroom, they are simultaneously defining what counts as knowledge, how one engages in and uses written language for knowing (the social, cognitive, and linguistic practices and processes for generating and determining what counts as knowledge) (e.g., Floriani 1993; Green and Dixon 1993; Heap 1985), and what constitutes rationality (Newell et al. 2015). In part, what counts as knowledge depends on what texts are present and validated in the classroom literacy events (e.g., Luke 1988; Tuyay et al. 1995) and what intertextual relationships are validated (cf. Bloome and Egan-Robertson 1993).

Every literacy practice involves an underlying rationality, an ideology about what makes sense and what does not. Although teachers and students may not explicitly talk about underlying rationality, their literacy practices nonetheless promulgate a definition of rationality. Part of what students and teachers construct when they participate in classroom literacy practices is a distinction between what is rational and what is not (and correspondingly a distinction between who is rational and who is not).

How the rational is constituted through classroom literacy practices depends, in part, on the definitions of rationality teachers and students bring to their participation in classroom literacy events and, in part, the definitions of rationality they interactionally construct. For example, in writing argumentative essays, teachers and students may emphasize claims, warrants, and evidence in pursuit of the Truth, a rationality defined as a set of decontextualized principles. Alternatively, teachers and students may compose argumentative essays in pursuit of consensus and agreement across diverse perspectives and understandings of the truth (cf. Habermas 1984) or in pursuit of deeper understanding and insight without the assumption of being able to arrive at a singular truth (cf. Gadamer 1976). Still other definitions of rationality implicit in classroom literacy practices may emphasize an ethic of care (cf. Noddings 1992), the valuing of human relationships (cf. Gilligan 1982), and deconstruction of

power relations (cf. Flyvbjerg 1998). What is at issue regarding rationality and literacies in the classroom is not what definitions of rationality teacher and students initially hold but rather what definitions are constituted through, promulgated by, and taken up in their participation classroom literacy practices (cf. Newell et al. 2015; Wynhoff Olsen et al. 2013).

Globalization and Literacies in the Classroom.

Globalization can be defined as a historical process through which there is increasing interaction among people geographically across economic, cultural, linguistic domains (cf. Luke and Carrington 2002). Whether globalization involves increasing standardizing of cultural and linguistic practices and increasing centralizing of economic decision-making and control is debatable. Regardless, as globalization extends even to remote rural areas, classroom literacy practices are influenced by the economic, cultural, and linguistic dilemmas, opportunities, and problems globalization entails. Within local contexts, people will increasingly have to struggle with how to balance maintenance of their local culture, community, language(s), and ways of life with preparing their children for a world in which access to economic, intellectual, academic, cultural, and material resources will depend on being able to interact on a global level and address what people are doing elsewhere in the world (e.g., Damico and Baildon 2011). Communities will variously choose to resist, to adapt, to balance between the local and the global, and to incorporate globalization within their own economic, cultural, and linguistic frames, or some combination thereof (cf. Anderson-Levitt 2003). Such choices will affect classroom literacy practices as such choices shift the epistemological context and the context of social relationships.

Literacies in the Classroom, the State, and Power Relations

Discussions of education and of literacy often include the role of classrooms and schools in the social reproduction of society (e.g., Collins 2009) and in promulgation of State control over people through how literacy education is organized in classrooms. Classroom literacy practices and assessment are often organized in a competitive manner that justifies social stratification, hierarchy, and the differential distribution of the rewards that schooling can provide. Students who do not participate as expected in a classroom event involving written language, who do not speak in a particular manner, dialect, or language, and who do not score at a particular level on a standardized or informal assessment are all at risk of being labeled as slow, below, and special needs. The tests and observations are a form of public gaze and a form of governmentality (cf. Foucault 1991) for encouraging and regulating behavior, thought, and ways of using written language. This includes what students read (Luke 1988) and write, when, where, and how; what intertextual connections they make (cf. Bloome and Egan-Robertson 1993); what meanings they assign to texts;

how they structure a narrative (cf. Michaels 1981; Champion 1998); how they configure and control their bodies during classroom literacy events (cf. Leander and Rowe 2006); what languages they speak, read, and write in the classroom (cf. Scott et al. 2009); what emotions they are allowed to display when, where, and how (cf. Lewis and Tierney 2013); and what and how they think (what constitutes being rationale, cf. Newell et al. 2015; Wynhoff Olsen et al. 2013). This governmentality is naturalized; it seems common sense, obvious, and alternatives viewed as either non sequitur or irrational, immoral, and subversive. The State apparatus for supporting such governmentality includes control and surveillance of curriculum, what students read, how they are taught to read and write, high-stakes assessments, censoring of alternative perspectives of literacy and literacy instruction, control of teacher salaries (through government-mandated test-score-based merit raises), public praising and shaming of teachers based on students' reading assessment scores, and financial support for and dissemination of reading research aligned with such governmentality, among other means. Perhaps most important to the exercise of governmentality in literacies in the classroom is the buy-in of educators, students, parents, and others to the autonomous model of literacy (itself an ideological model that has been naturalized) promulgated by the state; of the legitimacy of the consequences for children, families, and communities (both those who are privileged and those who are not); of the extension of the governmentality of literacy in the classroom to other contexts (e.g., family contexts); and of the axiom that the literacy ideology promulgated by the State through classrooms is not an ideology but an empirical "truth."

Yet, despite the extensive apparatus of governmentality and the buy-in of many educators, students, and others, in their daily lives in the classroom, teachers and students engage in what might be called a series of "tactics" (cf. De Certeau 1984) that allow them to engage in illicit literacy practices. They may engage students in literacy practices for exploring their own communities, families, and histories (e.g., Egan-Robertson and Bloome 1998), reconstituting what counts as knowledge and personhood (e.g., Gutierrez 2008; Kirkland 2013; Pacheco 2012), side-stepping state-mandated language policies (e.g., Dixon et al. 2000), mediating the official knowledge of school texts (e.g., Rockwell 2013), and mediating official and unofficial literacy practices (Maybin 2007), among other tactics.

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The Politics of the Teaching of Reading

Janet Soler

Abstract

Political debates over the "correct" and "best method" to teach reading during the early stages of learning to read in primary schools and infant classrooms have periodically surfaced since the beginnings of compulsory education in Western countries. These debates and "reading wars" have often occurred in conjunction with serious public concerns over reading standards. They reflect the importance placed on learning to read by parents, teachers, employers, and politicians. The public controversies over the teaching of reading have in turn fueled public and professional debates over which specific methods and materials to use with beginning readers and children who have reading difficulties.

Debates over reading methods for early literacy acquisition have tended to lead to a focus on reading proficiency and "reading standards" and standardized approaches to teaching reading, reading assessment, and engaging with literacy. The universal acceptance of the importance of learning to read has also led to vested interests in specific methods, reading programs, and early literacy assessments among professional, business, commercial, and parental lobby groups.

The public debates over how to teach reading have been increasing in intensity since the 1950s. In recent decades the power to make decisions over the teaching of early reading has been increasingly centralized, with more prescriptive curricula and National Literacy Strategies being implemented in many countries. This centralization and increased policy-based governance of the teaching of reading has in turn heightened the political control and infringed on the classroom teacher's professional control over the way reading is taught. There have also been concerns that researchers' voices are being ignored as decisions regarding how to teach reading have become increasingly politicized and centralized (see, e.g., Goodman 2014; Wyse and Opfer 2010; Goldenberg 2000).

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Early Developments

The current politics surrounding the teaching of reading has resulted from the emergence and growing intensity of the phonics versus whole language/real books debate during the twentieth century. The emergence of binary oppositional models of how to teach early reading, and the political stances associated with them, can be linked to the increasing influence of psychology on reading research and pedagogy from 1900 to 1935. David Pearson argues that the new ideas which emerged from psychology and the pedagogy of reading from 1900 onward have had an enduring impact on reading instruction and are still influential (Pearson 2000).

Prior to the 1850s, the drill and practice approach of the alphabetic method was employed to teach reading. This method taught children to identify and name the letters of the alphabet. It encouraged children to initially recognize and name the letters in both capital and lower case, in alphabetical order from available texts such as a bible or reading "primer." This method began to be challenged in the middle of the nineteenth century with a phonics-based approach which rapidly gained popularity in America and England.

Unlike the alphabetic method, this early phonics method involved learning through recognizing the letters made in the composition of the word rather than recognition of the named letter. This "new phonics-" based approach had the key aspects of more recent phonics-based approaches as it was highly systematic and a utilized range of pre-reading perceptual activities such as introducing fusing separate sounds into words, as well as introducing the letters of the alphabet. Later commentators writing in the 1960s would describe this initial phonic system as an "elaborate synthetic system" and noted that it had become firmly established by the 1950s (Cove 2006).

The initial phonics-based approach was, in turn, challenged by the emergence of the "look and say" teaching technique which had become dominant by the 1930s (Chall 1967, p. 161). The "look and say" method had been originally promoted by the psychologist Edmund Huey in the early 1900s and had become established in many countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Commonwealth countries such

as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa in the 1940s. During the 1950s "look and say" was advocated by leading reading researchers such as William Gray in the United States who argued that teachers need to be encouraged to teach children to read whole words and to avoid phonics drills that lacked meaning. The "look and say" method focused on teaching children to recognize entire words or sentences and emphasized the use of flash cards with pictures. While they had been challenged and to some extent overtaken by the "look and say" method, phonics approaches regained enough credibility during the 1930s to become used with "look and say" through to the 1960s. The eight principles Chall (1967) identified as the prevailing views of reading in the 1960s included a mix of "look and say" and instruction in phonics (Chall 1967, p. 14).

From the very early stages of the development of reading methods and programs, there have been associated ideological viewpoints, commercial interests, and political allegiances. For example, there was an early recognition of the potential for the commercial publishing of specially written texts related to specific methods of teaching reading with the establishment of the McGruffy basal readers in the United States in the 1940s. By the 1860s there was a wide use of the *McGuffey Readers*, which were based upon the phonics as well as the alphabetic method. From 1927 to 1973, the Scott Foresman company sold the *Dick and Jane* series based on the "look and say" method, and by the 1950s and 1960s, this series was the main early reading texts associated with this method and was in use as the *Janet and John* readers in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth countries.

Allan Luke has noted that earlier textbooks and reading practices were firmly linked to religious ideology which served religious and nation-building purposes; these basal reader series have embodied "technocratic approaches" to the curriculum which have endorsed the researching and teaching of reading as a neutral psycho/social phenomenon, divorced from surrounding cultural practices. He argues that the *Dick and Jane* series was designed by university-based psychologists to be a sequenced instructional program which also sequenced and controlled the teacher's behavior through a focus on children's behavioral skill acquisition with an accompanying emphasis on detailed teacher guidebooks which instigate a standardized approach to teaching and communication (Luke 1991).

David Pearson has noted the way in which there are political and professional agendas surrounding the construction of reading as a "performance" to be examined by scientific examination and systematic testing of individual silent reading. He argues, like Luke, that this fitted the demands for efficiency and scientific objectivity and supported a psychometrically based construction which fitted the emerging scientism of the period (Pearson 2000).

Major Contributions

Current reading debates and the politics surrounding reading methods have tended to polarize over the use of phonics versus whole language methods of teaching reading. This particularly divisive "great debate" over reading methods had its origins in the

United States during the "reading wars" of the 1950s. This debate was initiated with the publication of Rudolf Flesch's (1955) book, *Why Johnny Can't Read*. Flesch maintained that there had been a decline in reading standards which could be attributed to teaching children to read by the "look and say" method. He advocated a return to a phonics approach as the only method to use in beginning reading. In his book Flesch (1955) argued that his view was supported by the interpretation of the existing reading research, especially the research comparing sight and phonic methods. The politics surrounding the "great debate" over how to teach reading in the 1950s was, therefore, linked to public concern over claims of falling literacy standards and resulting assertions that there was a need to implement the "one best method" to teach reading. This claim that it was possible to establish the most effective and efficient way to teach literacy in a scientifically valid way was reinforced by the growing influence of experimental behavioral psychology and psychometrics within education and reading research during the late 1950s and 1960s. During this period the central issue under debate was the extent to which children learnt to read better with a method that stressed meaning versus a method that stresses learning the alphabetic code. Jeanette Chall who produced a review of experimental studies in the area conducted during the twentieth century supported early code and phonics teaching in the early grades rather than whole language teaching for meaning (Chall 1967).

From the 1950s there was a gradual shift away from the conventional wisdom implicit in the look and say method in basal readers toward the incorporation of practices which recognized the need for broader meaning making when learning to read (Monaghan et al. 2002). This in turn had impacted on teaching practice and the conceptualization of reading programs. For example, word attack skills became linked to "context," "configuration," "structural," and "dictionary" clues as well as "phonic" clues. It also bought about changes to traditional classroom-based reading practices as more conventional classroom practices such as "round robin" oral reading sessions utilized these clues rather than relying on solely phonics-based instruction (Monaghan et al. 2002, p. 228).

The polarized and increasingly bifurcated perspectives of reading that emerged from the great debate in the 1950s and the challenges from psycholinguistics-based approaches in the 1970s were reflected in the two principal models of the reading process which had developed by the 1980s and 1990s. These models are often referred to in the research literature and by practitioners as "bottom-up," and incorporated phonics-based approaches to reading, and "top-down" models of reading. In the bottom-up model of reading, fluent readers look firstly at the arrangements of the letters in the words, before they consider the meaning of the print. In contrast to the bottom-up model, the "top-down" model, which encompasses programs such as Reading Recovery, views learning to read as a concept-driven activity. The top-down model assumes that confident readers initially predict the meaning of text before examining the available syntactic, semantic, and graphic cues (Reid 2009, pp. 106–109). Both top-down and bottom-up models have had their advocates among educational psychologists, primary teachers, and professional support staff in different countries at different points in time across the period from

the 1960s to the end of the 1990s (see, e.g., Openshaw and Cullen 2001; Stannard and Huxford 2007; Carson 1999).

During the 1970s the new field of "cognitive science" as an interdisciplinary field in the United States led to the emergence of the concept of "reading process models." The specific development of the top-down, whole language-based model in the teaching of early reading marked a radical shift from a behavioral perspective to a metacognitive perspective which changed the way in which readers were observed. This change was initiated by newly emerging evidence about the way language is learned through the work of Noam Chomsky and from psycholinguistics-related fields (Monaghan et al. 2002, p. 229). In the United States, Australasia, and Canada, the top-down model of reading became linked to the term "whole language," through the psycholinguistic-based work of Yetta and Ken Goodman. The Goodmans were advocating a comprehensive theory of the reading process which had evolved from Ken Goodman's studies of the making of meaning through unexpected responses in oral reading which focused on miscue analysis. The increasing dominance of the "top-down" approach challenged "bottom-up" methods which drew upon phonics and direct instruction. Initial support for the whole language approach came from Canadian teachers who rejected the emphasis upon tests and the fragmented nature of contemporary textbook-based reading programs (Goodman 2014). By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the whole language movement had become firmly established in educational practice internationally. Commentators, however, have pointed out that whole language was never universally accepted by all teachers, even in countries such as Australia where it had been popular since the 1960s (Snyder 2008, p. 51).

During the 1970s there was a further escalation of the politics surrounding the polarized views of the "one best way" to teach reading, with additional challenges to accepted practice from a psycholinguistics perspective where the process of reading was seen to involve a "range of meanings produced at the interface of person and text, and the linguistic strategies and the cultural knowledge used to 'cue' into the meanings embedded in the text" (Rassool 2009, p. 9). This view formed the foundation for the whole language and real-book approaches that were advocated by literacy educators, such as Kenneth Goodman and Frank Smith, in the 1970s and 1980s (see, e.g., Smith 1971; Goodman 1986). Goodman's (1986) top-down approach to reading became known as the "psycholinguistic guessing game." Its advocates argued that it resulted in good readers not needing to rely on graphic clues to process every distinguishing feature of the words and letters in a reading text. The implicit assumption was that children would learn to read through being read to, becoming immersed in a literacy-rich environment and engaging in reading.

The whole language approach attracted the attention of policy makers and politicians as well as researchers and educational professionals from its emergence in the late 1960s and 1970s. American educational historians have noted that in the United States, the competitive space race between the Americans and Russians after the launch of Sputnik in 1957 motivated political interest in finding the "best method" of teaching reading during the 1960s. It also resulted in an increased investment in research-related studies into the teaching of early reading in the United

States (Monaghan et al. 2002, p. 229). During the 1970s political opponents to the whole language movement and the Goodmans' work came from those who equated it with the earlier "look and say" approach and supporters of phonics programs. Direct political opposition took the form of attempts to legislate for the way reading was taught (Goodman 1986, Chap. 2, location 182 of 3065).

The New Zealander Marie Clay was another key figure whose psycholinguistic influenced top-down model resulted in the Reading Recovery program, which had an internal uptake during the 1980s and 1990s. Marie Clay established running records as a simpler form of miscue analysis which had been developed by the Goodmans. In New Zealand Clay's approach became particularly influential and led to an emphasis on the observation of children's reading behaviors rather than the strategic teaching of sounds. Marie Clay's views, her Reading Recovery program, and the work of other whole language advocates such as the Goodmans, Frank Smith, and fellow New Zealander Donald Holdaway were taken up and supported at a national level via in-service courses and local reading association workshops (Openshaw and Cullen 2001). The establishment of Reading Recovery as an internationally based program in the late 1980s and 1990s heightened political debates surrounding the efficacy of whole language versus phonics and issues in relation to the efficacy and cost of such programs (see, e.g., Soler and Openshaw 2007).

The 1980s marked an uptake of whole language-based programs in many countries. Commentators on the political ascendency of these programs have argued that during the 1980s and into the early 1990s, the uptake of reading programs such as Reading Recovery took place out of the public gaze in countries such as England and New Zealand. They contend that throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, important discussions about the literacy curriculum and literacy teaching tended to take place in parliamentary committees with nominated representatives from professional organizations or between professional organization and government departments. For example, in New Zealand, following a large-scale study with positive outcomes for Reading Recovery, senior officials had the direct support of the Director General of the Education Department to provide financial backing for its expansion and for extensive training for the Reading Recovery teachers (Openshaw 2002, p.86). Colin Harrison notes that in England throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, the content of the literacy curriculum was determined in government committees and between professional groups such as the National Association for the Teaching of English and the United Kingdom Reading Association (see, e.g., Harrison 2004, p. 1). In subsequent decades decisions over the reading and literacy curriculum in the early years would increasingly be driven by politician-driven initiatives in the public sphere in both of these countries (Soler and Openshaw 2007).

During the 1990s the whole language approach faced renewed pressures. Challenges from reading researchers initially emerged from the work of cognitive psychologists who wanted to further explore the processes underpinning fluent reading through investigating eye movement. This approach enabled researchers to find the extent to which context might help or hinder word recognition and if children skipped letters and word when reading text. By the late 1990s, evidence from this approach had led to both the top-down and bottom-up method being

critiqued in the research literature with claims that the research evidence supported approaches which used a combination of both approaches to teaching literacy. For example, in the early 1980s, Stanovich (1980) had proposed that both top-down and bottom-up methods are problematic when used as the sole method of teaching reading, because readers draw on both processes when reading. He suggested that readers do not necessarily begin at the graphic (bottom-up) or the context (top-down). Stanovich referred to this process as the "interactive compensatory" model because these different processes are also linked together, and a weakness in one area can be supported by the reader relying on strengths in other areas. The acknowledgment of multiple strategies was reinforced by comprehension research in the early 1990s with research identifying five different strategies utilized by expert readers to foster metacognitive awareness and leading to comprehension (Dole et al. 1991).

In the United States pressures for a bottom-up model of reading reemerging in the 1990s with the growing support for systematic phonics-based reading programs from publishers who wanted to reinvigorate the market related to publishing texts for young readers through making explicit, systematic, and sequential phonics part of nearly every reading program (Moore 2002, p. 47). Mesmer and Griffith (2005, p. 368) note that the terms systematic phonics and explicit and systematic phonics emerged in the early 1990s when Marilyn Jager Adams used the term "explicit, systematic" to describe her recommendations for phonics instruction. The aspects of this form of phonics instruction highlighted the following common features:

> (a) curriculum with a specified, sequential set of phonics elements; (b) instruction that is direct, precise, and ambiguous; and (c) practice using phonics to read words.
>
> (Mesmer and Griffith 2005, p. 369)

In England, the pressure for a bottom-up model of reading instruction in the late 1990s came from the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy which included the teaching of phonological awareness to 5 year olds upward during a "literacy hour" which was to be implemented at a national level. As part of the English National Literacy Strategy, teachers received intensive training and a training pack which also focused on teachers' knowledge of phonics (Lewis and Ellis 2006, p. 2).

Work in Progress

The public debates over whole language versus phonics and the adherence to either top-down, bottom-up methods or the incorporation of both into interactive compensatory models or "mixed method" approaches to teaching reading have played out in different ways in different countries. In countries such as Scotland, where the more centrally controlled National Literacy Strategies were not introduced, the political debate over the public debates over whole language versus phonics has not been so prevalent (Lewis and Ellis 2006). However, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, the bottom-up model, in the form of specifically synthetic phonics

approaches, has been gaining ascendency over both bottom-up and interactive compensatory models in many other countries such as the United States, England, and Australia. This situation has been endorsed and supported by conservative politicians in these countries who have argued that the evidence is "overwhelming" and that the early teaching of reading through systematic synthetic phonics is the most effective approach.

This claim is not universally upheld and has been disputed by academic researchers who have argued that it has not been supported by empirical research evidence (see, e.g., Wyse and Goswami 2008) and by professional groups such as the United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA 2005). It has also been difficult to clearly endorse either whole language or phonics via the use of empirical evidence. For example, while there has been a significant amount of evidence collected in relation to the whole language-based program, Reading Recovery, over the past 20 years, the evidence is often seen as relatively weak and unclear from an experimental research perspective. From this perspective there are a limited number of true experimental studies and a "lack of independence of those gathering or analyzing data" (Wheldall et al. 1992, cited in Reynolds and Whedall 2007, p. 207).

It has also been argued that because most research on Reading Recovery is not experimental, there is not the "highest proof" of efficacy for the program, and it does not have the most effective designs for showing causality and preventing problems with internal validity (Reynolds and Wheldall 2007). In evaluating the evidence, the US Department of Education review noted that of an extensive 105 studies on Reading Recovery, only four studies were randomized controlled experiments and therefore met its "What Works Clearing House evidence standards and eligibility screens" (WWC, December 2008). However, this could also equally apply to synthetic phonics programs as there have been considerably fewer "highest proof studies" of synthetic phonics than Reading Recovery. Also, critiques in the academic literature indicate that there are issues with the design and internal validity of the Clackmannanshire study (see, e.g., Ellis 2007).

The perceived failure of Reading Recovery evaluations to meet the standards demanded by "true experimental studies" highlights the problems associated with the distinction being made between theory and practice in contemporary discourses seeking to "scientifically" evaluate early reading programs as a "one best method" for national policy implementation. The current policy and professional discussions draw upon "scientific" positivistic and psychological discourses which place an emphasis upon the identification and measurement of apparently culturally neutral cognitive abilities related to the reading process. This in turn impacts upon the ability to identify and assess evidence from early reading programs because "culture" and related social processes associated with reading are not acknowledged. The public debates and the psychometrically based assessments of reading programs associated with accentuating "the one best method," therefore, do not recognize teaching early reading as a cultural practice.

In order to gain a greater understanding of the teaching of early reading as a cultural practice, it is possible to view the "wars" and debates over reading methods, which have been outlined in above, from a cultural history perspective. From this

perspective continuum of events and narratives surrounding reading debates can be seen in terms of an ongoing historical struggle over the social, cultural practices and interpretations associated with literacy and literacy practices. From this point of view, it is possible to argue that the legacy of the historical development of early reading as a concept and field of knowledge and bottom-up synthetic models in particular are inextricably linked to the autonomous model of literacy (Street 1993), which emphasizes the skills taking place in individual minds to decode text.

Problems and Difficulties

The ongoing "wars" over the teaching of reading have embedded the dichotomy of top-down model-based programs such as Reading Recovery versus bottom-up programs such as synthetic phonics and the evaluation of their effectiveness even more deeply within a cognitive and psychological based paradigm, grounded upon quantitative and experimental scientific-based approaches. This in turn has sustained the belief that it is possible to scientifically validate a particular essential program or "right method" of teaching reading. There has, therefore, been a renewed emphasis on nationally implementing the ideal early reading program, to standardize and govern the teaching of early reading. As this sense of the overriding need for a "one best" program and pedagogical approach develops, the gulf widens between the underpinning beliefs in these approaches regarding the role education should play in shaping the child's identity and participation as a literate individual within society.

Why, and how, synthetic phonics has come to dominate the teaching of early literacy in these countries and to the extent that it is currently funded and supported, as the "most effective" approach, is therefore a crucial question to ask given these conflicting positions. The discourses surrounding this debate can be seen as a "site of struggle" teaching of early reading in England as situated within a particular time and space in relation to a government-endorsed literacy policy and its related programs and pedagogies. The implementation of policies forged in this "site of struggle" has the potential to shape the way which professionals, parents, and the children they teach think about, view, and engage with early literacy. It therefore raises issues regarding the current positioning of early literacy acquisition within education and society.

The struggles for power between different discourses and associated lobby groups with their conflicting educational and social visions also have implications for the way in which early reading programs have been legislated for, funded, socially recognized, and enacted in educational settings and pedagogical approaches. For example, the political and commercial discourses associated with the recent rise of the use of commercial synthetic phonics resources in England in the last decade can be seen to be linked to reductions in government spending and an increasing privitization of literacy resources throughout this period, which have been increasingly driven by strong neoconservative views on education held within the Conservative Party. The rhetoric concerning "efficacy," "performativity," and "market-

driven" economies over the past three decades has also been directly linked to the influence of neoliberalism on literacy-related educational policies (see, e.g., Comber et al. 1998).

We also, however, need to consider how the recent increasingly dominant perceptions of these approaches to early reading as dualistic, antagonistic, and the ensuing ultimate dominance of synthetic phonics can be linked to the way in which the prevalence of a neoliberal ethos has changed the "politics of the social" with the displacement of previous values placed upon literacy acquisition and its place within education. The complex interaction of different agendas surrounding reading programs and reading difficulties have given rise to "commonsense" assumptions about the links between improving reading and literacy to serve the needs of the economy. The politics surrounding the teaching of reading have, therefore, endorsed the rhetoric of efficacy, performativity, and a market-driven need to improve literacy.

From this perspective the relationships and alliances that have been forming and reforming in early literacy education over the past two decades have also challenged previous understandings and ethics in early literacy education. For example, political and financial support by the Conservative Party for the uptake of synthetic phonics based programmes in the United Kingdom, has challenged the hitherto accepted assumption that professional judgement should be prioritised over programmed instruction and commercial interests. Drawing on Nikolas Rose's explanation of Foucault's notion of governmentality (Rose 1999, pp. 20–28), these new relationships of ethics, power, and the redefinition of professional culture in early literacy education can be viewed as governing the professional practice of reading teachers through a "code of conduct" related to particular reading programs, techniques, and strategies for particular neoconservative and neoliberal objectives.

Future Directions

To move away from the antagonistic and entrenched dualism embedded in the debates over reading, we may need to ask different questions such as "what underpins, drives, and accelerates the phonics versus whole language dualism and associated funding battles related to the teaching of early reading?" These questions highlight and problematize the assumption that the advantages and disadvantages of a particular pedagogical approach and resulting literacy knowledge can be recognized.

In order to dig deeper into the historical narratives currently woven around whole language and phonics based approaches, there is a need to examine more deeply the links between these narratives and the ascendency of neoliberalism during the 1980s and 1990s. In particular we need to examine the links between the emphasis on "new public management" and the way it has introduced a "new mode of regulation and form of governmentality" and "replaced fundamentally different premises at the level of political and economic theory, as well as at the level of philosophical assumption" (Olssen and Peters 2005, p. 314). Drawing upon a cultural history

perspective, and a Foucauldian analysis of neoliberalism, the central assumptions linked to the rise of neoliberalism during this period can be seen to be an emphasis upon the use of markets as a new technology to control and enhance performance in the public sector (Olssen and Peters 2005).

Neoliberalism deprioritizes locally derived professional knowledge gained at a particular point in time within specific individual interactions and educational settings. This is because under neoliberalism governmentality is achieved through the establishment of managerialism and top-down line management chains. This form of management favored under neoliberalism inserts a "top-down" line of management and control, which undercuts collegial, professional knowledge and autonomy (Olssen and Peters 2005, p. 234). Neoliberal educational literacy policy initiatives will, therefore, tend to support the uptake of a centralized structured reading programs. They will also favor certain programs over others where methods and pedagogies vary in relation to their underpinning notions of professional autonomy. Given this, neoliberal literacy education policies will naturally advantage phonics and in particular synthetic phonics-based programs over teacher-led whole language programs such as Reading Recovery.

In this political environment, phonics programs are able to dominate over whole language approaches because they are perceived to have a "traditional" emphasis on sequentially presented logical and rationally organized skills rather than a "progressive" child-centered, experiential, and interactive engagement with learning to decode text. Thus synthetic phonics approaches to early literacy fit a neoconservative "traditional" view of knowledge and the curriculum. They also fulfill a neoliberal agenda for rationality emphasis upon a centrally controlled model of line managed, delivery. Whole language programs such as Reading Recovery will be disadvantaged, despite its apparent centrally structured nature and format, because it is founded on an epistemology and view of reading development which necessitates and prioritizes professional control and literacy educator autonomy to make decisions dependent on individual circumstances, literacy problems, and understandings during individualized one-to-one instruction.

The current emphasis on depoliticization, individualism, and financialization is central to the way the "reading wars" have been enacted and situated in public debates and professional discourses surrounding the reading debates and the identification of the "one best" reading program. The impact of these underpinning ideals embodied within neoliberalism can be seen in the increasing emergence of de-professionalization and the commodification of early literacy teaching and programs.

An international domination of neoliberal-based literacy policies and curricula also has the potential to accentuate what Patti Lather calls the "quantitative reductionism" that follows the "metric mania" promoted by neoliberalism:

> Neoliberalism LOVES quantitative reductionism. In the realm of public policy a kind of "metric mania" disallows what cannot easily be counted . . . in a way that profoundly shapes what counts as science. We have only to look at how federal efforts toward "scientific research in education" . . . have produced an era crushed by demands for more "evidence

based" research under some "gold standard" where "evidence" is defined very narrowly indeed.

<div align="right">(Lather 2012, p. 1023)</div>

A continuing prevalence of quantitative reductionism in conjunction with strong neoliberal policies would provide even greater support for early reading programs with a reductive measurable "scientific approach" to the world. This opens up questions regarding the way in which such a discourse would move the reading debate still further toward an every more extreme view of the bottom-up model of reading. Moving to such a position in the debates over how we teach reading would lead to an even deeper emphasis upon literacy programs and approaches which focus upon teaching reading through a skills-based and technique-oriented methods. It would also encourage an increased focus upon individual children's internal cognitive functions. This view stands in stark contrast to a view of literacy as a social practice rooted in cultural, socioeconomic differences as it has been reconceptualized with the emergence of "New Literacy Studies," "critical literacy," and socioculturally related views of literacy and reading practices in recent decades.

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Part III

Living Literacies: Social and Cultural Experience

Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth

Jabari Mahiri

Abstract

Millennials (people born shortly after the mid-1970s) engage in reading and writing texts in way that reflect key shifts in the forms and functions of literacy. Often referred to as the "global generation," their meaning making and meaning producing practices represent shifts are from a static concept of "literacy" to a dynamic one of "multiple literacies." This chapter delineates a number of considerations regarding these shifts in literacy practices. It shows how literacy scholars have significantly revised conceptions of literacy since the rise of the Internet and the increase in use of digital texts and tools. It also shows how scholars have analyzed the rise of hip-hop culture on the shifts in literacy practices of global youth. Finally, it explores some of the challenges for future literacy research on multiple literacies as reading and writing are increasingly mediated digitally.

Contents

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From Literacy to Literacies

A period of approximately 40 years from the mid-1970s through 2015 frames this chapter's discussion of literacy practices in the lives of global youth. It reaches back to the 1970s to connect the emergence of two intertwining forces that have significantly influenced the literacy practices and perspectives of youth and young adults throughout the world – the rise of the Internet and the rise of global hip-hop culture. Young people born shortly after the mid-1970s have been described as the "millennial" generation (Strauss and Howe 2000). Also called the global generation, millennials are projected to surpass baby boomers in 2015 as the largest living generation in the USA according the Pew Research Center (Fry 2015). Due to the Internet and other technological influences as well as influences from hip-hop culture, this generation and the postmillennial generation that followed it reflect a distinct shift in the forms and functions of literacy – a shift from a static concept of literacy to a dynamic one of multiple literacies. This chapter delineates a number of considerations regarding this shift. First, it describes conceptions of literacy prior to the millennial generation and how literacy scholars have significantly revised these conceptions in the 1980s. It further shows how other scholars built upon these reconceptualizations up to the turn of the century. Then, it shows how these developments too have been transformed by scholarship in this century. Finally, it addresses some of the challenges and future directions for research on literacy practices of global youth as they turn from reading the world on pages to viewing and participating in it on-screen.

Early Developments

Earlier theories of writing and literacy as decontextualized skills that have pervasive cognitive consequences substantially different from orality were put forth by scholars like Goody and Watt (1963), Olsen (1977), and Ong (1982). Olsen's (1977) claim in this regard was that "The faculty of language stands at the center of our conception of mankind; speech makes us human and literacy makes us civilized" (p. 257). In the 1980s, this cognitive consequences model of literacy was challenged and transformed by a number of scholars like Tannen (1980), Kochman (1981), Scribner and Cole (1991), Heath (1983), Street (1984), Shuman (1986), Milroy (1987), Saville-Troike (1989), and others through their ethnographic studies of actual literacy practices in various social contexts. For example, Shuman (1986) noted, "For the most part, research on literacy from each disciplinary perspective has challenged rather than confirmed a sharp distinction between oral and written communication" (p. 184). Scribner and Cole's (1991) extensive ethnographic study intricately delineated a conception of literacy as a set of socially organized practices whose nature determines the kinds of skills actually associated with literacy in specific contexts.

Heath (1983) provided another compelling example of an ethnographic study that described a range of literacy events and practices of different participants acting together in social situations. She explored the language socialization of children in two communities in the Piedmont Carolinas in the USA that she called Trackton and Roadville and compared these processes in conjunction with a third community of townspeople. Among other things, she found very different literacy events occurring that had different functions and different social meanings within the three communities based upon distinct and culturally specific ways of making and receiving meaning in a variety of textual mediums. Extending the reconceptions of literacy that were emerging from various ethnographic studies, Street (1984) argued that earlier theories claiming that literacy was a universal and decontextualized set of skills that did not change significantly from one social setting to another reflected an "autonomous model" that was severely limited for understanding actual literacy practices. He put forth an "ideological model" as an alternative framework for understanding literacy in terms of concrete social practices embedded in and given meaning through different ideologies. He chose the term "ideological" to denote that these practices were aspects of power structures as well as of cultures. In further developing this framework, Street (1993) began to outline a "New Literacy Studies" approach to focus more comprehensively on how literacy is linked to social and cultural contexts. In this edited volume, Street brought together research from a variety of world cultures to investigate and demonstrate the different meanings and uses of literacy in different cultures and societies. This work globalized what Heath (1983) had done with local communities and families in one geographical region.

One early revision of the autonomous model of literacy was a "continuum model" that challenged the notion of a great divide between orality and written texts. Yet, this model also tended to reify "literacy in itself at the expense of recognition of its location in structures of power and ideology" (Street 1993, p. 4). Street cofounded a group of international scholars (see Gee 1990; Barton and Hamilton 1998; Barton et al. 1999; Pahl and Rowsell 2006; etc.) using Gee's (1990) label of the New Literacy Studies, who took the view that literacies were multiple rather than a monolithic concept and that they should be studied as variably and historically "situated" practices within social, cultural, economic, and political contexts. Additional scholarly contributions through to the turn of the century that were highly influenced by the paradigmatic shift reflected in New Literacy Studies perspectives are reviewed in the following section.

Late Twentieth-Century Developments

A wave of qualitative research and scholarly critique extending from or consistent with New Literacy Studies formulations began exploring and theorizing nonschool literacy practices in a wide range of sociocultural contexts like families (Cushman

1998; Purcell-Gates 1997; Taylor 1983; Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines 1988;), churches (Moss 1994), sports (Mahiri 1994), youth social and peer groups (Finders 1996; Willis 1990), neighborhood youth organizations (Heath and McLaughlin 1993), gangs (Conquergood 1991), rap music and spoken word (Mahiri 1996; Mahiri and Sablo 1996; Rose 1994), and transnational communities (Guerra 1998; Gutierrez 1997). This work documented and analyzed diverse practices of literacy and built additional, grounded theories and situated understandings of literacy and learning. For example, Cushman (1998) showed the rich repertoire of literacy practices that poor black women exhibit as they interact with societal institutions from which they need to get resources. Moss' (1994) work on black sermons delivered from full, partial, or no texts continued the complication of intersections between oral and written language. Mahiri (1994) described and assessed an array of spontaneous and adaptive literacy practices of preadolescent African American males linked to their involvement in a community sports program. Finders (1996) captured both visible and "hidden" literacies that girls use to construct personal identity and to maintain friendship groups, while Willis (1990) explored how traditional conceptions of symbolic creativity "have no real connection with most young people or their lives" (p. 1).

Guerra's (1998) transnational fieldwork with a Mexicano social network of several hundred people residing both in Chicago and in a rural *rancho* in Mexico further problematized notions of dichotomies between orality and literacy. His research indicated that both were highly overlapping linguistic (rhetorical) practices that resisted any clear characterization of fixed boundaries between them. Furthering this analysis, he used the literacy practices of one young woman in this social network to demonstrate her use of overlapping, situated literacies and a "nomadic consciousness" (shaped by continual physical and linguistic border crossings) to enact what he termed "transcultural repositioning" – a rhetorical ability to productively move back and forth between different languages, literacies, dialects, social settings, and ways of seeing and thinking (Guerra 1998). Transcultural repositioning elides the simplicity of dichotomous models of literacy and can be connected to Gutierrez et al. (1997) and the notion of a "third space" for language and literacy learning. Later, Lam (2004) utilized a slightly different third space metaphor in her research on the transnational discourse of Chinese youth to illuminate the nature of their reading and discussion of international comic books as a fundamental social practice linked to literacy learning and the transformation of their cultural identity. Here the third space was the site of new or emerging frames of reference and processes of signification afforded between cultures of transnational youth. Moving beyond discourses that position literacies as oppositional and hierarchical, these researchers posited a third space in which less distinction is placed on formal versus informal learning and more emphasis is placed on normalizing multiple pathways and literacies as learning resources. Interestingly, all of these studies or critiques acknowledged the contrast of their findings of complex and expansive practices of literacy to how little is known or utilized from these situated, sociocultural practices in schools and other societal institutions.

Digital Literacies of the Twenty-First Century: Significance for Global Youth

Beginning in the closing decades of the twentieth century and intensifying in the early decades of the twenty-first, scholars have explored the workings and implications of novel literacy practices connected to and often enabled through the Internet and other digital technologies. Their work reveals how millennial and postmillennial youth and young adults engage in and make sense of their worlds very differently from earlier generations. A key feature of this age is that digital media has greatly increased the mobility, interchangeability, and accessibility of texts and signs while magnifying and simplifying processes for their production and dissemination. Manovich (2001) described how earlier visual media eventually converged with (or were consumed by) digital technologies through the expanding capability of computers to translate all existing media into numerical data. The result was a "new media" that incorporated graphics, moving images, sounds, shapes, and other forms of texts into data that was computable and thereby interchangeable. These qualities allowed for new forms of authorial assemblage through remixing, sampling, and cutting and pasting of highly mutable and (through the Internet) highly accessible texts. It created what Miller (2004) termed a "gift economy" that supplies abundant textual raw materials that allow consumers of all kinds of literacy texts to easily become producers of them. Johnson (2005) argued that as these kinds of transformations in meaning making are taking place, "the culture is getting more intellectually demanding, not less" (p. 9). Gee (2003), in his analysis of how these transformations play out specifically in the domain of video games, noted that the theory of learning reflected in these digital environments actually "fits better with the modern, high-tech, global world today's children and teenagers live in than do the theories (and practices) of learning that they see in school" (p. 7).

In the opening decades of the twenty-first century, video games, text messages, Instagram, Snapchat, blogs, zines, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Vine, Google +, and many other Internet-based social networking sites mediate extensive, digitized experiences for almost all young people. According to the Pew Institute (2015), 92% of teens in the USA go online daily, mostly facilitated by mobile devices and especially smartphones to which more than 75% have access. Also, 71% of US teens use more than one social network site with Facebook (71%), Instagram (52%), and Snapchat (41%) being their top social media platforms (Pew Institute 2015). Worldwide, the number of Internet users has increased tenfold from the turn of the century to 2013 according to a 2014 report by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The same ITU report also indicated that in 2014 around 40% of the world's population had an Internet connection with the highest number (48.4%) being in Asia, while 21.8% resided in the Americas – North and South combined. Clearly, new media are more and more pervasive throughout the world, and, importantly, they have enabled "new literacies" (see also "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies" by Leander and Lewis; "▶ New Literacies, New Times: Developments in Literacy Studies" by Street; "▶ Literacies In and Out of School in the United States" by

Schultz and Hull, Vol. 2). According to Ito et al. (2010), "Today's youth may be engaging in negotiations over developing knowledge and identity, coming of age, and struggling for autonomy as did their predecessors, but they are doing this while the contexts for communication, friendship, play, and self-expression are being reconfigured through their engagement with new media" (p. 1).

A number of studies have attempted to understand how and what intellectual demands and literacy practices are utilized by youth in digital environments. For the studies in her edited volume, Alvermann (2002) broadened "the term *literacies* to include the performative, visual, aural, and semiotic understandings necessary for constructing and reconstructing print-and-nonprint-based texts" (p. viii). Chapters in this volume describe the new "attention" economy that is becoming increasingly pervasive; they portray literacies in the lives of people defined as millennial adolescents or "shape-shifting portfolio people"; and they argue that youth participation in digital technologies offers dramatically new ways of constructing meanings and identities.

An illuminating example of the some of these considerations was provided in a study by Fleetwood (2005). Her description and analysis of the production process for a narrative video about youth life in San Francisco's Mission District that was to be shot from the youth's perspective revealed provocative issues connected to practices of literacy and the creation and representation of identity through digital visual media. The question this study raised was "could this visual media be utilized by youth for "authentic" projections, or did the larger community and organizational context surrounding the use of this media inherently work to mainly racialize and contrive youth identity?" It was a question of could practices of literacy associated with visual media production work to transform rather than merely make youth perceptions conform to adult expectations. Fleetwood concludes that youth media production does provide possibilities for alternative representations of youth, but it does not resolve the complicated problems of youth being represented authentically. In attempting to apprehend more authentic youth practices and representations, some researchers have worked to counter characterizations of youth in mainstream media and political discourse as a "transitional" category, often marked as violent, or dangerous, or weird: "the devious computer hacker, the fast-talking rapper, the ultra-fashionable Japanese teenager teetering on platform heels. Youth in these incarnations personify a given society's deepest anxieties" (Maira and Soep 2005, p. xv). The ongoing work of these researchers attempts to capture and critique "the transnational imaginaries of youth culture" facilitated by the global reach of technology, but "always in dialectical tension with both national ideologies and local affiliations" (p. xxvi).

Another consideration for this period is its overlap and reciprocal influences with the hip-hop generation – youth around the world who utilize particular styles of music, language, dress, and other practices linked to hip-hop culture for core representations of meaning and identity. Other ongoing research on literacy practices and learning of youth outside of schools attempt to capture their authentic textual productions and symbolic representations at the intersection of new or alternative digital media and the local and global manifestations of hip-hop culture. Miller

(2004) demonstrated the cross-fertilizing connections between hip-hop and technology noting, for example, that rap artists were quickest to exploit digital samplers and sequencers when these and other technologies suited their cultural purposes. Much earlier, Rose (1994) had argued that "hip hop transforms stray technological parts intended for cultural and industrial trash heaps into sources of pleasure and power. These transformations have become a basis of digital imagination all over the world" (p. 22). Now, according to Rose, contemporary youth in the USA and globally are utilizing technological resources to sample, cut and paste, and remix multimedia and multimodal texts for replay in new configurations, just as hip-hop DJs reconfigure images, words, and sounds to play anew (see "▶ African American Literacies" by Richardson, Vol. 2). One example of the pervasive influences of hip-hop worldwide is that one of its icons, Kanye West, was selected for the cover of *Time* magazine's 2015 issue on the 100 most influential people. The article on him opened with lyrics from one of his raps entitled "Power":

> I'm living in that twenty-first century
> Doing something mean to it
> Do it better than anybody you ever seen do it...

Work by Mahiri and several collaborators (2007) is another example of research at the intersection of digital media and hip-hop culture. One of the originators of hip-hop, DJ Herc, claimed that it "has given young people a way to understand their world" (Quoted in Chang 2005, p. xi). It is widely considered to be a salient voice of contemporary youth – a voice that is electrified, digitized, and spoken through rappers' mikes, DJ music mixes, dance styles, and graffiti. The mic of the music DJ or the rap and spoken word MC is a potent symbol at the intersection of power and pleasure on hand inside this dynamic and comprehensive aspect of youth culture. The mic also marks the intersection and interaction of production and consumption of hip-hop texts and styles. This work documents and analyzes the wide-ranging practices of literacy inside hip-hop culture focused on how these practices are manifested on both sides of the mic by producers and consumers who are writing and reading the world though vibrant, provocative, music-centric lenses.

Challenges and Future Directions

Traditional conceptions of print-based literacy do not account for the richness and complexity of actual literacy practices in young people's lives enabled by new technologies that magnify and simplify access to and creation of multimodal texts. Similarly, traditional research processes (that intimately link to traditional conceptions of print-based literacy) are not well suited to capture these widely variable, highly changeable, temporal, and local acts of meaning making and identity construction (see "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies" by Kevin M. Leander and Cynthia Lewis, in this volume). The novel, diverse, and transient text production and

utilization we attempt to document, analyze, and publish are only realized long "after the fact" and thereby increase the possibility that the fact has significantly changed.

How do we bridge the generational divide between researchers and researched as well as teachers and those who are taught? If our students and informants are inhabitants of digital and virtual worlds, then how do we bridge the divides that distort our views of youth practices as they are filtered through our more static institutional structures and cultural models (Kress 2010)? For example, although the primacy of modes of meaning making and representation for youth has shifted from written texts to more dynamic and interactive visual, tactile, animated, and sonic texts, the primacy of modes for attempting to report these shifts seems not to be affected at all by these changes. A key challenge for the future will be to imagine and implement new ways to more accurately and authentically capture and reflect the significance of everyday literacy practices of youth through the very textual mediums they pervasively utilize.

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Literacies and Ethnolinguistic Diversity: Chicago

Marcia Farr

Abstract

Chicago is in many ways an archetypal U.S. city; it is now a global city, its traditional industrial economy having changed into an information and service-based economy. Since its inception Chicago has been linked to other places in the world through its varied population, making it notably multicultural and multilingual. Contemporary globalization processes intensify transnational links while exerting bi-directional pressures with notable implications for language and literacy. Increased transnational communication, especially via mass media like satellite television, facilitates exposure to varieties of English (e.g., African-American English in rap music). Yet global movements toward sameness simultaneously complement the marked differentiation of ethnic, class and other identities at local levels. Although historical studies of Chicago do not explicitly investigate language or literacy, such knowledge can be inferred from these studies. Most contemporary research on Chicago's ethnic communities likewise ignores language and literacy practices, including the distinct writing systems brought by recent immigrants. Recent ethnolinguistic research in Chicago, however, shows how people construct different facets of identities via a range of speech genres and literacy practices in both English and non-English languages and dialects. This research has focused on Mexican, Puerto Rican, Italian, Lithuanian, Greek, Swedish, Chinese, Japanese, African-American, African, Arabic, European-American (working class and middle class) populations. Future research could include Polish, Indian, Korean, Native American, Appalachian, and other Spanish-speaking and Asian communities, as well as the interaction among all these populations.

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| Keywords |

Ethnolinguistic identities • Multilingualism • Multiliteracies • Transnationalism • Chicago

Contents

Introduction

Chicago is in many ways an archetypal US city; it is now a global city, its traditional industrial economy having changed into an information- and service-based economy. As a global city, Chicago is linked to other places in the world economically, culturally, and linguistically. Since its inception, of course (see chapter on City Literacies in this volume by Gregory), Chicago has been linked to other places in the world through its large immigrant populations, but the rapid pace of more recent globalization processes, primarily in transportation and communication, has intensified these connections, along with the change in the economy. Such intensified globalization leads, in some metropolitan areas, to complex migrant communities comprised of populations from all over the world, a phenomenon labeled "superdiversity" (Blommaert and Rampton 2011). Although some neighborhoods in Chicago are comprised of heterogeneous populations (Conquergood 1992), in general, Chicago's neighborhoods are still ethnically based. Even most Mexicans and Puerto Ricans (the two largest Spanish-speaking groups in Chicago) live in generally separate areas, although the sheer number of Mexicans leads some to reside in other neighborhoods.

Contemporary globalization processes exert bidirectional pressures with notable implications for literacy. Increased transnational communication, especially via mass media like satellite television, facilitates the development of a global monoculture, e.g., among youth worldwide who emulate African American musical and verbal style, thus spreading English literacy in song lyrics (see chapter in this volume by Leander and Lewis). Yet global movements toward sameness simultaneously complement the marked differentiation of ethnic, class, and other identities at local levels. Research in Chicago communities (Farr 2004, 2005a), for example, has shown the resilience of ethnolinguistic identities as well as the languages and scripts that index them. Such ethnolinguistic identities encompass oral and written verbal styles commonly associated with various identities.

Identities, in fact, are inseparable from the verbal styles that characterize them: as people speak or write, they construct themselves as particular kinds of people with particular ethnic, racial, class, gender, religious, political, or other identities. Across Chicago's neighborhoods, many different languages are spoken, written, and read in both public and private contexts: in stores, businesses, schools, homes, community centers, religious congregations, and workplaces. Signs in these neighborhoods are in English, Spanish, Polish, Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Greek, Hindi, Russian, Korean, Thai, etc., indicating either the residential or the commercial presence of people who speak, read, and write those languages. The notable multiplicity of ethnolinguistic styles reaffirms Chicago's reputation as a vibrant, multicultural, and multilingual metropolitan area. The Chicago city government prints documents (e.g., for voting) in English and Spanish, as well as Russian, Chinese, Hindi, and other languages/ scripts, and its official website is now integrated with Google Translate to convert information into multiple languages.

Early Developments

Chicago always has been multicultural and multilingual (Holli and Jones 1995). Although historical studies of Chicago do not explicitly investigate language/literacy, such knowledge can be inferred. Chicago's earliest inhabitants, Miami and Illinois Native American tribes in villages on various waterways, called the area *Checagou* (where the wild onion grows). The European fur trade 1760–1800 profoundly changed local Indian cultures, resulting in cultural and linguistic loss as tribes merged into a pan-Indian culture. French and English were introduced by fur traders, the former notably including Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, a French- and African-descent Haitian considered as the founder of Chicago. Point du Sable undoubtedly spoke Haitian Creole and French, and probably Potawatomi, the Native American language of his wife (Cameron 2006). Many French fur traders married Native American women, resulting in cultural and linguistic mixtures among both Indians and whites. "Most white traders... blended into the pan-Indian culture developing in the Great Lakes region, learning Ojibway, the *lingua franca* of the trade, as their Indian counterparts learned a French *patois*" (Peterson 1995, p. 24). The fur trade probably utilized not only oral language but also writing, perhaps with the French alphabet.

Another major change occurred when Yankee entrepreneurs from the East, notably John Jacob Astor and his American Fur Company, monopolized the region between 1811 and 1834. During this period, Chicago was comprised entirely of "middlemen traders and their employees – clerks, *voyageurs*, and *engagés* of French, British, American, Indian, and mixed extraction" (Peterson 1995. p. 25). Yankees, Southerners from Virginia, French-Indian *métis* (of mixed race), and Indians shocked newly arrived Easterners by socializing together in this frontier space, dancing and drinking to French fiddles. Clearly, socializing together required

multilingualism involving French, English, and Native American languages, probably Ojibway. Moreover, the trading business clearly required not only the use of all these languages but commercial literacy as well, at least in English, probably in French, and, using the French or English alphabet, possibly in Ojibway. After Chicago became an incorporated city in 1833, Easterners continued to arrive, while most French, French-Indian *métis*, and Indians, faced with Anglo-Saxon control and attitudes of superiority, moved westward, the Indians having been coerced into signing a treaty that gave up their lands in return for acreage beyond the Mississippi. The fact that Indians signed a treaty may indicate some literacy, although what "signing" meant – a mark indicating agreement or a written name – is unclear.

From the 1830s onward, Eastern businessmen promoted the city as a site for self-making and ambition (Spears 2005, p. 8), and rapid population growth ensued throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In addition to Easterners, the city attracted many migrants from the rural and small-town Midwest, immigrants from Europe, and Southern African Americans. Although the effort to establish Chicago as a cosmopolitan center both of the Midwest and the nation was led by "the city's upper- and middle-class elites" (Spears 2005, p. xv), this vision was shared by the migrants who came to Chicago with hopes of social and economic mobility. Between 1860 and 1890, Chicago grew from 100,000 to 1 million residents, three quarters of whom were foreign-born. All these migrants provided labor for Chicago's rapidly expanding industrialization. A rare publication about language in early twentieth-century Chicago describes the city as "an unparalleled Babel of foreign tongues" (Buck 1903, as quoted in Cameron 2006, p. 114). Buck assumes that English is "spoken by nearly the whole population" (Buck 1903, p. 8), which numbered 1.7 million in 1900. German, spoken by 500,000 people, was the most dominant non-English language in the city, followed by Polish, Swedish, Bohemian, Norwegian and Yiddish, Dutch, Italian, Danish, French, Gaelic, Serbo-Croatian, Slovakian, and Lithuanian, all of which had at least 10,000 speakers (Cameron 2006). Print forms of these languages also circulated, primarily as newspapers, e.g., in German (Holli 1995; Kloss 1998[1977]) and Lithuanian (Markelis 2004).

Southern African Americans began to settle on Chicago's Near West Side as early as the late 1860s, but large numbers, as part of the Great Migration to Northern cities, only occurred around World War I, and even more rapidly after World War II, settling primarily on the South Side of the city in an area informally called Bronzeville. This was the end of the "Blues Trail" that began in New Orleans and Mississippi, which fostered not only the Chicago blues but many other musical innovations. Thus African American verbal, including musical, styles became an important part of Chicago, and much of the South Side of the city, including both middle-class (Braden 1995) and working-class neighborhoods, remains the cultural heart of this repertoire of ethnolinguistic styles and literacies.

African Americans, along with Mexicans and Appalachian whites, were recruited to work in Chicago's industries after World War I restricted the supply of European immigrants to the city, the previous source of labor. Thus, in addition to African American English, Appalachian English was added to the city's ethnolinguistic

profile. The Mexicans brought Spanish, which in recent decades has emerged as a widespread second language to English, both in speech and print, with many Spanish-language newspapers, radio stations, and television channels.

After being recruited as labor around World War I, Mexicans began to arrive in larger numbers during the 1920s (Farr 2006), settling in three neighborhoods on the South and Southwest Side. They continued to arrive, and in dramatically larger numbers, after the immigration law of 1965 abandoned national origin quotas and provided for family reunification. Puerto Ricans became a noticeable presence during the 1950s and continued to grow in numbers through the 1960s, settling on the near Northwest Side of the city (Velazquez 2014). Although American citizens, they are the poorest Latino group in Chicago. Chicago's Cubans, in contrast, are largely middle-class, having fled Cuba after Castro's victory in 1957, leaving behind properties and businesses. In the decades after 1965, a wider variety of Latin American populations (notably Dominicans and Guatemalans) and many Asian populations filled the city's (and Cook County's) neighborhoods. Among the Spanish-speaking people, Mexicans are by far the most numerous. Thus, Mexican Spanish, though not the only Spanish variety in Chicago, is the dominant variety. Over one quarter of Chicago's population speak one or another of these Spanish varieties, and the younger generations speak a Latino variety of English that is as yet unstudied.

Chinese immigrants first migrated to Chicago from California in the wake of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, but significant numbers of Chinese did not arrive until after the Communist victory in China in the late 1940s, leading to the development of Chicago's first "Chinatown" on the near South Side of the city in the 1950s. These early immigrants were fairly homogeneous culturally and linguistically as primarily Cantonese-speaking peasants from southern China. After the end of the Vietnam war in 1975, however, another group of Chinese immigrants came to Chicago, this time largely entrepreneurial ethnic Chinese from Vietnam who spoke Cantonese and Mandarin, as well as Fukien, the Chinese province from which most of them originated. This group established a second "Chinatown" on the North Side of the city. Ling (2012) illustrates how the Chinese, since their earliest arrival in Chicago, maintained transnational networks. Clearly, bilingualism to which she refers occasionally and biliteracy are required for such transnationalism.

Currently, the Chinese in Chicago are quite heterogeneous, being comprised of Cantonese, Indo-Chinese, Taiwanese, mainland immigrants, American-born Chinese (referred to as ABCs), and racially mixed Chinese (Moy 1995, p. 408). The languages they speak are equally varied, as are their writing systems. Earlier Chinese immigrants maintain the traditional Chinese writing system, with its thousands of complex characters, whereas more recent immigrants from the mainland use the modern simplified system of Chinese characters developed in the People's Republic of China. Each group is intensely attached to its writing system not only for reasons of familiarity but also, importantly, for reasons of political identity (Rohsenow 2004).

Like the Chinese, Japanese immigrants were primarily peasant farmers who first migrated to California, but they arrived there later, during the 1880s, replacing

(as workers) the excluded Chinese. By the early 1900s, however, they too experienced discrimination of increasing intensity, peaking with their internment in camps during World War II. After leaving the camps, many relocated in cities further east such as Chicago, although many of those who relocated returned to the West Coast before 1960 (Osako 1995, p. 423). In contrast to stark anti-Japanese sentiments in California, Chicago was more open to Asian immigrants. Ultimately, many of this population became middle class and moved to the suburbs. A high percentage of the second generation intermarried with European Americans, perhaps "the first non-whites to merge biologically into the dominant American society" (Osako 1995, p. 432). Such intermarriage initially must involve some bilingualism and complex biliteracy, since Japanese writing involves three different scripts (Rogers 2005). It is unclear to what extent the Japanese language and writing system are maintained by Chicago-born or mixed-heritage Japanese. The demographics would suggest a shift to English among Japanese Americans, but Japanese literacy is maintained in Chicago by overseas Japanese who intend to return to Japan (Miller 2004).

Current Demographics: Ethnicity, Language, and Literacy

As with historical studies, other research on Chicago's ethnic communities is extensive, yet little of it explores language/literacy practices. Two studies illustrate transnationalism in the Chinese (Ling 2012) and Mexican (Bada 2014) communities, but do not investigate language/literacy per se. Three studies of Native Americans (Beck 2000; Fenelon 1998; Straus 1988) are not transnational, but provide background for language/literacy research in this population. Straus briefly describes Native American English in Chicago, Fenelon notes desire among younger Native Americans to learn ancestral languages, and Beck critiques the enforced loss of such languages and the "miseducation" of Native Americans.

Thus, we know more about ethnic diversity in Chicago than diversity in language or literacy practices, although many of the newer immigrant groups bring distinct writing systems with them. The 2010 US Census indicated the city to be about 45% white alone (with no other race listed), 32.9% African American alone, 28.9% Hispanic or Latino, and 5.5% Asian alone. In this scheme, Hispanics or Latinos may be of any race, so they also are included in applicable race categories. For example, white alone, not Hispanic or Latino, was 31.7%, indicating that about 13% of the total white alone percentage was Hispanic or Latino. People who listed two or more races were 2.7%.

The largest group of Asians in Chicago is from India, followed by Filipinos, then Chinese and Koreans, then Japanese, Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Thais (Ahne 1995, p. 483). These groups bring many different languages to Chicago, including at least one distinct variety of global English, Indian English. Moreover, many of these languages come with writing systems different from the alphabets used with English, Spanish, Russian, and other European languages. For example, Chinese languages, grouped into seven major dialects, are written with Chinese characters that are part ideographic and part phonetic, being based on syllables and morphemes (Rogers

2005). Two of these languages, Cantonese and Mandarin (the national standard taught in schools), are the primary Chinese languages in Chicago, and written Mandarin is used in newspapers, books (in bookstores and libraries), a Chinese Yellow Pages, and other media. Both languages are used on global television and radio and are taught in heritage language schools (Rohsenow 2004). Korean and Japanese, genetically related to each other, but not to Chinese, adapted Chinese characters for their own writing systems. Today, written Japanese uses three sets of symbols, and Korean uses an alphabet, Hankul, devised in the fifteenth century, although other forms of writing were already in use (Rogers 2005). Both of these written languages, along with written Thai, Hindi, Gujarati, and other literacies, appear in signs and in printed material in various neighborhoods in Chicago and its suburbs.

The 2013 American Community Survey of the US Census Bureau for the city of Chicago shows that slightly over a third of the population 5 years of age and older (35.8%) speak a language other than English at home. This percentage includes those who also speak English, but those students entering Chicago Public Schools who do not speak English are entitled to 3 years of bilingual education at the level at which they enter school. Of the non-English languages, which span the world, the numerically important ones (in the 2004 American Community Survey) are Spanish (71%), Polish (6.3%), Chinese languages (3.8%), other Asian languages (3.1%), Tagalog (2.3%), languages of India – primarily Gujarati and Hindi – (2.1%), French (including creoles) (1.7%), and Arabic (1.5%). Although these figures indicate a wide range of languages and writing systems, clearly the predominant non-English language in Chicago is Spanish, followed distantly, but significantly, by Polish, due to continuing immigration from Poland.

Spanish speakers, however, dominate these statistics, and roughly two thirds of the Spanish speakers are of Mexican origin. As already noted, Mexicans now move not only into traditional Mexican neighborhoods but also into Puerto Rican and other Spanish-speaking neighborhoods and into "white ethnic" and some African American neighborhoods. Thus, Spanish speakers can be found in almost all neighborhoods of the city, and they are a significant presence as well in the counties surrounding the city, north to the Wisconsin border, southeast to the Indiana border (and in Northwest Indiana), and to the west of the city. Although numerically remarkable, the current preponderance of Spanish speakers is similar to that of German speakers over a century ago throughout the Great Lakes states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Massive migrations of German speakers throughout the nineteenth century vastly outnumbered speakers of other languages, including English in some places (Trommler and McVeigh 1985).

Currently, Spanish speakers in Chicago are comprised (in order of population size) of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Guatemalans, Ecuadorians, Cubans, Colombians, Spaniards, Salvadorans, Hondurans, Peruvians, Dominicans, Argentineans, Nicaraguans, Chileans, Panamanians, Costa Ricans, Venezuelans, Bolivians, Uruguayans, and Paraguayans (Farr and Domínguez 2005). These groups speak different varieties of Spanish, and some of them may speak indigenous languages such as Purhépecha, Zapotec, or Quechua as well. Caribbean varieties of Spanish,

for example, Cuban or Puerto Rican, differ from Mexican Spanish phonologically, lexically, and in other ways. Caribbean speakers, for example, tend to aspirate s, as in *e'ta'* for *estas* (you are). No research has yet clarified if these varieties are blending in Chicago or if speakers of other varieties adopt features of the dominant Mexican Spanish.

Even within national varieties of Spanish, vernacular and regional dialects differ from standard popular Spanish, for example, the subgroup of rural Mexicans known as *rancheros* uses archaic features in their speech and writing (Farr 2005c, 2006). This vernacular dialect is denigrated by educated Mexicans, and Spanish teachers in Chicago, as uneducated and incorrect *españolranchereado* (ranch Spanish). For example, a woman who participates in a Catholic Charismatic prayer circle writes letters to God using some *ranchero* dialect features, including the rural vernacular *redames* instead of the standard *derrames* (pour out), as well as nonstandard spelling based on speech, as in v for b in *vautismo* (baptism) for *bautismo* (Guerra and Farr 2002). Two years of primary school in rural Mexico did not "correct" these features of the writer's oral language, but they did allow her to develop fluent religious literacy.

Historically, standard languages have rarely been used by immigrants to Chicago: Lithuanian (Markelis 2004) and Swedish (Isaacson 2004) immigrants, among others, spoke vernacular dialects of their respective languages, then learned standard varieties of these languages in Chicago in order to communicate with each other and to read ethnic newspapers. Moreover, as often happens with languages in contact (Winford 2003), language mixing occurs naturally. English words appear in both oral and written Spanish; one sign above a *cantina* (bar) in a Mexican neighborhood boasts, "*Tenemos* Via Satellite" (we have satellite TV). Code-switching between Spanish and English is common among younger-generation Mexican Americans in Chicago, as well as among Puerto Ricans. Although such "Spanglish" is often as denigrated as vernacular dialects are, in fact this is a common occurrence in all immigrant populations. In Chicago, for example, Greeks (Koliussi 2004) and Swedes (Isaacson 2004) used "Greeklish" and "Swinglish." In a common pattern of code-mixing, Swedes borrowed English words into Swedish and used them with Swedish conjunctions, articles, and suffixes, as in *storet* (the store) rather than the standard Swedish *handel* or *affär* (Isaacson 2004, p. 224).

Today a rich variety of dialects and languages are used in Chicago, including a Northern Cities English in which whites, but not African Americans, pronounce "the White Sox" as "the white sacks" (Cameron 2006). Morgan (2004) describes how African American vernacular is used aesthetically to construct gender identities in South Side neighborhoods of Chicago. Lindquist (2004) and Cho and Miller (2004) illustrate dialect diversity in the differing rhetorical styles used by Chicago's working- and middle-class white population. Thus, language varieties differ both in terms of structural features such as pronunciation and syntax and in their stylistic dimensions, what Hymes called "ways of speaking." Like ways of speaking, literacy practices also construct important aspects of identity, whether linked to class, race/ethnicity, gender, or other identities (such as religious or political). The next section

reviews studies of such identity construction in both speaking and literacy practices across a range of ethnic populations.

Major Contributions

Recent ethnolinguistic research in Chicago shows how people construct different facets of identities via a range of speech genres and literacy practices. Domínguez Barajas (2005, p. 77) shows how the use of proverbs constructs people in a Mexican transnational social network as having "sharp wit, facility of expression, and adherence to traditional values." The use of traditional Mexican proverbs not only affirms the solidarity of the network and approved social values, but it also distinguishes the individuals who use them as wise and knowledgeable. Farr (2005b) shows how Mexicans from a *ranchero* background construct themselves as independent individuals with a frank speech style that is direct, candid, and down-to-earth. Inasmuch as this speech style constructs the *ranchero* ideology of liberal individualism, it contrasts sharply with the communal identities attributed (stereotypically) to non-*ranchero* Indian Mexicans. Both studies of transnational families, then, show Mexicans constructing identities of personhood via sanctioned ways of speaking. Domínguez Barajas (2010) develops the implications of proverb use for literacy by showing how the complex cognitive processes required to correctly interpret a proverb used in context can be utilized in the teaching of writing. The link between proverbs and literacy goes back centuries, since proverbs are likely the oldest surviving texts of Western civilization (Pérez 1988).

Dorning et al. (2007) explores the cultural and linguistic translating, or "language brokering," of bilingual children in Mexican families. Such work to help their immigrant parents is seldom recognized as important (for the children), but this language/literacy practice is linked to higher reading scores in school and so should be encouraged. Christiansen (2015) also explores younger, bilingual Mexicans in Chicago. She shows how they use Facebook both to maintain transnational social networks and to index identities. As second-generation members of *ranchero* families, these young teenagers and adults play with language and several multivalent identities (*ranchero*, indigenous Mexican, transnational Mexican) on Facebook for particular rhetorical purposes. In doing so, they utilize various dialects of Spanish and English (and sometimes limited Purhépecha, the indigenous language of Michoacán). Dialects include popular and *ranchero* Spanish, as well as Chicago English (and sometimes features of African American English, primarily for style).

Lindquist (2001, 2004) also links oral rhetoric to literacy; she shows how class identities conflict when working-class students learn to write at the university, arguing that "the domain of argument itself is a site of class struggle" (Lindquist 2001, p. 262). The verbal style of academic argument is culturally and historically specific (Farr 1993), and using it as "real work" strikes those from working-class cultures as oddly privileged, especially since work for them is action oriented and productive, and verbal argument a matter of play, not work. Cho and Miller (2004)

similarly distinguish white working-class and middle-class verbal styles, showing how "working class families privilege personal storytelling in a way that middle class families do not" (Cho and Miller 2004, p. 99). They also note that working-class mothers co-narrating young children's experiences are more direct and forth-right than middle-class mothers. This direct verbal style of white working-class speakers evokes the *franqueza* of the rural Mexicans in Farr's study (Farr 2005b, 2006). Herrick's (2005) study of workplace communication at a factory in Chicago also shows how class differences emerge, and conflict, in literacy practices. While translating a brochure into Spanish to initiate new workers, Mexican workers of different class backgrounds (rural *ranchero* and urban educated) argue vehemently about whether to use "correct" Spanish or the language of the "people on the [factory] floor" (Herrick 2005, p. 372).

Moss (2004) shows how the verbal style of African American sermons (e.g., using the pronoun we rather than you and personal testimonials) constructs the minister as a humble member of the community, rather than one who is superior to it. The genre of sermons is particularly interesting, in that it seems to be both a speech and a literacy event: delivered orally, sermons are sometimes prepared in writing, and they are often based on written religious text. Reynolds (2004) also focuses on a religious genre: prayers at Ibo association meetings that coalesce the physical distance between Chicago and Nigeria. Here prayers are used both to build transnational solidarity and to distinguish the individual creating the prayer as verbally astute, like the user of proverbs in Domínguez Barajas' (2005, 2010) Mexican families. Finally, as discussed above, literacy practices that construct a religious identity are found in Guerra and Farr (2002) and Farr (2005c), which discuss how a Mexican woman constructs herself as authoritative both in her oral religious discourse and in the letters she writes to God as part of her Charismatic prayer circle. As she builds an ideology of personhood with her frank *ranchero* dialect of Mexican Spanish, she simultaneously creates a gendered, religious, and political identity.

Nardini (2004) analyzes Italian women's use of *bella figura* (literally, beautiful figure, or good impression) in their discourse at a social club. Here women use verbal art to not only perform in ways that are consonant with the Italian cultural construction of verbal and visual beauty but that also construct gender identities that are not submissive. Cohen (2005) also focuses on gender identities, but with literacy practices. She shows how second-generation Mexican high school girls experiment with both gender and ethnic identities on the Internet by participating in chat rooms and developing relationships online. Internet literacy allows these girls to try out possible selves from the safety of their homes: they "get out of the house" without disobeying parental restrictions that keep them, but not their brothers, at home.

Del Valle (2005) contrasts verbal practices in two Puerto Rican families, one that experiences more social and economic success than the other. The family that uses Spanish literacy regularly for religious and political purposes and emphasizes Puerto Rican oral traditions, e.g., *rosarios cantados* (sung rosaries), also achieves some upward mobility that involves specific work literacies. The other family, using

primarily English and leisure-time literacy (e.g., reading magazines), seems unable to move out of their precarious economic position. Although both families appear socioeconomically similar, one of them illustrates behaviors, values, and literacy practices of mainstream populations. Thus, facile generalizations about entire demographic groups are unwarranted, given that literacy practices constructing religious, political, and cultural identities can have positive effects in life trajectories. Velazquez (2014) examines Puerto Rican literacy in Chicago in three publications from the 1960s to the 1980s: *The Rican: A Journal of Contemporary Puerto Rican Thought*, *El Puertorriqueño*, and the newspapers of the Young Lords Organization. She shows how this print culture "provided venues for academic scholars to articulate their own research agendas, and also created spaces to examine and include the voices of the growing Puerto Rican diaspora, while tracing the intricate history of Puerto Ricans in the city" (Velazquez 2014, p. 88).

Many studies of ethnolinguistic diversity in Chicago bring transnational relations into sharp relief. Cohen describes how high school girls in Chicago who pretend to be *chilangos* (residents of Mexico City) in Internet chat rooms have their true identities discovered through "lexical and morphologic variations" (Cohen 2005, p. 196) in the Spanish that they write. Thus, people online recreate national, gender, and other identities solely through the available clues in literacy. This is yet another example of how literacy practices construct identity, although on this occasion inadvertently. Similarly, Hurtig (2005) shows how adult women construct gendered Mexican identities and thus resist assimilation through the pieces they write and publish in a locally produced magazine. Christiansen (2015) explores tensions over "degrees of Mexican-ness" and centrality in the network (those who are more "Mexican" are more central in the transnational network). These tensions play themselves out both in face-to-face interaction and in writing on Facebook, as the speakers/writers use different languages and dialects to construct various facets of their identities with each other.

Both Rohsenow (2004) and Markelis (2004) discuss political identities as constructed by literacy practices. Rohsenow (2004) shows transnational influences on literacy practices within Chicago's Chinese populations: earlier immigrants read and write the traditional Chinese script, refusing to use the simplified characters devised during the 1950s by the People's Republic of China, arguing that this move on the part of the then-new Communist government was a "deliberate attempt to cut off China's people from thousands of years of traditional Chinese culture and values" (Rohsenow 2004, p. 338). Markelis (2004) describes considerable efforts by Chicago Lithuanians to maintain their language, both oral and written, through Lithuanian parochial schools, mass media, and ethnic churches. Migrating in large numbers from 1881 to 1920, the Lithuanian press only ceased operating in Chicago in the late 1970s. Markelis explains: "Concerns about the possibility of linguistic annihilation were widespread among Lithuanian immigrants, who had experienced suppression of their language during the 42 years of the czarist press ban" (Markelis 2004, p. 282). Having been forced to use (and go to school in) Russian, and having secretly fought to use Lithuanian, Lithuanians in the diaspora refused to give it up when they had the freedom to speak and publish it freely. Lithuanian newspapers

published both in Chicago and Lithuania especially served to connect people in this transnational ethnic community by reporting on events and circulating in both places.

Thus, both historically and currently, ethnolinguistic practices in Chicago are inextricably linked to events, people, and institutions in their places of origin. Politics, educational practices, local linguistic characteristics, religious traditions, class relations, gender orders, and cultural values in the "homeland" do not determine, though they do influence, what happens in Chicago, and these, as well as other dimensions of life "back home," are necessary to understand transnational (and internal migrant) communities in Chicago. From its beginnings, ethnic diversity in Chicago implies both oral and written linguistic diversity. The world's languages and dialects, used alone or mixed with each other or English, create vibrant communities with a range of oral and written genres.

Problems and Difficulties

As is typical of new research directions, studies of ethnolinguistic diversity in Chicago explore the subject with a variety of approaches and findings. Unlike the early historical research on ethnic diversity in Chicago, which traced the historical trajectories of various populations in similar ways, language-focused research has yielded understandings as diverse as the populations and languages or dialects under study. Although united under the general framework of the ethnography of communication, some studies focus on oral genres such as sermons, prayers, proverbs, arguments, and personal narratives; others focus on written genres such as letters, articles in newspapers and magazines, books, workplace brochures and reports, and journal narratives, and yet others focus on how language, oral or written, constructs various aspects of identity. Eventually, a more theoretically focused set of studies across populations would be useful.

Future Research Directions

In addition to developing a more shared theoretical and content focus, future research could expand the range of populations studied. Although research has begun to describe the myriad ways in which people in Chicago use various languages in speaking, reading, and writing, this research does not include, e.g., Polish, Indian, Korean, and Native American (with the exception of Straus 1988) language/literacy practices, even though these populations have a notable presence in Chicago. Such studies could explore not only Chicago-based varieties of global languages and their accompanying literacies but also the varieties of English that have evolved among various groups in Chicago (e.g., Latino English, Indian English, etc.). Finally, studies that are limited to Chicago could be extended globally to include comparative sites: Does the *bella figura* of Italians in Chicago differ from that expressed in Italy? Does the English used by Ibos in Chicago differ in significant

ways from the African English used in Nigeria? This final example suggests yet another direction for future research: how much interaction is there among the various ethnolinguistic groups in Chicago, and does interaction lead to yet newer varieties of language and/or new, hybrid literacy practices? A number of chapters in this volume address these issues, notably those by Gregory, Vaish, and Juffermans and Abdelhay.

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Language Diversity and Indigenous Literacy in the Andes

Inge Sichra

Abstract

The Andes stretch out along the entire South American continent. The Andean space, as traditionally referred to in social studies, especially in relation to languages and cultures present there before the conquerors arrived, is restricted to the Incan Empire's sphere of influence (Cerrón-Palomino (Revista Andina 3:509–572, 1985)). Therefore, we herein refer to the region that spreads out from the south of Colombia to the north of Argentina and Chile and includes the coastal area, mountain range fringes, and the regions of high plateaus.

Our bibliographical review of literacy is limited to Andean languages that have managed to survive Spanish language rule, which seeks to maintain certain functional spaces in national societies. A commonly accepted notion is that indigenous languages had some sort of graphic or notational, albeit not alphabetical, system. They are then called illiterate; thus typified, this deficit could be hindering the acknowledgment of different writings, like textile writing or "other forms of textual expression and graphic representation" (López, L. E. (2001). Literacy and intercultural bilingual education in the Andes. In D. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The making of literate societies* (pp. 201–224). Oxford: Blackwell.).

Their speakers increasingly hoist Andean languages as symbols of ethnic and political vindication (Sichra, I. (2005). Trascendiendo o fortaleciendo el valor emblemático del quechua: identidad de la lengua en la ciudad de Cochabamba. In S. Coronel-Molina & L. Grabner-Coronel (Eds.), *Lenguas e identidades en los Andes: perspectivas ideológicas y culturales* (pp. 211–250). Quito: Abya Yala.) in an attempt to secure prestigious and public spheres for these languages (King, K. (1997). Indigenous politics and native language literacies: Recent shifts in

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bilingual education policy and practice in Ecuador. In N. Hornberger (Ed.), *Indigenous literacies in the Americas. Language planning from the bottom up* (pp. 267–283). Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.; López, L. E. (2001). Literacy and intercultural bilingual education in the Andes. In D. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.), *The making of literate societies* (pp. 201–224). Oxford: Blackwell.). From this perspective, literacy acquires or could acquire a driving role in the social participation of sectors traditionally marginalized by these countries' societies, i.e., it could be an empowerment mechanism for the individual, the community, and the group (Hornberger, N. (1997). Quechua literacy and empowerment in Peru. In N. Hornberger (Ed.), *Indigenous literacies in the Americas. Language planning from the bottom up* (pp. 3–16). Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.). Consequently, this chapter focuses on the literacy of languages characterized by their orality and seeks to contribute this volume on Language and Education, with a focus on Spanish literacy. As for the notion of literacy, we adhere to the ideological model (Street, B. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.) in which literacy comprises concrete social practices with certain purposes that depend on previous political and ideological factors. Learned events, that is, activities in which literacy plays a social role, can help us observe said practices (Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1998). *Local literacies. Reading and writing in one community*. London: Routledge.).

Keywords

Indigenous literacy • Language policy • Oral tradition • Andean history • Andean textiles

Contents

Early Developments

Early chroniclers, like the Jesuit Acosta in 1588, expressed their admiration for the "veritable language jungle" found by Spanish invaders upon their arrival in 1532 to the current Peruvian territory. Cieza de León in 1550 informed about a process, set by Inca Huayna Capac at the beginning of the fifteenth century, to spread Quechua as a unifying policy of the Incan Empire, which upheld and fostered pluridialectism and plurilingualism. Chroniclers thus record Quechua as a general language superimposed on so-called natural languages like Aimara, Puquina, and

"other languages they understand and speak and call hahuasimi, which means "language alongside the general one" (Monzón 1586/1965, 221). A century later, late chroniclers like Cobo were still recording a wealth of languages in the same town and valley (Cerrón-Palomino 1988).

This linguistic diversity was in part a consequence of the archipelago system, where settlements of a same community extended over several ecological floors, divulging languages and dialects in noncontinuous territories (Mannheim 1991). Likewise, the Incan policy of forcing Quechua speakers to migrate, the mitmaes, in order to secure newly conquered peoples and territories, accounted for linguistic diversity. Seemingly, during the Incan Empire, there were six linguistic families in the current Peruvian territory (Cerrón-Palomino 1988); Moya (1997) reports various languages, without mentioning their linguistic affiliation, in what today is Ecuador.

Another surprise extensively commented on by Spanish chroniclers, like the Jesuit José de Acosta or the monk Fray Martín de Murúa in the late sixteenth century, were the records or khipus that the vast empire's administration kept. For Blas de Valera in 1578, the system of knots in multicolored wool was read in the manner of a poetic text. Despite the abundance of studies on this topic, it has yet to be confirmed if khipus were in effect text documents, or accounting and mnemonic instruments (Ascher and Ascher 1997), apart from containing numerical knowledge and mathematical practices of the Incas (Urton 1997). In any case, the "readers" of this registry form the khipukamayuq, narrated historical feats and mythical stories that legitimized Incan power, although alphabetical decoding has not yet been proven. New studies are incorporating the contexts in which khipus were used, and the intervention of the khipukamayuq as producer and interpreter (Platt 1992a), into research on this communication system. In this same line, Salomon (2004a) evidenced use of khipus until the latter part of the past century in the Province of Huarochirí, Department of Lima, in Peru and the coexistence of khipus and writing as complementary records for at least four centuries. Icono-graphic texts of Andean abstract geometrical patterns on ceremonial jars called *qiru* and textiles were produced well into the sixteenth century as a form of resistance against colonial power by referring to the Incan past, paradoxically using forms of representation of the dominant Spanish culture (Hill and Mignolo 1994).

On the other hand, the historical confrontation between Spaniards and indigenous people had the book as its initial landmark. Several chronicles remark the encounter between Europeans and the last Inca in Cajamarca in 1534, where Inca Atahuallpa uttered his amazement at the object that bore God's word, the Bible. The Inca's anger and frustration with a book "that said nothing to him" have landmarked a scene that would later be mythologized and incorporated into Andean imagery as a trauma borne from the conquest: a symbol of subordination to the invader, of the Inca's death and the empire's defeat (Mac Cormack 1988). As instruments of death and punishment, writing and its bearers, paper, letters, memorials, and edicts fascinated and astounded for their unexplainable magic power and foretelling effects (Mignolo 1995). Platt (1992b) asserts that indigenous people granted shamanic powers to European alphabetic writing and found it analogous to their own experience of representing visual patterns, generated by hallucinogenic visions, in graphic designs for shamans to interpret.

At the outset of the conquest, with the First Lima Council in 1552, Quechua became the object of a new expansion when declared, along with Aimara and to a lesser degree with Puquina, a means for evangelization and colonial administration. The Third Lima Council in 1583 established evangelization in these languages and therefore printed – thus inaugurating the use of the press in Peru and South America – *Doctrina Cristiana* and *Confessionario* in 1584 and *Tercero Catecismo* a year later in a Quechua variety construed for an ample reach, as a written lingua franca. The first pieces of descriptive and interpretative work of linguistic leanings were produced: monumental lexical-grammatical studies for Quechua by Spanish missionaries like Domingo de Santo Tomás in 1560 and González Holguín in 1608 and for Aimara by Ludovico Bertonio in 1612. In this period of Quechua and Aimara studies, the professorships of the Lima Cathedral in 1551 and of San Marcos in 1579 were created, and writing received singular attention there.

With Bourbon reforms, specifically those of Charles III, beginning in 1770, a decisive policy to make Spanish a goal language was formulated "to achieve once and for all the extinction of the different languages used (. . .) so that only Spanish be spoken" (Rivarola 1990, 108). Thirteen years later, the Quechua professorship at the National University of San Marcos closed down. Constant indigenous uprisings between 1780 and 1782 were critical to the rigorous execution of this change in linguistic policy. As analyzed by Godenzzi (1995), the same indigenous aristocracy, the local rulers (*caciques*) and principals who began the process of independence from the Spanish crown, used only Spanish to summon anticolonial rebellion. In the nineteenth century, languages like Mochica, Culli, and Cholón in the Peruvian coast also disappeared. This led both to linguistic displacement in the Peruvian coastal area and northern sierra and to the unstoppable process of social and political marginalization; the new states' progressive neglect of the major indigenous languages, Quechua and Aimara, soon ensued.

Major Contributions

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, an indigenous assistant of the mestizo priest Francisco de Avila wrote the Huarochirí Quechua manuscript, the first compilation of Andean literature transcribed into a vernacular language (Taylor 1988). Forced evangelization and cult banning, the so-called extirpation of idolatries, as well as the rupture of the territorial organization that safeguarded indigenous cultural and religious practices, prompted the need to use writing in order to preserve memory (ibid). De Avila also advocated educating local rulers' children "so they would not conceal or protect native rites" (Glave 1990, 460). To educate these youngsters in Spanish language and culture and make of them intermediaries between the indigenous and the Spanish worlds, the Jesuits founded the schools for caciques (local rulers) in Cusco, Lima, and Quito.

Physical extermination of the indigenous intellectual class in power centers at the end of the eighteenth century brought about the cultural and linguistic decline of Quechua and Aimara. The only current sources belong to a period when Quechua

thrived, between the mid-sixteenth century and mid-seventeenth century, which Durston (2003, 210) calls "the golden era of written Quechua." These sources comprise Quechua texts, in Spanish books, by indigenous chroniclers. Among these we can mention Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala (*El Primer Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno* in 1615), Joan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Yamqui Salcamaygua (*Relación de antigüedades deste reyno del Perú* in 1613), mestizos like Inca Garcilaso de la Vega *(Comentarios Reales de los Incas* in 1609 and 1617), mestizo monks like Jesuit Blas de Valera (*Historia de los Incas* in 1596), and Cristóbal de Molina "El Cuzqueño" (*Ritos y Fábulas de los Incas* in 1574). To these, we can add Francisco de Avila's writings in Quechua, as mentioned above (*Tratado y relación de los errores, falsos dioses y otras supersticiones y ritos diabólicos en que vivían antiguamente los Indios de las Provincias de Huarochiri* in 1608). Poma de Ayala's work is specially worth mentioning, for it was written as letters to the King and included Quechua and Aimara texts that combined alphabetic writing with illustrations of festive and daily scenes. This exemplary piece of multiple literacies allowed the writer to express veiled meanings of resistance to and denunciation of the Spanish authority (Dedenbach-Salazar 2004).

These fragments, most of them in the lyric genre of wide circulation and importance during the Incan period due to its ceremonial and ritual role permeating all daily activities, are being studied to uncover their genuine historical and literary meanings and reproduced to be disseminated among today's readers (Murra and Adorno 1980; Sichra and Cáceres 1990). In contrast, historical sources that recover oral tradition do not record texts in prose, with the exception of two epic fragments in Fray Martín de Murúa's *History of the Origin and Royal Genealogy of the Inca Kings of Peru* in 1590, collected from khipukamayuq who had survived the Spanish invasion.

This cultured native literature, more widely known and studied (Beyersdorff 1986), was commissioned by the Crown or the Church and written by descendants of the indigenous nobility. Preceding this and only recently brought to light in the last two decades was an area of Quechua literature unknown until now (Taylor 1985; Itier 1991; Adelaar and Trigoso 1998; Durston 2003). It comprises ten documents from the era when Quechua flourished, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and includes judicial complaints written by notaries, and letters or petitions of indigenous authorship, in several cases by indigenous elite women. The documents were written in the Quechua variety propitiated by the Third Council of Lima aforementioned. After several centuries, it is extremely difficult to find this type of daily, spontaneous writing in neglected and isolated parish or archbishopric archives. Nevertheless, these documents are precious evidence that helps us understand how much social validity Quechua writing must have had among the indigenous population, reaching beyond legal and administrative ambits and becoming a means of communication among speakers. According to Itier (1991), this is proof that Quechua had the status of a written language.

Gradually, literary Quechua also began to be cultivated and its importance increased with the use of its Cusco variety, in which the colonizing minority of Spaniards and Native Americans produced religious and profane literature of

European leanings and promoted it as their own (Itier 1987). This literature includes theater plays with which the landholding elites, usurpers of indigenous lands, attempted to establish a Quechua literature that would legitimize them politically. Mannheim (1990) calls the revival of Spanish literary styles in Andean languages in the eighteenth century "the golden century of literary Quechua." Nonetheless, it generated an adverse process for Quechua as communication means because the mestizo and Native American culture made of the indigenous language a cult, rescuing its importance in the glorious Incan Empire rather than its significance as the language of a majority (Itier 1995). These plays, targeted to an erudite Native American audience, continued being cultivated until the republican period in the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, as an exception to this rule, Quechua Juan Wallparrimachi of Potosí, Bolivia, wrote Quechua poetry that has survived in part in popular culture as anonymous writings (Sichra and Cáceres 1990). For two centuries, Andean languages ceased to be the daily written means of indigenous users, and literary creation was cultivated through oral tradition in stories and songs regarded as folklore. In a parallel way, languages were gradually being confined to low-prestige social roles and functions.

Although the Summer Linguistic Institute's work beginning in the 1950s in the Amazonian and Andean regions sought to assimilate through evangelization (Stoll 1984), SLI linguists initiated a real pioneer work in systematizing indigenous languages and establishing them in writing. They also contributed to speakers' awareness of the feasibility of writing in their languages (Landaburu 1998). Therefore, the last third of the twentieth century reveals a profusion of linguistic descriptions and studies of languages and varieties of Quechua and Aimara, accompanied by a long debate on their alphabets that, despite bringing about their official status in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador in the 1980s, generated recurrent confrontations and questionings.

Work in Progress

The diversity of Andean languages began to be acknowledged and promoted as a consequence of currents of political confrontation with authoritarian regimes established from Ecuador to Argentina from the 1960s to the 80s in the twentieth century, as well as a result of the acceleration of the globalization phenomenon. Social and later ethnic vindication movements questioned the state's homogenizing and unifying nature and its aims at building nations based on one language and one culture.

A noticeable fact is that the efforts to generalize Quechua during the Incan regime and the first century of the Spanish colony, at the expense of regional and local languages and by displacing a language as major as Aimara, did not succeed in imposing a supra-regional variety. Aimara, the most extended language of the Aru family, is confined to the Peruvian-Bolivian high plateau; the other two languages of Aru family, Kauki and Jaqi Aru, are subsisting in central coastal Peru. Sichra (2009) register 12 million Quechua speakers and 2.5 million Aimara speakers, mostly

bilingual with Spanish. In the Bolivian high plateau, there still are some, albeit few, Chipaya speakers of the Arawak family. It is worth mentioning that the phenomenon of migration from the countryside to cities and capitals is transforming them into increasingly greater reproduction spaces of Andean cultures and languages in all Andean countries (Sichra 2009).

Another revelation in these times of activist indigenous organizations and peoples as interlocutors of the state in their struggle for juridical recognition and territorial rights is the reemergence of multiethnicity among peoples commonly subsumed under the term "Quechuas" (in Peru and Bolivia) or "Quichuas" (in Ecuador), as well as Aimaras, though to a lesser degree. Oral tradition, like myths, stories and songs, common law ("uses and customs"), records and maps in chronicles or judicial writings, community demarcation and land titles, and other oral and written documents are exhibited by communities ("aborigines" in Bolivia, peoples or "nationalities" in Ecuador) as historical evidence of collective identity and rights thereof derived. In the 1990s, all Andean constitutions were created or modified to incorporate adjectives like "pluriethnic" and "multilingual," formulations like "ethnic and cultural diversity," and terms like "ethnic groups," "nationalities," "indigenous peoples," and "native peoples." Amid this constellation, asserting one's belonging to indigenous peoples has ceased to be, necessarily, a stigma, as is seen in Bolivia, where indigenous self-identification increased between the 1992 and the 2001 censuses, although this percentage has decreased significantly in the census 2012.

Among the most notorious effects of these constitutional realignments are the educational reforms in the Andean region that seek to include indigenous languages in primary education in order to develop alphabetization and literacy through them (López 2001), under the term of bilingual intercultural education, indigenous education, or ethno-education. Since Vol. 5 of the Encyclopedia includes an article on this topic, no more details are given here. We will, however, trace evidence of the difficulty of erasing a long, painful history of discrimination toward everything that is indigenous, something that characterized – and still does – public schools (Oliart 2004). Nowadays, sustained by the relation of diglossia between Spanish and indigenous languages, prevalent in Andean societies despite constitutional and political changes, "writing and literacy are closely associated with the hegemonic language" (López 2001, 211).

Freire's pedagogical current (1970) in Latin America during the 1970s and 1980s set the tone that writing can be an instrument of political participation and permit self-assertion processes by reading reality. The aim of alphabetization, originally conceived in Spanish because it targeted the working population and the urban proletariat, was to raise awareness of a subordinate condition (in those times, of the popular sectors). From various sceneries and with the contribution of several actors – NGOs, indigenous intellectuals, rural union organizations, and universities – a rich vein of literacy in Andean languages have been developing along the line of "reading reality to write history" (Peresson et al. 1983, 152). The fact that oral history and life testimonies became crucial in this process of establishing literacy during the decades of de facto governments, political oppression, and social exclusion is not merely coincidental. To raise muted voices, so they narrate history

through testimonies not only updates historical awareness but "can also have a political role in the sense of wanting to influence on the present, transform the order of things, and project towards a different future" (Howard-Malverde 1999, 341).

Aimara-Spanish bilingual transcriptions of community history, indigenous and union struggles, indigenous leaders and schools, and oral tradition and life stories, collected with ethnographic methods and indigenous authorship, were propitiated and published in La Paz by the Andean Oral History Working Group *Taller de Historia Oral Andina*, THOA; the Institute of Social History in Bolivia *Instituto de Historia Social de Bolivia*, HISBOL; and the History Department of the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés. Participants included Aimara intellectuals and some descendants of local rulers' representatives who at the end of nineteenth century were recovering and securing original community lands from state plundering by obtaining old titles signed by the Spanish Crown. Focused on research-action, the Center for Andean Communication and Development *Centro de Comunicación y Desarrollo Andino* (CENDA) generated bilingual publications in Quechua and Spanish, collecting oral history and literature on peasant survival strategies in health, agricultural wisdom, community leadership, and union struggles. For both languages, publications were targeted to protagonists and indigenous authors, adults and children in rural areas, and urban mestizo readers.

For nearly 30 consecutive years now, CENDA has been editing the rural bilingual magazine CONOSUR *Ñawpaqman*. Its contents, relevant to peasant life and political and social movements in Cochabamba, Bolivia, are collected periodically from its own rural readers and returned to them as written oral discourse (Garcés 2005), "generating new styles and new usages, (with) the grand art of letting people feel that this is their language, that there is nothing artificial in it" (Albó 2001, 9). Stories collected for two decades and regularly published in the newspaper were turned into luxury editions, along with a lot of other material in indigenous language, for school libraries established by the Bolivian Educational Reform at the end of the nineties.

In Peru, the Andean Center for Education and Promotion (*Centro Andino de Educación y Promoción*, CADEP) publishes traditions and narrations in bilingual editions that recover – also as testimonial memory in recordings – contents related to myths, to the era of the *hacienda* and to cultural aspects. The Bartolomé de Las Casas Andean Regional Studies Centre in Cusco has propitiated several bilingual texts of oral history and oral literature.

In this line of literacy aimed at political empowering, there are diverse provincial experiences in Ecuador in producing material from community and individual histories of participation in struggles to recover lands occupied by hacienda owners and large landowners at the end of the 1960s and 1970s. Cayambe in the north of Quito, Chimborazo in the Central Sierra, and Cañar in the south were centers of peasant indigenous movements that stood out in their struggle to advance recognition of their rights to their own education, territory, organization, and political participation. These topics were made visible in bilingual texts collected and published by the Catholic University of Quito and the pre-graduate course in Andean Linguistics and Bilingual Education at the University of Cuenca.

We cannot fail to mention that, between the 1980s and 1990s, scholars, writers, Andean and foreign academicians in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru compiled oral tradition, stories, legends, riddles, and songs in diverse texts meant to be divulged, revaluate culture, foster studies, but, overall, to recover and fix writing so it would not disappear as oral patrimony. The Experimental Project for Bilingual Education in Puno, Peru, sponsored by the German Technical Cooperation produced oral literacy texts in Quechua and Aimara. In all these cases, authorship, although situated in a local or regional context, is anonymous (commonly known as popular cultural wealth).

Problems and Difficulties

Ironically, problems detected in indigenous literacy do not spring from not recognizing Andean languages and cultures, but from ideological notions embedded in governments' lack of political will to face the promotion of writing and literacy in indigenous languages as instruments of power in its broadest sense.

Before expounding on anything else, it is crucial to keep in mind the almost absolute weight granted everything related to Spanish literacy, writing, and alphabetization and promoted, of course, by a globalizing and developmentalist current underlining any current state policy. National societies voluntarily assume this sort of dogma, and hegemonic sectors transmit it to indigenous communities and individuals. Principles sustaining all types of international and national policies are therein crystallized and can be summarized as follows: Spanish alphabetization has intrinsic instrumental value in overcoming poverty; it is an unalienable right to participate as citizens and a requisite for democracy. This strongly internalized faith, materializing in development through written Spanish (writing ideology) and the consequential hierarchical differentiation between those who know how to write and those who do not, and has been well documented in several Quechua-speaking communities in Andean countries (Hornberger and King 1996; Zavala 2002; Salomon 2004b). Moreover, this current is spreading among indigenous organizations themselves and is being fostered as state policy even by governments of indigenous and popular orientation. Bolivia and Ecuador, among other countries in Latin America, introduced the Cuban alphabetization program in Spanish *Yo, sí puedo* for their adult illiterate population which is mostly found among monolinguals in indigenous languages. López and Hanemann (2009) present the state-of-the-art of bilingual intercultural alphabetization programs for youth and adults in seven countries.

Linguists, technicians in charge of education, and indigenous organizations themselves continue granting vast importance to problems concerning indigenous languages, alphabets, and graphic elements, yet invest no consideration to writing and literacy issues. Written indigenous language was probably important per se to exemplify its equality and its likelihood of leveling itself with the dominant language. On the other hand, the policy and task of public bilingual education has divulged a normative writing notion that hinders and distances written practice of a

daily nature (King 2001). In the same line, alphabetization in Andean languages in rural areas may undermine languages meant to be preserved and reassessed (Arnold and Yapita 2000; Vigil 2004). Relative to this "technical" vision of writing that, far from approaching the literacy level, keeps the alphabetization level, the vicious circle is closed by the evidence that alphabetic nonliteracy remains widespread and is a common focus of governmental and nongovernmental development projects in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador.

Nevertheless, there where the alphabetic issue is meant to be transcended in order to propitiate writing as a useful tool in daily life, efforts in adult education and in primary school education present literacy as the only means to create and transmit cultural knowledge, ignoring or nullifying the other own means of Andean languages and cultures (Howard-Malverde 1998). Indigenous cultures are cultures of orality that grant central value to spoken words; denying an articulation between orality and writing is denying this quality. If indigenous peoples have not appropriated writing, it is because it was introduced in communities without taking into account its relation to social practices extant in the community. Writing must cease to be a form of acculturation, and be incorporated into indigenous cultures' social practices, without implying a loss of value for the spoken word and these cultures' own writings. Writing's social value needs to be acknowledged; moreover, it should stop being understood as educational or technical value.

At the same time, this means recognizing the wealth Andean cultures exhibit in their diverse textual expressions. For example, Franquemont (1994, 362) wonders, "How could textiles represent information and ideas so effectively that the sophisticated Andean civilizations never felt the need to develop writing?" From this perspective, failing to understand the textile system condemns us to be perpetually illiterate in Andean thought. Inquiring into what was and is in art textile, pottery, and music furthers our understanding of the cultural, social, and political sense of the various textual practices. As Desrosiers (1994, 361) specifies, "textile techniques have probably constituted a means of resistance to acculturation, which would explain why numerous communities preserved it, and others, wishing to partake of a new system of social relations peculiar to urban life, suddenly abandoned it."

Future Directions

Retaking the specificity of the ideological model that "concentrates on the overlap and interaction of oral and literate modes rather than stressing a 'great divide'" (Street 1984: 3), this discussion leads to a couple of promising viewpoints for the future. On the one hand, literacy is understood and promoted based on indigenous languages themselves and on their own orality features. On the other, literacy modes (alphabetic, graphic, textile) are regarded as complementary.

Within school education, this integrated perspective of literacy would take into account the mutual influences among cultural practices, discourse practices, and writing practices in order to develop local, not universal, teaching and learning methods (Arnold and Yapita 2000). Child literacy in the community ambit, beyond

any writing norm and imposition of school contents and topics and with the most diverse writings, undoubtedly is the most promising path in the area. In this respect, experiences are a display of creativity and stylistic and graphic wealth, where social meaning competes with meanings granted by identity, affectivity, and self-esteem.

As for the development of indigenous language practice and functionality in academic spaces, the challenge implies overcoming the traditional narrative genres of stories, myths, and legends and penetrating into the genres of daily information, descriptions, arguments, etc. For this, however, the starting point would not be the Spanish discourse model, but rather the own discourse forms and resources of the languages of orality, such as metaphor, rhetorical resources, textual inference and ambiguity, and nonlinear argument development. In order to advance this task of respecting the structural particularity of orality, Calvo (1993) argues, from a pragmatic approach, for a grammar that can respond to the specificity of the orality of languages and in which, for example, the circular organization of narrative text can be described. Sichra (2011) refer to the recognition of the discourse resources of oral languages themselves to stimulate indigenous students' creativity in formal scholarly events, like producing academic texts in the master's degree in bilingual intercultural education at PROEIB Andes in Cochabamba, Bolivia. In this way, the pedagogic practice of writing texts in indigenous languages according to Spanish molds, a consequence of an imposed literacy, could begin to be overcome (Ivanic and Moss 1991). Paraphrasing these authors, the wager is to overcome literacy where the style and content range allowed are set by external social institutions *of the Spanish learned culture*, and instead promote a self-generated literacy stemming from peoples' own interests, needs, and purposes, where there is freedom to adopt the contents and styles of *oral indigenous cultures*. Elaborating, among others, academic, technical, and pedagogical texts *in* Quechua and Aimara, and not only *on* Quechua and Aimara languages and cultures, would further this trajectory (von Gleich 2004).

The fact that Andean cities and capitals are becoming indigenous, and that formal spaces, like higher education or the written mass media, are being conquered for the use of indigenous languages, will no doubt encourage biliteracy (Hornberger 1997) in accordance with the interculturality phenomenon registered in Latin American societies. Learned events in which two languages intervene will probably exceed monolingual events in indigenous languages, given the advance of bilingualism in cities and the expansion of Spanish to rural areas. Nonetheless, to give indigenous languages official status as was the case in the new Bolivian Constitution does not necessarily promote written practices and use of these languages for public purposes. On the other side, recent efforts of Peruvian regional and local governments to expand the oral and written use of indigenous languages in public places and formal domains are very successful and accepted by indigenous and nonindigenous populations.

In regard to the second viewpoint of writing complementarity, until not long ago, textiles were studied mostly as historical or modern products from three perspectives: firstly, by trying to understand the cognitive and cultural meaning of their structure and their techniques. Secondly, studies are done on textiles' semiological meaning and, related with it, their visual and cognitive grammar. Thirdly, textiles are

studied when used as clothes, for ritual purposes and as means to transmit collective memory.

Recently, attention is being drawn to the ability and practice of knitting textiles as a process of acquiring socially relevant knowledge (Crickmay 2002). It is interesting to see how, during their primary socialization stage, indigenous children learn, through the language of textiles, all the repertoire of textual practices cherished by the community, such as narrations, songs, music, etc. (Arnold and Yapita 2000). A very promising vein is for indigenous professionals to study this indigenous literacy from the perspective of its own users (Castillo 2005). Through indigenous pedagogy, this perspective recovers indigenous peoples' sociocultural awareness raising and socializing processes to produce, systematize, and spread their knowledge.

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Marleen Haboud: Language Policy and Education in the Andes. In Volume: Language Policy and Political Issues in Education

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Literacy and Multilingualism in Africa

Kasper Juffermans and Ashraf Abdelhay

Abstract

Literacy and multilingualism in Africa is approached here as a field of practice rather than a unified field of research. This field presents a crucial paradox: African contexts present some of the world's most diverse and vital multilingual situations but also feature in the world's poorest literacy rates and are routinely said to lack a literate tradition altogether. By reviewing Africa's script inventions this chapter offers counter-evidence for this deceptive view. Throughout Africa – from the Maghreb over West and Central Africa to the Horn of Africa – there have been significant indigenous script traditions and inventions, including Tifinagh, N'ko, Vai, Bamum and Ge'ez. In fact, some of the world's oldest known scripts (e.g. Egyptian hieroglyphs) are African scripts. The chapter further outlines two relatively young fields of practice and research that have begun to make major contributions to literacy and multilingualism in Africa: digital literacy and linguistic landscape. These fields share a common interest in the materiality of real language as opposed to idealized images of language and in local agency and creativity in the site of struggle that is language. Like digital language practices, linguistic landscapes constitute a domain for African written multilingualism that is not generally supported or monitored by African states. Nor does either field present simple continuities from colonially inherited language policies and ideologies, in the way that classrooms do. As spaces for writing par excellence linguistic landscapes and mobile phones promise to contribute in no minor way to the development of African language literacies and multilingualism in Africa.

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Preliminaries

A sufficient review of literacy and multilingualism in their full complexity in a continent as immensely and densely diverse as Africa is simply unachievable within the scope of an encyclopedic article if it were not for the relative marginality of Africa in global scholarship. With the exception of South Africa, Africa is not at the forefront of discussions in socio- and educational linguistics. This marginality, however, is greatly undeserved: African sociolinguistic realities are among the world's most complex and there is much to gain if it could inform literacy and multilingualism research more generally. In fact, this peripherality has recently been a productive source for a radical revision of some of the metropolitan epistemologies about multilingualism and literacy.

Literacy and multilingualism in Africa does not form a unified field of research and is approached here rather as a field of practice. As such this field presents a crucial paradox. African contexts present some of the most diverse, linguistically creative, and vital multilingual situations in the world Vigouroux and Mufwene (2008) but also feature in the world's poorest literacy rates and are routinely said to lack a literate tradition altogether. This chapter offers counter-evidence for this deceptive view by reviewing Africa's literacy traditions and script inventions but also points at problems and difficulties in African multilingualism and literacies. It then outlines two relatively young fields of practice and/or study that have begun to make major contributions to literacy and multilingualism in Africa: digital literacy and linguistic landscape.

Early Developments

"Widespread assumptions on literacy (or its absence) in Africa," Lüpke and Storch (2013, p. 65) argue, "turn out not to be true as soon as one looks beyond literacy in the formal education sector dominated by the official languages." Indeed, some literacies are more visible than others. The issue of (in)visibility should be kept in mind since it directs us to inspect the metadiscursive practices in and through which certain forms of literacy are made "visible" while others are "erased" altogether from history.

The development of literacy in Africa certainly predates the histories of European colonialism and Islamic conquest. Some of the world's oldest known scripts emerged in the Nile Valley and are indeed African scripts. These include the Egyptian hieroglyphs and the later Hieratic, Demotic, Coptic, Old Nubian, and Meroitic scripts. In the Horn of Africa Ge'ez developed since 500 BCE as the holy script of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and still is the common script for Amharic and Tigrinya in Ethiopia and Eritrea today. In the Maghreb, (Neo-)Tifinagh, revived from the ancient syllabic script of the Phoenician-Carthaginian Empire, is currently one of the three official scripts in Morocco. We can further add forms of proto-writing such as Nsibidi in southeast Nigeria and the Adinkra symbols of Ashanti in Ghana (see Abdelhay et al. 2014 for details and citations).

Notwithstanding these ancient literacy traditions, it was mainly the Christian and Islamic missions that developed vernacular literacies in the Roman and Arabic scripts associated with Christianity and Islam, respectively. These missionary views of literacy invested the Latin and Arabic script with specific cultural images of "modernity," "clarity," and "reason," as opposed to pre-Christian and pre-Islamic belief and knowledge systems. Paradoxically, at the same time the Latin script was promoted in the West as a "modernist," nonideological tool of written communication, Christian missionaries systematically imbued it with deep cultural meanings in Africa. The same practice was exercised by its relationally constituted rival Arabic script. Colonialism has made an impact on Africa's language and literacy ecology, however also in the indigenous creative reactions it triggered. In the colonial encounter, a series of indigenous writing systems emerged in nineteenth and twentieth century colonial West Africa (Dalby 1967 and later publications).

As the oldest and most well-known of the West African invented/indigenous scripts, the Vai syllabary was invented around 1830 by Momolu Duwalu Bukele of Jondu in western Liberia. It is this script that features in Scribner and Cole's (1981) classic study on the psychology of literacy. They remark: "The Vai are extremely proud of their writing system, and they know it distinguishes them from other tribal people in Liberia. They also know that from time to time foreign scholars have come to study the Vai script, and this attention has helped to bring the Vai status in the eyes of their countrymen." Other writing systems in the same region (from present-day Côte d'Ivoire to Guinea) emerged in the 1920s–1950s and include syllabaries for Mende, Bambara Masaba, Loma, Kpelle, and Bété and the Bassa Vah and N'ko alphabets. N'ko is a special case as this alphabet, modelled after Arabic in 1949 by Souleyman Kanté in Kankan, northeastern Guinea, has been disseminated beyond

the original Maninka speaking area in northeast Guinea, into Dyula and Bamanankan (Bambara) speaking communities in Côte d'Ivoire and southern Mali, respectively. The social movement of N'ko (meaning "I say") promotes N'ko as a script for the whole Manding cluster, as a harmonized literary koiné that unites Manding peoples across state borders and Anglo- and Francophone divides, and reconnects with their common, precolonial past (Oyler 2005; Wyrod 2008).

Elsewhere, in the Cameroonian Grassfields, the pictographic-syllabic scripts of Bamum and Bagam were devised around 1900. In the Horn of Africa, the Osmanya alphabet for Somali – one in a series of three – was devised around 1920. In the 1950s, the Summer Institute of Linguistics developed a script built around a sampling of the markings on livestock in western Sudan and eastern Chad, the so-called Zaghawa Beria or "camel" script. Several other scripts emerged around independence, including the Garay alphabet for Wolof, the Nwagu Aneke Igbo syllabary, and the Ba and Dita alphabets for Fula in Mali. More recently in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Mandombé script was invented by Wabeladio Payi of the Kimbanguist Church in 1978. Yet more recent are Nolence Mwangwego's alphabet for Malawian languages ("inaugurated" in 1997) and – both in Guinea – the Adlam script for Fula created by the Barry brothers of N'Zérékoré in 1987 and Yacouba Diakité's Miriden alphabet for Maninka created in 2011 (see Abdelhay et al. 2014 for details and citations).

These more recent African script inventions do not seem to have received much scholarly attention so far, and it remains to be seen if they will be able to acquire and maintain sustainable communities of users and generate diversified contexts for their use. With the exception of Vai and N'ko, the majority of these scripts have not proven to be very viable alternatives for the great imperial script traditions transplanted to Africa as part of European colonization and the spread of Islam. Most of the (West) African invented scripts are indeed "failed scripts" (Unseth 2011, p. 27). They were invented mostly not out of practical considerations given that other scripts were already available and locally rooted but out of ideological considerations, as "efforts to strengthen ethnic identities" (Unseth 2011, p. 23) or as proofs of dignity in the face of colonial humiliation. Scripts typically thrive through association with states and empires (consider Greek, Roman, Cyrillic, Chinese, or Devanagari but also Tifinagh and Ge'ez). These associations with state power are generally lacking or weak in the case of Africa's modern script inventions. Even N'ko, one of the most successful modern African scripts, remains subjected "to a kind of marginalization akin to that of a minority language" (Wyrod 2008, p. 31), i.e., unsupported by an infrastructure of formal education and broadcast media and left entirely in the informal sector.

Ajami is another case in point. Despite being (near to) invisible to educators, language planners, and development activists, a precolonial literacy tradition continues to be practiced throughout those areas that are in the sphere of influence of Islam. This writing tradition uses Arabic-based scripts for the writing of African languages. The historical role of the most influential Ajami scripts – for Swahili, Kanuri/Kanembu, Hausa, Fula, Soninke, and Wolof – is well documented (e.g., Lüpke and Bao-Diop 2014). Their contemporary weight is less well understood,

partly because of their survival in informal and religious contexts only and partly because of dominant ideologies of missionaries, language planners, and official bodies that insist on literacy in Roman scripts (Pasch 2008).

We can only conclude that Africa's literacy inventions are in fact rich and diverse, even if they often lacked and still lack support from governments to compete with Latin- and Arabic-based literacies in the public domain. The above discussion has shown that writing scripts in Africa are always "social scripts" and ordered in a way that narrates how different ideological forces and conflicts were inscribed in them.

Problems and Difficulties

With the exception of North Africa and only very few sub-Saharan countries the overwhelming majority of African populations are highly multilingual. In urban and rural areas alike, people speaking (and identifying with) three or more languages as part of their everyday lives are much more likely to be encountered than monolingual or even bilingual people. Multilingualism is so self-evident in much of Africa that the word "bilingual" tends to be reserved for people in command of two former colonial languages irrespective of their repertoire in African languages. Metrolingualism or sociolinguistic superdiversity as a phenomenon is hardly spectacular when compared to African sociolinguistic realities. Large parts of rural Africa are characterized by similar patterns of intense diversity sometimes thought to be exclusive for metropolitan areas (cf. Wang et al. 2014). Yet, the same lack of state support for African scripts and literacies observed above also applies to multilingualism. With some exceptions, African states do nothing substantial to support the learning and teaching of African languages. Yet African multilingualism thrives as nowhere else, despite a nearly complete lack of infrastructure supporting it. This is in stark contrast with the everyday monolingualism that prevails in Europe despite all the efforts and investments, at supranational level mostly, to promote multilingualism.

Whereas African multilingualism may serve as a positive model (Lüpke and Storch 2013), African formal education certainly cannot. Critiques of African education are abundant (e.g., Dumestre 2000) and – ironically – not rarely seen in connection with linguistic diversity. What appears as highly successful in informal domains is seen as the very problem in the formal education system built on European ideas about language and society. Many sub-Saharan states therefore settle for a postcolonial status quo in their national education systems, endorsing former colonial languages (English, French, Portuguese) as only or dominant languages of instruction at the cost of unacceptably low learning outcomes and high dropout rates. Decades of international arguments in favour of mother tongue education are passionately ignored. Time and again literacy programs and multilingual education policies fail to move beyond the mere rhetoric of policy texts (Omoniyi 2003; Stroud 2001). The debate on African languages in education may be fuelled by *fallacies* as Obanya (1999) points out, but given their sustainability and purchase over time and

across the continent, we should begin to suspect valid reasons for this structural resistance.

The following example is illustrative. Juffermans and Van Camp (2013) analyzed an English/Mandinka interpreted focus group discussion with parents, teachers, and community leaders on the question what local language should be used as medium of instruction once the new education policy would be implemented in their school in rural Gambia. The policy text prescribed that "during the first three years of basic education (grades 1–3), the medium of instruction will be in the predominant Gambian language of the area in which the child lives" (*Education Policy 2004–15*). Throughout the discussion the interviewees stated their support for the new education policy but collectively avoided choosing which language should be chosen, no matter how the interviewer phrased the question. The most obvious candidates would be Jola and Mandinka, two languages with a complex historical relationship. In not choosing the interviewees made a statement against compartmentalizing African multilingualism which they conceptualized in the singular as *moo fing kango* (black people's language, in Mandinka) as opposed to the researcher's plural conceptualization of *local languages* in English.

This example suggests that introducing local language(s) in Gambian schools should be done without determining what part of the local multilingual repertoire should be used as this would imply excluding other parts of that same local repertoire, formalizing existing inequalities in multilingual patterns, and essentializing relations between Gambian language communities. It further suggests that mother tongue education is a Eurocentric construct and that there are passionate reasons for keeping African multilingualism out of the formal education system. "The insistence on 'mother tongue education'," write Lüpke and Storch (2013, p. 273), "is harmful, because it creates attitudes and expectations that are not in line with the lived linguistic context, just as the insistence on the exclusive use of the colonial languages in formal contexts has." Asking a community to choose which of its languages should receive institutional support is like asking a mother to choose which of her children should be given new clothes. Makoni and Mashiri (2007) have argued in this respect that language planning in Africa best proceeds without a construct of language, or if that is too radical, with an African, flexible construct of language.

Major Contribution 1: African Digital Literacy

In October 2014 several news media headlined that there are now more mobile phones than people in the world. Figures from the UN's International Telecommunications Union (ITU) show that while access to fixed-line telephony has remained stable or even moderately declined (at 1.5–1.3%), access to mobile phones in Africa has risen spectacularly in the last decade: at the turn of the Millennium, only one in fifty Africans had access to a mobile phone (de Bruijn et al. 2009, p. 11), in 2005 this was one in eight, in 2008 one in three, in 2011 one in two, and in 2013 two in three. Several countries that ITU collects data for show figures of over 100% indicating

that on average people maintain more than one mobile phone line. Whereas many African countries (Eritrea, Burundi, Ethiopia, Madagascar) do rank low, third on this list, after Macau and Hong Kong, is Gabon with 214 mobile-cellular telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants. Several other African countries (e.g., Botswana, South Africa, Egypt, Ghana) are also above the 100 mark (www.ntu.int).

Mobile phones and smartphones with Internet connections introduce a broad range of possibilities for communication and social relations that bring about social changes and development. De Bruijn et al. (2009, p. 14) note that the mobile phone is "an instrument of power, capable of positive and negative outcomes like a double-edged sword. Even if evil, the mobile phone is perceived as a necessary evil – something that has become and should stay as part and parcel of the communication landscape of Africa and Africans rural and urban, at home and in the diaspora." They refer to mobile phones as "the new talking drums of Africa." Digital technologies are appropriated into local contexts and integrated into everyday life and make it easier to relate over distances and across towns, countries and continents, redefining centre-periphery relations in the process. Africanist scholarship, however, warns us to see this new connectivity as a naïve global village utopia counteracting all inequality and poverty (McIntosh 2010) or as an alternative for physical mobility and migration. Quite in contrary, Burrell (2009, p. 153) emphasizes, "the Internet has not transformed young Ghanaians' migratory impulses into the kinds of information practices often promoted by governments and development institutions. Instead, the Internet has provided new resources for seeking migration opportunities and increasing one's mobility."

Turning to literacy and multilingualism now, it has been noted that through texting and instant messaging mobile phones open up a niched domain of written communication that challenges and changes conventional spelling practices. In Europe, this has been cause for some consternation over falling standards and loss of verbal hygiene in writing. In Africa, in contrary, language scholars recognize mobile phones' potential to promote African language literacy from below, i.e., away from formal education and top-down language policy and planning.

Drawing on a corpus of text messages from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa, Deumert and Lexander (2013) note that writers draw on local as well as global linguistic resources within their multilingual repertoires to perform a range of emotional and romantic meanings. The examples they show clearly go beyond monolithic orthodoxies and the authors resisted the temptation to quantify their corpus in simplistic counts of codes. Instead, their analysis builds on the assumption that English and French are integrated into local ecologies of language as much as Nouchi, Wolof, and isiXhosa are and that contrasts are exploited to negotiate subtle differences in meaning as strategically relevant in, e.g., courtship discourse. Their quantitative analysis shows that in the Anglophone African countries (Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa) nonstandard spellings are more ubiquitous when compared to British and American text message corpora, both for globally attested texting abbreviations and for eye-dialect spellings. These nonstandard spelling features are creative word-play invested into impression management through "textual linguistic dexterity" – nimble-fingeredness and translanguaging

virtuosity on a small keyboard. In her study of ideologies surrounding text messaging among Giriama in urban Kenya, McIntosh (2010, p. 342) argues that rapid code-switching and condensed, abbreviated English "does not emerge simply from hurry" but are "means of 'showing off' that one is 'modern' (*ya kisasa*), 'developed,' 'fashionable,' 'Western,' 'dot com,' or a 'town boy.'" Interestingly, both Deumert and Lexander (2013) and McIntosh (2010) indicate that nonstandard or condensed orthography applies to the former colonial languages only: "African languages, on the other hand, are usually spelt out in full and the texts are appreciated by readers as being 'special' [indexing] sincerity and seriousness as well as respect" (Deumert and Lexander 2013, p. 541).

Using a reflexive ethnographic perspective in a study of mobile phone literacies in a post-apartheid township in South Africa, Velghe (2014) comments than many nonstandard features in text messaging are nonetheless norm-governed orthographic forms that require an (informal) learning trajectory. The textspeak she analyses is predominantly done in "global medialect" (McIntosh 2010) based on English but with localizing accents in Afrikaans and isiXhosa. Despite its hybrid and seemingly chaotic appearance, it is possible to make mistakes against the (unwritten) rules of Cape Town textspeak just as it is possible to make mistakes against the grammar of Standard English or Afrikaans: "one has to be as literate to read or write textspeak as to read or write standard English and one entering this new communicative environment has to become 'literate' in this new repertoire if one wants to be regarded as a participant" (p. 83).

The examples Velghe discusses are messages sent to her and represent a mix of English and Afrikaans but exclude instances of isiXhosa. This may be seen as evidence for the flexibility of the digital multilingual repertoire in function of the addressee. Exploring the digital repertoires of Senegalese on a diaspora web portal, Mc Laughlin (2014) similarly finds that Senegalese circumscribe their broader individual repertoires by limiting themselves to those linguistic resources in their repertoires that are shared by the community, i.e., French and urban Wolof. Linguistic resources not shared in the diverse community break through only minimally and are restricted to emblematic functions.

These varied studies on digital literacy practices suggest that mobile phones and the Internet carve out a new domain for multilingual writing in which African languages feature more prominently than ever before in predigital genres such as letter writing. In this digital space, a new register seems to be in formation. Their findings also suggest that this digital register of African multilingualism is quite pragmatic, making use not primarily of the ethnic languages but a flexible repertoire of the most widely shared linguistic resources circulating in the given context.

Major Contribution 2: African Linguistic Landscapes

A second field of practice holds similar opportunities for African multilingualism and literacy and the study of it – linguistic landscapes. Whereas digital literacy is new both as a phenomenon and as a field of study, linguistic landscaping is only new as a scientific methodology or field of study, the phenomenon being as old as writing

itself. Linguistic landscape refers to visible language or meaningful objects that mark the public space, comprising public notices, road signs, advertising billboards, shop signboards, graffiti, and any inscription or text in the built environment. Linguistic landscape studies opened up a new approach to multilingualism, enabled by the availability and affordability of digital cameras with practically limitless storage capacity. Early days linguistic landscape studies tended to be rather positivistic in the sense that it was primarily concerned with counting occurrences of different languages in a given multilingual space in order to measure linguistic diversity or assess the vitality of minority languages. However, the field quickly expanded to include broader semiotic, critical, and ethnographic concerns and methodologies.

Several studies of African linguistic landscapes have appeared and contributed to linguistic landscape research; at the same time linguistic landscapes have become typical ingredients of monographs on language and literacy in Africa (e.g., Higgins 2009). Lanza and Woldemariam (2014), for instance, analyze phenomena of language contact in the linguistic landscape and in educational materials against the background of the new policy of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia. This policy, with Eritrea and South Africa one of the most progressive policies for multilingualism in Africa, consists of decentralizing administrative powers to ethnically based regions and is meant to emancipate ethnic and linguistic minorities through changes in the medium of instruction at primary school, the media, and the linguistic landscape. In these domains, Amharic makes place for the respective regional languages. These planned changes in the status of Ethiopian languages are accompanied by rapid corpus planning for the hitherto practically unwritten regional languages, including script and orthography development (graphization) and the preparation of teaching materials.

Lanza and Woldemariam focus on two important regions – Tigray in the north and Oromia in the centre and south of the country. They find that signs with a regional focus are in Tigrinya/Oromo and those with a national focus are in Amharic, both often accompanied by English, "the de facto official second language." Trilingual signs or combinations of Amharic and Tigrinya/Oromo are rarer. They also find that the dominance of Amharic goes beyond the surface level of the signs but is also attested at a deeper, grammatical level: signs in Tigrinya/Oromo often follow an Amharic word order. Where noun phrases in spoken Tigrinya/Oromo are normally "left-headed" in the LL they are often "right-headed" as in Amharic or in English (compare *writing instrument* vs. *instrument writing*). Similar patterns were found in Tigrinya/Oromo school books. The researchers suggest that these contact phenomena point at the covert prestige of Amharic which for centuries was the language of literacy through Ge'ez (see above). Sign writers and authors/translators of the educational materials not only draw on their spoken language competence in the respective regional languages but also on their written language competence in Amharic (and English) in creating a new register for the regional languages. Such processes of enregisterment rescale regional languages and redefine their relation to the center. This process needs to be seen not only as straightforward emancipatory change from unwritten/private/informal into written/public/formal domains but also as change in the structure of the language itself and as change in their relation to Amharic on the one hand and the smaller unsponsored minority languages on the other hand.

Not focusing on official policy but on "spontaneous" development, Kasanga (2010) presents us evidence of the increasing visibility of little bits and pieces of "streetwise" English in public advertisements in "Francophone" Africa. Although marginal in the overall linguistic ecology of the Democratic Republic of Congo, English becomes increasingly salient in public display of creative local language practices. These intimations of English such as in cloned brand name "Katanga Fried Chicken" of a Lubumbashi fast-food restaurant serve as "attention-getters" as well as perform imagined global identities of sophistication and modernity rather than fill lexical gaps in the local multilingual ecology. Such performative branding is not only an act of self-styling identity display of the producers of these signs and services but equally implicates the users of these signs and services – thus representing a powerful marketing strategy to appeal to all those who desire sophisticated, modern, and upwardly mobile identities. Targeted largely at a non-English-knowing audience, these streetwise indexes of English are more about the idea of English in Congo than they are basic communicative signifiers.

In their study of commercial signage in Khayelitsha township in post-apartheid Cape Town, Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) argue for a material ethnographic and semiotic approach to linguistic landscaping and propose a theorization of space as constructed by local economies of literacy production. Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of distinction and his notions of taste of necessity and taste of luxury, they refer to public signage in sites of necessity and sites of luxury. Sites of luxury are economically advantaged spaces that are appropriated (with official authorisation) by well-resourced companies to advertise expensive products and services by means of professionally outsourced high-tech modes of literacy production. Sites of necessity on the other hand are lower in the economic hierarchy and predisposed towards inexpensive and more strictly local products and services for everyday needs by means of low-tech, locally available ("grassroots," in Blommaert 2008 sense) literacy materials. This distinction replaces the idea of top-down and bottom-up flows in the linguistic landscape by foregrounding social class rather than a flat public/private distinction. The different technological affordances of (top-down) luxury signage and (bottom-up) signage of necessity are consequential for the organization of multilingual and other semiotic resources in a sign and the construction of public sites themselves. When taken as "a resource for the study of social circulations of meaning in society" (Stroud and Mpendukana 2009, p. 380), African linguistic landscapes are powerful tools to interrogate discourses of social stratification and power, to read articulations of precarity and hope, and for African language literacies to enregister in the collapse of tastes of necessity and luxury in streetwise multilingual practices.

Future Directions

There are, to conclude, several parallels between these two otherwise disparate fields of study. For one, mobile phone companies in Africa are often among the most creative and resourced players in the linguistic landscape, and in their

advertising often draw on streetwise multilingual practices in which local and global literacy resources alike creatively break through and break with the hegemony of the colonial languages (compare Kasanga's creeping of English in Congo with the creeping of local languages in The Gambia described in Juffermans 2012). The fields of linguistic landscape and digital literacy share a common interest in at least:

- The materiality of real language as opposed to idealized images of language
- Multilingualism and the broader semiotics of linguistic and cultural diversity
- Local agency and creativity in language practices
- Language as a "site of struggle" (Stroud 2001) for justice, inclusion, upward mobility, and to have one's voice heard
- Globalization, technology, and social and linguistic change

Illustrative for all these points, Jørgensen's concluding words in a paper on the subversive linguistic landscapes of graffiti still makes sense if graffiti is replaced by texting: "Currently graffiti presents us with a window to future linguistic norms [. . .]. The most noteworthy aspect of that is the dissolution of boundaries between languages in the practical linguistic behaviour of graffiti writers" (2008, pp. 251–2).

Like digital language practices, linguistic landscapes constitute a domain for African written multilingualism that is not generally monitored by or dependent on the support of African states. Nor do either domain present simple continuities from colonially inherited language policies or ideologies, in the way that classrooms do. With some exceptions, African states seemingly admit to being paralyzed or in a state of immovability with regards to issues of language education and multilingual citizenship. If formal schooling is judged to be foreign to Africa, linguistic landscapes and mobile phones are locally appropriated or appropriately relocalized in African contexts. And as spaces for semi-public/private texts and writing *par excellence*, linguistic landscapes and text messaging are likely to contribute to the development of African language literacies (whether this be standardization or something else). Finally, both digital writing and linguistic landscapes are shaping what Higgins (2009) refers to as a "new wor(l)d order," an order characterized by a simultaneity of reference points – local and global – and multivoiced meanings in multilingual practices. With her we may ask how long it will take for language in education to follow suit and open up to these more dynamic and more African language practices.

Cross-References

▶ Language, Literacy, and Knowledge Production in Africa
▶ Literacies In and Out of School in South Africa

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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Literacies In and Out of School in South Africa

Pippa Stein and Mastin Prinsloo

Abstract

Ideas about literacy have been shaped in South Africa by historical processes including colonial conquest, missionary activity and race segregation, marking lines of inclusion and exclusion, that constructed religious, racial, cultural and educational/intellectual divides. Post-apartheid democratic governmental processes have struggled with these legacies, as concerns with human rights, social justice and language equity have encountered the inequalities of the past and the developmental challenges of the present. One sign of these uneven struggles is the narrow way literacy is presented in contemporary school literacy and adult education debates since the 1990s, as a narrow skill to do with coding and decoding skills, reflecting the endurance of an autonomous model of literacy in current conceptions of literacy. This view of literacy as constituting sets of decontextualized, technical and yet socially transformative skills permeates early and secondary schooling, skills-based approaches to university education and to 'basic skilling' strategies in adult literacy campaigns. In contrast, social historians and literacy studies researchers in adult education, early childhood literacy and academic literacies in university education have begun to examine more ethnographic, varied and situated understandings of literacy as social practice, and developed a critical body of literature on the complex and varied dynamics around literacy practices in varying settings, showing literacy learning to be part of much broader chains of sustainability and social development. They show that the divide between literacy and illiteracy is not a clear-cut one amongst

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the unschooled, that literacy does not equate simply with powerlessness or silence, but also show the powers of inclusive and developmental literacy-linked social activities. Literacy development in schooling continues to be intertwined and complicated by the multilingual nature of the South African polity and the hegemonic weight of standard English literacy in educational contexts, perpetuating historical inequalities in complex and problematic ways. Further research in early childhood education and around questions of multilingualism in education are still sorely needed and are sites of contemporary research.

Contents

Introduction

> I imagine another universe, not beyond our reach, in which [we] can jointly affirm our common identities (even as the warring singularists howl at the gate). We have to make sure, above all, that our mind is not halved by a horizon. Amartya Sen (2006) *Identity and Violence*

Literacy learning in South Africa has never been value-free. Since print-based literacy was introduced in mission schools in the nineteenth century, through the apartheid era of Bantu Education (1948–1994), the idea of literacy has been constructed by social groups and governments as a marker of power and control, of exclusion and inclusion: between "literates" and "illiterates," between "Christians" and "heathens," between the "civilized" and the "barbaric," between "traditionalists" and "modernists," and between "English" and "indigenous languages." The advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 brought with it a new dispensation based on human rights, social justice, equality, and multilingualism. Since then, attention has turned to what a more inclusive, culturally responsive literacy curriculum might look like: what does it mean, in practice, to design a curriculum which works toward integrated understandings of South African identities, despite the diversity of races, cultures, languages, religions, and histories? There is a progressive, learner-centered curriculum in place, but paradoxically, the autonomous model of literacy still prevails in most South African classrooms (Chisholm 2004;

Kell 2001), where multilingual children are learning through the medium of English, their second or third language. Although there are pockets of good literacy instruction in some schools, not enough children are attaining the necessary literacy levels required for success in school. What counts as literacy is, in the main, constructed within very narrow bands: "in school" literacy learning in the early stages is often the meaningless performance of phonic drills and practice, whether children are learning literacy in their home languages or in English. At higher levels, literacy is taught as a set of decontextualized, technical skills, with a focus on written language in its standardized forms. There is little attention to literacy as a technology for the interpreting and designing of meaning for diverse purposes, discourses, and audiences. As a result, there is evidence of low literacy achievement and high dropout rates in the majority of schools.

This chapter presents a selected overview of research projects in South Africa, which investigate alternative ways of conceptualizing literacy learning; here, literacy is constructed as a multiple semiotic practice, used, inserted, and transformed by agentive human beings across local and global sites, contexts and spaces, discourses, languages, and genres. In these multiple forms of crossings (Street 2005), the relationship between learning in everyday lives and school learning, and what might be an effective relationship between them, is explored (Hull and Schultz 2002). In doing so, it attempts to reconfigure taken for granted assumptions about what constitutes rich locations for literacy and learning.

Early Developments

The study of literacy is an underdeveloped but emerging field of inquiry in South African scholarship. An important body of work in postcolonial, cultural, and historical studies (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993; Harries 2001; Hofmeyr 1993) explores the relations between indigenous cultural and linguistic forms in Southern Africa, which were predominantly oral and performative in nature, and their interaction with western cultural forms and epistemologies, including literacy. The orientation of much of this work views literacy as a socially situated practice which African people appropriated for their own visions of modernity and embedded in multiple symbolic systems. This interactive relationship between African and western forms of knowledge positions African intellectual agency as central to these processes.

In her study of oral historical narrative in a Transvaal chiefdom that was radically transformed by colonialism and capitalism, Hofmeyr (1993) explores the dynamic relationship between orality and literacy in the history of this community. She traces the impact of mission school literacy, through its production of primary basal readers, on out-of-school indigenous oral storytelling practices, and vice versa. She argues that the overall impact of the agencies of colonialism on oral performance was ambiguous. It was not literacy per se which transformed oral forms: rather it was the political intervention of literate institutions like the church, state, or school, which shaped and asserted how literacy was to be used and understood. Drawing on a classic study of Xhosa oral storytelling practices by Scheub (1975), Hofmeyr

reveals the gendered nature of oral storytelling practices in African households and challenges the idea of indigenous or "traditional" oral genres as fixed and stable: rather, she demonstrates how they shift and transform in response to social and political dynamics and pressures. The instability and hybridity of cross-cultural forms, modes, and practices is an important idea which underpins this chapter.

In the field of educational scholarship, the political struggle against apartheid injustices provides the backdrop against which the major critical debates in educational theory and practice have taken place (Christie 1992). There has been little attention, until more recently, to focus on literacy education and pedagogy per se, except in the field of adult basic literacy education. Kallaway's (1984) edited volume of essays, *Apartheid and Education*, explores the origins and evolution of black educational policy, including education beyond schools in the radical adult education night school movement during the first half of the twentieth century. Most of the investigation into school-based literacy has taken place within the context of wider debates on language-in-education policies within the context of the relative status and positions of English, Afrikaans, and the indigenous African languages (Heugh et al. 1995). This is particularly the case in relation to the debates around the language of choice for early literacy, in essence, the impact of mother tongue literacy instruction and English literacy instruction on children's initial literacy learning. Hartshorne (1992) points out that during the apartheid era, decisions about language-in-education policy were intended to divide African communities and limit their social mobility and access to higher education. Since 1994, in spite of the political will to promote multilingualism, and declare all South African languages equal, official languages, English is rapidly monopolizing powerful domains like the government, media, schools, and business. The dominance of English needs to be seen in relation to the struggle to establish a body of literature in African languages, the absence of which has a direct impact on the range and availability of written materials for early literacy learning.

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

In 1994, the ANC government, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, initiated a new era in South African education. Nineteen departments of education, previously divided along racial lines, were combined into one national department of education. Faced with the challenges of producing educational policies which would address the inequities of the past and enable young people to enter the globalized world of the twenty-first century, the government introduced curriculum reform in 1998 through a national curriculum, Curriculum 2005, an outcome-based model of education. This was later revised as the Revised National Curriculum Statement in 2002. The South African model of outcome-based education (OBE) differs from its international counterparts in its explicit emphasis on constitutionally enshrined values of redress, equity, the development of a democratic culture based on social and environmental justice, fundamental human rights and inclusivity, multilingualism, and multiculturalism. The curriculum is "learner-centered" and promotes

participatory, interactive models of learning, emphasizing the important role of the learner's interests, prior to knowledge, history, and identity in the learning process.

It was in this context of political and social transformation that a number of important initiatives in the area of literacy research took place. The government set out to redesign the assessment framework for education and training and a concern for literacy and Adult Basic Education was included. A major contribution to rethinking literacy education within a social practice perspective in South Africa and influencing research traditions was the pathbreaking *Social Uses of Literacy* (Prinsloo and Breier 1996), a collection of ethnographic case studies on the reading and writing practices of ordinary people in the Western Cape, who had little or no schooling. This volume formed part of the first wave of ethnographic research into local literacies research in the tradition of the New Literacy Studies (Barton 1994; Heath 1983; Street 1984, 1993). This research aimed to make an intervention in adult basic education policy discussions and challenge the universalism of most policy research by providing detailed accounts of the social uses and meanings attached to literacy in a range of contexts, from informal urban settlements to family farms and from townships to the taxi industry. While the planners of the 1994 parliamentary elections considered "illiteracy" to be a major barrier to knowing about the election and voting, only 1% of the votes cast were spoilt ballots, despite the fact that the ballot form was complex and lengthy. The work challenges the rhetorical "literate"/"illiterate" divide operating in many educational and policy circles that without schooling, adults are a homogenous mass of socially disabled people. The research demonstrates how people are able to draw effectively on local forms of knowledge, literacy mediators and forms of apprenticeship learning, in order to participate in processes and actions which affect their everyday lives.

There is a growing awareness in South Africa of the need for more ecological models of literacy education (cf. Barton 1994) in which teaching young children to read and write has to be linked into much broader chains of sustainability. In a project focused on early childhood literacy learning, Tshidi Mamabolo, an early literacy educator working with children from impoverished communities on the outskirts of Johannesburg, changed her "autonomous" model of literacy pedagogy through reconfiguring the boundaries between home and school (Stein and Mamabolo 2005). She set "in school" activities which built on children's indigenous knowledges, identities, and multilingual practices outside of school. However, she discovered that "pedagogy was not enough": the effects of hunger, poverty, and HIV/AIDS on her children's lives forced her to cross the boundary between school and home backgrounds, to try to "get everyone on board" – households, families, and communities – in order to sustain early literacy development across multiple sites and contexts. In remaking the conditions for reading, Mamabolo recognized that "home background," rather than being in "deficit," needs to be positively referenced as a matrix of social relations, social conditions, and potentials for social action.

In a different version of an ecological model, Janks (2003) describes a whole school environmental educational development project in a poor school on the outskirts of Pretoria, in which critical literacy was nested within other projects and contributed to the changes produced in the school. One of these classroom projects involved the children in collecting, explaining, and illustrating their everyday games

for children in Australia. This project drew on their out-of-school literacies and used their multilingualism as a pedagogic resource (see Freebody, Critical Literacy Education: On Living with "Innocent Language").

It has been argued that the separation of early childhood development and Adult Basic Education and Training in different sites of delivery and curricula can undermine the potential of learning within the household or family. Culturally sensitive, organic models of family literacy, in which meaningful partnerships are formed with family members, have much to offer in enhancing literacy in households. Pioneering work in this field was carried out in the early 1990s by Letta Mashishi (2003), who worked with parents and children in Soweto in the Parents and Schools Learning Clubs (PASLC) program. These programs were initially developed on the basis of requests from different communities of parents, who did not possess the requisite literacy skills to providing support to their children in school. The aim of these clubs was twofold: to encourage family members to share their experiences, knowledge of languages, and cultural knowledge with their children and other members of the family and to involve families in the effort to entrench reading, writing, and learning as part of the culture of African homes. The PASLC curriculum which evolved over 10 years was based on a model of collaborative action research, allowing for high levels of democratic partic- ipation and resulted in synergies which directly impacted on parents' and children's engagement with literacy practices. A central focus of this work was discussion and research into African identities and traditional ways of life, including aspects of genealogy and kinship, and musical and oral traditions such as praise poetry, family totems, family, and community histories, which then became the content around which different genres of written texts were produced, in extended family chains of collab- oration. Building on the fact that the majority of parents indicated that they had not considered that cultural factors such as family trees and praise poems could be relevant to their children's education; this program was highly political and challenging in its assertion of the importance of African cultural issues and indigenous knowledges within the realm of family literacy. In this organic, contextualized model of family literacy, parents and children, together, forged an alternative set of texts and concerns to those operating in mainstream schooling.

Another example of a successful intergenerational family literacy program is the Family Literacy Project, which works with groups of women from remote rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal (Desmond 2004). This model explores ways in which mothers can support the development of their children's early literacy learning. Through the process of broadening the women's horizons through developing a culture of reading, the women come to understand the importance of their own role in relation to their children's healthy development. In 2003, a home-visiting scheme was launched where group members visited other families, took out books and read to children, and at the same time discussed child development with the parents.

The Children's Early Literacy Learning (CELL) project is an ethnographic research project in the tradition of the New Literacy Studies, investigating the literacy practices of children across homes, schools, streets, and communities. This project is trying to understand the key shaping influences which enable some children, and not others, to read and write in South African schools. This research

observes children from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds in their home and school environments. In a study of children in their everyday play in the Western Cape, Prinsloo (2004) describes how, in contexts where children's resources for representation are not strictly regulated by adults, the children drew in imaginative and creative ways on multiple semiotic resources from their official school world, peer social world, and the world of the media and the home. Their games are characterized by a mix of languages, hybrid narrative resources, images, and artifacts from local popular culture, including "traditional" Xhosa and Christian church influences, from the mass media (TV and radio), and from schooling (see Leander and Lewis, "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies"). In their home language, isiXhosa, they used rich sources of image, metaphor, and music. These practices were in direct contrast to the kinds of literacy pedagogy they encountered in school, which was mainly in the form of highly directed skill and drill teaching. Prinsloo argues that in the absence of meaning-making activities in school which are connected to their social worlds, the children's chances of developing careers as successful readers and writers were limited by the narrowness of their school experience, rather than by their home experiences.

Stein and Slonimsky (2006) present data from the CELL project in their ethnographic study of multimodal literacies involving adult family members and girl children, all of whom are high achievers in school literacy and who come from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. They investigate the microcultures in each family in relation to its ideological nature (Street 1984): what kinds of textual practices count, by whom and for what ends, in relation to how different roles and identities for the child both as reader and as subject are constituted and projected. Through an analysis of particular family literacy events in each household, Stein and Slonimsky show how what counts as "good reading practices" are not the same in each family. At the same time, they demonstrate how each adult family member uses the practice of literacy to project and orientate the child toward certain forms of worldliness. Each adult uses the practice of literacy to develop each girl's capacities to self-regulate, to map pathways of access in relation to aspirations and possible futures. These pathways include how to get access to various forms of linguistic, educational, cultural, and economic resources. These pathways are both real and imaginary – the dusty roads which lead out of the "shacks" and the "townships" to the city of Johannesburg and beyond. The authors argue that the different ways in which adult family members shape and reshape the "stuff" of literacy (Kress 2003) with and for their children have deep effects on children's orientations to the future both as readers and as subjects.

In multilingual South Africa, a culturally responsive literacy curriculum has to include bilingual/multilingual literacy. In spite of new language-in-education policies which actively promote functional multilingualism, most parents want their children to have access to English as the language of power and internationalism (Granville et al. 1998). The work of Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) (Bloch and Alexander 2003) is committed to promoting African languages and developing African literature in African languages in the face of what they call "the self-defeating language attitudes of the majority of people." They argue that full functional use of indigenous languages at all levels of education is central to economic

development and the development of democracy in South Africa. They propose that all South African schools should become dual-medium institutions in which the home language is sustained as a language of teaching and learning for as long as possible, alongside a second language of teaching and learning, and in which additional languages are offered as subjects. An important part of PRAESA's work is enabling and supporting teachers to carry out an additive approach to bilingualism and biliteracy in early childhood classrooms. In order to do this meaningfully and effectively, the project develops multilingual learning materials and story readers for teachers and parents to use in children's initial literacy development.

In an attempt to understand the relationship between school learning and students' learning in their everyday lives, the Wits Multiliteracies Project (Stein and Newfield 2004) has developed classroom-based pedagogies which are multimodal and multilingual and involve different kinds of "crossings" – across languages, discourses, popular youth cultural forms, indigenous knowledges, and performance arts. The work is based on an application of the New London Group's Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (Cope and Kalantzis 2000) to a South African context (see also Leander and Lewis, "► Literacy and Internet Technologies"). These pedagogies attempt to move beyond literacy in the form of written language only. Members of the project argue that school literacies exclude the life worlds of those who participate in them, and they work with indigenous knowledge systems, cultural practices, and languages within a critical framework that takes account also of school and global literacies. Brenner and Andrew (2004), working in a university context, explore the relationship between visual literacy, identity, and knowledge and in their class assignments which focus on local craft forms, such as the *minceka*, a traditional cloth inscribed with narrative forms, worn by women in Limpopo Province. Mamabolo's Grade 1 children at Olifantsvlei Primary School made dolls based on traditional South African fertility figures, as part of a project exploring history, culture, and neighborhood.

Similar work which explores the contribution of multimodality to designing culturally responsive curricula at the tertiary level is Archer's (2006) research which demonstrates how pedagogies which incorporate multimodality and indigenous knowledges can yield successful results for students from diverse language and cultural backgrounds, who are studying academic literacy in an engineering foundation course at university.

In an attempt to engage "at-risk" students in a Soweto Secondary School, an English teacher, Robert Maungedzo, consciously worked with multimodal pedagogies to stimulate his disaffected Grade 11 students into creative production, hoping that this might stimulate them to returning to poetry, which they had abandoned in the school because it was "too difficult" (Newfield and Maungedzo 2006). In this project, the students collectively made a cultural identity text, a large cloth stitched with maps of South Africa, ethnic dolls, praise poems, and contemporary poems. They made this cloth to send to teenagers in China in an international exchange project. The mixed media, multimodal cloth they called Tebuwa, which means "to speak." Since this time, they have returned to poetry and written a collection of their poems which have been published. Their poems experiment in playful and original ways with forms of rap, text messaging, and different

South African languages, including township idiom, youth slang, and the rhythms of kwaito, a genre of local popular music (see Richardson, "▶ African American Literacies").

Problems and Difficulties

South Africa is engaged in a sustained process of recovery and reconstruction after centuries of racism, violence, and oppression. The extremely damaging effects of generations of appalling apartheid education and poverty live on in people's psyches, senses of identity, and selfhood. They also continue to affect people in very material ways, in terms of grossly unequal access in the society to quality education, and therefore to successful literacy learning. This is especially the case for the rural poor (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). While major gains have been made in overhauling apartheid education, with compulsory, improved access to schooling, free schooling for the poor, accelerated provision of school infrastructures, more equitable distribution of resources, school-feeding programs, better teacher-learner ratios, and better quality textbooks in all schools, the fact remains that the majority of South African children are struggling to become successful readers and writers in school, *in any language*. There are many structural, social, and educational reasons for this, some of which have been outlined earlier. A key area of concern is literacy pedagogy: the new national curriculum allows for a range of meaningful literacy activities, which incorporate and build on learner's knowledges, semiotic resources, and multilingualism. However, teachers find this difficult to implement, for historical, cultural, and pedagogical reasons (Adler and Reed 2002). Educators have only recently begun to note the differences in the long-standing international debate between phonics and whole language literacy pedagogies. Teacher education programs, both pre-service and in-service, which focus on literacy as a social practice can work with teachers on how to sustain and develop learners' literacies in ways which make sense to learners and which draw on their everyday worlds. Part of such programs involve the development of teachers' own multiple literacies, as most teachers were educated in the impoverished apartheid model. This seems to me an important way forward to improving literacy pedagogies. Another area of concern is resources: learners all over the country need access to literacy materials in different South African languages, in print-based and electronic forms. These materials are more readily available in urban areas; hopefully, more sustained attention will be given by the government to adults and children in remote, rural areas, who live in conditions of extreme deprivation and hardship.

Future Directions

As researchers in the New Literacy Studies have powerfully demonstrated, literacy learning is part of much broader chains of sustainability and social development. In a developing country like South Africa, which straddles first and third world

economies simultaneously, it is important to "get everyone on board" to raise public awareness around the value and importance of literacy in sustaining democracy and human rights. Families, households, communities, the business sector, and the government need to support the development of literacy as one of the enabling conditions for the practice of freedom, at all levels and in all sectors of the society. Culturally responsive models of family literacy can have positive benefits to all participants. At the same time, rigorous, ongoing academic research into literacy practices across educational contexts needs to continue and be part of education programs at tertiary levels. While this chapter has mainly concentrated on research investigating out-of-school literacies, it is fair to say that very little research has actually been conducted into "in" school literacies: it is time to look in much deeper ways into children's actual experience of literacy learning across the curriculum. This involves getting a better sense of children's engagement with literacy at different grades and levels across discourses, genres, and technologies.

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African American Literacies

Elaine Richardson

Abstract

The term African American Literacies encapsulates sociocultural approaches to African American literacy education advanced by the various subfields: including sociolinguistics, critical pedagogy, reading, rhetoric and composition, and New Literacies Studies. African American Literacies offers Black people a means of accurately reading their experiences of being in the world with others and acting on this knowledge in a manner beneficial for self-preservation through economic, spiritual, and cultural uplift. Such literacies, include manipulation of cultural identities, social locations, and social practices that influence ways that members of this discourse group make meaning and assert themselves sociopolitically in all communicative contexts. Importantly, African American literacies extend beyond acting with print and language in their strict and broadly defined senses to include a host of multimodal strategies for making meaning in the world. As Americans of African descent had been enslaved and marginalized within American society, the early scholarly thinking about Black language and culture reflected the common prejudices of the time: Blacks were culturally and intellectually inferior. Since the 1940s, scholars presented the systematicity, the West African background, and the history and development of what is currently referred to by mainstream linguists as "African American Vernacular English," with many language educators advocating inclusion of African American language and literacy histories, structures, and discourse practices in critical conversation with those of the dominant culture's to make literacy education socially just by repositioning students as knowledge-making agents of social change. Other societal domains should have an awareness of African American literacies.

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Early Developments

One of the basic goals of the Civil Rights and Black Liberation Movements of the
1950s and 1960s was for African Americans to gain access to institutions and begin
the project of a more multicultural America. The 1954 Brown versus Board of
Education of Topeka, Kansas, Supreme Court case won by the NAACP's Legal
Defense Team symbolized America's granting of completely equal societal status to
African Americans. This victory brought about the entrance of Black students into
America's previously segregated public schools, which were not prepared to change
their pedagogies or their ideas about the inferiority of African American language and
culture. Early work in linguistic anthropology (Herskovits 1941; Turner 1949) and
(socio)linguistics (Bailey 1965; Labov 1972; Smitherman 1977) focused on the
origins and development of Black English Vernacular (BEV) or "Negro Dialect"
and its relation to other languages that have their origin in similar contact situations
such as Gullah and Jamaican Creole. These experts uncovered significant West
African language and cultural commonalities. The work of Labov (1969, 1972),
Dillard (1972), and Smitherman (1977) urged educators to apply linguistic knowledge to improve Black literacy education. Smitherman's foundational work as well as
later work (2006) continues emphasizing the importance of Black linguistic-cultural
heritage, identity, and history along with knowledge of discourse modes and rhetoric.

Labov's (1972) work investigated whether or not "dialect differences" had
anything to do with reading failure: and if so, could educator knowledge of the
differences between the two systems be useful in curricula design and delivery of
services to speakers of BEV? Labov concluded that the conflicts between BEV and
standardized American English were symbolic of the cultural conflict and racism
that is inherent in the society at large and played out in the classroom. Such work

discredited the idea that African American students were culturally deficient and lacked verbal stimulation in the home (Bereiter and Engelmann 1966). Subsequent scholars focused on factors associated with the trend of literacy underachievement among African American students. They noted mismatch between schools' and students' language and culture (Heath 1983, in linguistic anthropology; Shaughnessy 1977, in composition studies), teachers' negative attitudes toward Black students (Goodman and Buck 1973, in reading), Black communities' mistrust of schools, and Blacks as involuntary minorities and their opposition to imposed ways of being (Ogbu 1979, 1983, in educational anthropology).

Researchers have sought to develop literacy curricula using well-documented research on African American language and culture as the basis of instruction. (See Rickford et al. 2004, 2012 for fuller and updated listing.) For example, Baxter and Reed (1973) developed composition curricula. Simpkins et al. (1977) developed reading materials or "dialect" readers. In 1974, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) developed the "Students' Right to Their Own Language" policy, promoting the development of theories and practices for linguistic diversity in education. In 1979, a Michigan judge ruled that AAVE was a legitimate system of speech and that teachers needed to have knowledge of it to facilitate their students' literacy achievement in the "Ann Arbor King School 'Black English' Case." Young et al. (2013) argue that African American literacy educators should be trained to understand language more variably, that code meshing and code switching are at the core of language, and that hybridity is the hallmark of language and should be accepted as part of academic literacy instruction.

Blake and Cutler (2003) report on a study of five (5) New York City public schools and their teachers' attitudes toward "African American English" (AAE) and language policies or lack thereof for AAE-speaking students. This work suggests that schools' philosophies influenced teachers' disposition toward AAE-speaking students. For example, the school with the large bilingual population had a philosophy that promoted linguistic diversity, and its teachers had greater sensitivity to issues of AAE-speaking students.

This speaks to educational reform issues as discussed in Baugh (1995). Teachers along with the larger society harbor misinformed and racist beliefs about African American English though linguists have proved otherwise. In theory, all languages and varieties are equal, but in practice, they are not. Societal beliefs influence institutions, especially the law, which does not recognize African American English-speaking students as language minorities. This predicament denies AAE-speaking students funding which could be used to improve education. Another problem is that speech pathology has been used to refer African American English-speaking students to special education, though AAE is not pathological. Further, sometimes schools place AAE-speaking students in classes with students for whom English is not their "native" language, which presents a different set of problems, though both groups experience barriers to an equitable education. Baugh argues that there is a need for policies and programs that address the literacy needs of linguistically diverse students.

Building on this work, Ball and Alim (2006) argue for a language policy alliance of scholars, education reformers, and advocates of the rights of all linguistically and culturally diverse US students and demand additive approaches which maintain, value, and respect students' home languages (e.g., Jamaican Creole English, African American English, Chicano/Chicana English, Appalachian English, Gullah, Lumbee, Arabic-dominant English speakers, and Vietnamese English Language Learners) while teaching the conventionally accepted "standardized English." Paris (2009, 2012) argues that schools must teach about contemporary urban multiethnic sociolinguistic reality and inequality as a part of critical language and literacy pedagogy. This pedagogy would include teaching about the history and linguistic practices of AAL, fostering deeper understanding of the need for interethnic unity, the value of ethnic difference, and coalition building.

The ideas of vernacular literacy (UNESCO 1953), later expanded to vernacular literacies (Camitta 1993), converge with African American literacies, where it is understood that subordinated cultures have literacy practices and values that may conflict with the dominant culture's and that such cultures should define their own empowering literacy agendas. Yet, as a general rule, American literacy education operates on sanctioned autonomous models of language and literacy, whereby subordinated people are made to submit to the dominant official language (variety) along with its received ways of using language and reading the world.

Major Contributions

Ethnographers of literacy have uncovered African American literacies that are not acknowledged or built upon by educational institutions as they are evaluated negatively. For example, Gilmore (1983) observed Black adolescent girls on school grounds "doin' steps," involving rhyming and spelling of words while doing rhythmic body movements. Because of their participation in these routines, school officials denied them access to full participation in school-sanctioned literacy activities. School officials as well as some Black middle-class parents interpreted these performances as oppositional to school culture. As such, school officials labeled these girls as bad girls, and they tracked them as lower ability. Officials never considered the value in the girls' rhymes, for example, their employment of homonyms, their spelling abilities, and their display of embodied social knowledge. In the college context, researchers have identified such culturally biased educational experiences and note the development of adverse literacy practices within some Black students such as employing White supremacist discourse in their compositions or classroom talk (e.g., the use of "fronting") because they think they will be rewarded [and oftentimes are] (see, e.g., Canagarajah 1997; Fine, 1995 [in Gadsden and Wagner] among others).

From historical, intellectual, sociolinguistic, as well as social justice perspectives, the literacy experiences of African Americans must be taken into account in literacy education. Documented history attests to Blacks' struggle for literacy and education as a means of upliftment and liberation (see Engs 1987; Beavers and Anderson, in

Gadsden and Wagner 1995; Harris 1992; Royster 2000; among others). Gates' (1988) study traced an intertextual chain of distinct tropes, themes, and oral-written patterns in the African American canon of imaginative literature, wherein Black authors repeat and revise themes to point to their shared experience and cultural identity. Among these are the "freedom through literacy" and the "Talking Book" tropes in which writers speak their voices into the Western text through their use of Black discourse patterns.

Lee's (1993) work on the application of the Black discourse genre of signifying to literary interpretation is instructive. Lee drew on students' knowledge of the African American language practice of signifying, which is based on indirection and shared knowledge to teach them how to interpret literature. Ball's (1995) work showed that some high-achieving urban African American high school students preferred certain Black culturally based design patterns in their writing. This finding corresponds to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) essays that Smitherman (1994, reprinted in 2000) studied where she found that raters highly evaluated Black students' writing as powerful and fluent when it evinced higher use of a Black discourse style. Both Ball and Smitherman recommended that educators build on these cultural strengths to enhance students' literacy education (see also Gilyard 1991).

Such research within the milieu of African American literacies has substantiated that written literacy cannot exist without orality; literacy is informed by an array of socially constituted practices, understandings, and ways of being in the world; literacy is not a set of isolated skills that can be taught, acquisition of language; and literacy is socialization into particular discourses and worldviews. An important work by Gee (1989) surveys key studies with regard to literacy that inform scholars' theorization of African American literacies. Crucial ideas in these studies are "the great divide" between literate and oral cultures [that literacy itself (without schooling) restructures thought and societies and that oral practices are necessarily more bound up in group identity than "objective" written practices] (Ong, following Havelock, Goody). One problem as Gee shows is how the literate/nonliterate debate evolved from the civilized/noncivilized conceptions of orally based cultures. Gee's (1989, p. 45) observation of this is an important one: "In modern technological societies like the United States, something akin to the oral/literate distinction may apply to groups (usually of lower socioeconomic status) with 'residual orality' or 'restricted literacy' and groups (usually middle and upper class) with full access to literacy taught in the schools. Levi-Strauss' recasting of the primitive/civilized distinction in terms of a contrast between concrete and abstract thought, now explained by literacy, comes then to roost in our 'modern' society." Gee rejects this line of thought and along with scholars now identified with the New Literacies Studies hold that literacy is a social construction and what counts as literacy varies with context and is bound up in relations of power (for an overview, see Street 1999).

The decade-long literacy underachievement of African American students as documented in periodic reports such as the NAEP and other US Department of Education publications is not the result of massive cognitive deficiency among Black students. Research has presented evidence which suggests that a host of factors contribute to the so-called achievement gap between Black and White students.

Among them are low parent educational level, low social economic status, and poor school resources, to name a few. One response to counteract the problem of parents' educational level is the institution of community and family literacy programs to promote higher levels of literacy and to help "at-risk" students of color to excel academically. The theory behind this movement and others (e.g., vouchers, charter schools, school choice) is that access to well-funded schools, with lower teacher–pupil ratios and highly skilled teachers, will provide teachers with adequate resources to help students. This is a start but avoids the politics of language and literacy education for Black and poor people.

Describing the oppressive social and educational practices that have failed poor students of color as "achievement gap" rather than education debt absolves our society of accountability. Ladson-Billings (2007) explains:

> When we speak of an education debt it reminds us that we have consistently under-funded schools in poor communities where education is needed most. It reminds us that we have, for large periods of our history, excluded groups of people from the political process where they might have a say in democratically determining what education should look like in their communities. And, it reminds us that we are engaged as we reflect on our unethical and immoral treatment of underserved populations. (321)

Furthermore, one of the major roots of African American literacy underachievement is the ideology of White supremacist and capitalistic-based literacy practices that undergird curriculum construction and reproduce stratified education and a stratified society, which reproduce the trend of African American literacy underachievement. White supremacist ideology is insidious because it is entangled with the discourse of American meritocracy, which says that individuals are responsible for their own success, which is not entirely false. However, the value of individualism is consonant with White supremacy when large groups of students of color fail to achieve under its account. White supremacy in this usage refers to practices that confer privileges to white-skinned Anglo Americans and their norms, values, and ways of being at the expense of disprivileging people not of white skin, a form of racism. The percentage of students suffering under this paradigm is far beyond that of a smattering of lazy and cognitively deficient individuals who cannot measure up. The failure is not individual, but ethnic and cultural groups are failed by present (decade-long) practices. This indicates that the problem is structural.

Characteristics of the ideology of White supremacist and capitalistic-based literacy include consumption, consent, obedience, fragmentation, singularity (as opposed to multiplicity), and positivism. The educational practices associated with this autonomous conception of literacy (Street 1993) are naturalized in the system and taught to students as a set of isolated skills divorced from social context, politics, culture, and power. Teaching standardized English, a narrowly conceived academic discourse, and the "academic essay" is an example of the "neutral skills" needed to succeed in the corporate educational system and the market-driven capitalistic society (Berlin 1996).

Works such as that of Hoover (1982) and Ladson-Billings (1995) argue convincingly for culturally appropriate and culturally relevant literacy education, at the college and pre-K-12 levels, respectively. Culturally appropriate and relevant approaches focus on integrating African American perspectives (or those of the students they teach), along with critical examination of dominant cultural practices, in ways that empower students sociopolitically. Such teachers employ diverse teaching methods and become partners with the community. Recent work by Paris and Alim (2014) updates this work as culturally sustaining pedagogy, with an emphasis on flexibility of pedagogical approach that accommodates the dynamism and flux of culture and identity (See also Kinloch and San Pedro 2014).

Lanehart's (2001) state-of-the-art collection of essays by scholars entitled *Sociocultural and Historical Contexts of African American English* contains chapters by Wyatt, Foster, Baugh, Labov, and Spears which address the role of African American English (AAE) in education. In that work, Wyatt discusses the wide diversity of language use among African Americans even within the same socioeconomic class and how this is not usually factored into theories of language acquisition and literacy education. Foster's research explores the instructional uses of call-response to engage students in higher-order thinking, whereas Labov addresses AAVE with regard to reading development. He reports on research with the Oakland Unified School District and holds that reading difficulty can be overcome if the profession and educators apply what we know. Labov's (2010) work "Unendangered Dialect, Endangered People: The Case of African American Vernacular English" seems to argue in opposition to his earlier views. Though he takes pains to discuss the integrity of the language, Labov basically argues that Black speakers' language must be intervened upon as a means to social "equality" (integration, economic/political empowerment). He links Black language to Black illiteracy and Black impoverishment to Black segregation. Taken together with his assertion that *some forms of cultural diversity. . . need no help to survive* leads to the inference that poor Black people are responsible for and sustain the cycle of oppression [what Michelle Alexander (2010) calls *The New Jim Crow*] in which they have been entrapped. The argument also suggests that taking Black language out of the equation will promote gains in reading and play a significant role in reversing the effects of segregation (see Richardson 2015 for a fuller discussion).

Other work in Lanehart's 2001 collection discusses what it is that the profession knows and how all concerned can apply this knowledge (Baugh), whereas Spears contributes new understandings of directness in African American speech practices and how this should be dealt with in educational settings. Spears makes the point that the terms set for African American Language are "rooted in non-black discursive practices" (p. 243). Many social interactions which would be judged negatively in White mainstream culture dominant classrooms would not be judged as such in spaces where all Black norms prevail. Black teachers and administrators in schools in which Black values predominate can use direct speech in ways that build educational achievement and community among the students and the families of the school.

Drawing on sociolinguistics, African American studies, rhetoric and composition, literacy research, and critical race theory, Richardson (2003) constructed a theory and pedagogy of African American literacies, attending to discourse forms and functions as well as what it means to teach and learn within these discourse practices. This approach locates African American literacies in a tradition of negotiation of vernacular and standard epistemologies and ontologies. Literacy for people of African descent is the ability to accurately read their experiences of being in the world with others and to act on this knowledge in a manner beneficial for self-preservation, economic, spiritual, and cultural uplift. Perryman-Clark's (2012, 2013) work focuses on implementing linguistically diverse language into academic writing, thus continuing the tradition started in the 1970s by Geneva Smitherman and so many others, of opening up space in the academy for linguistically diverse students and their rights to their own languages and a broader more liberatory academy and educational system.

In the work, *African American Literacies Unleashed: Vernacular English and the Composition Classroom*, Ball and Lardner (2005) cover significant issues which teachers of AAVE-speaking students must confront. Teachers must face their subjective knowledge about AAVE and become willing to go against the grain as many have internalized unconscious negative racial beliefs and attitudes and educational institutions have set us in motion to gatekeep. Ball and Lardner approach the problem through building teachers' sense of efficacy and reflective optimism. Ball and Lardner define this important approach to literacy education as such:

> Efficacy acknowledges affect as an essential element in teacher's constructs of knowledge. Efficacy therefore pushes us to theorize unspoken dimensions of teaching practices, for example, its felt reality, and to trace them to their sources. Efficacy refers not just to what teachers know about linguistically and culturally diverse students but what teachers believe about their ability to teach students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Reflective optimism as the correlate perception of those students' ability to achieve is reflected in the expectations teachers hold for their students' achievement. (p. 65)

Ball and Lardner work with teachers to help them develop culturally relevant pedagogy and to transform their identities as teachers who can teach all students.

An important review article by Alim (2005) revisits many of the issues and theoretical orientations outlined earlier, coupled with the current situation of de facto segregation or resegregation of many urban cities and schools. Alim argues that critical language awareness pedagogies are desperately needed. In this view, it is not enough to teach unequal power relations and standardized English. Language and literacy educators use students' own discourse practices, their hip-hop literacies, for example, to critically engage them in research and action and to confront and change racist discourse practices and institutions that promote them (see chapter "▶ Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth" by Mahiri, Vol. 2).

Work in Progress: Building on Legacies of Struggle with New Work in African American Literacies, Popular Culture, and Globalization

Morgan's (2002) work helps scholars to understand how Black youth inscribe their identities through urban, working class and Black language use, how they mark public space therewith, and the worldviews they bring to bear on their gendered, sexed, classed, racialized, and otherwise embodied readings of the world. As Black youth culture provides grist for the mill of popular culture and digital media (Banks 2011) and a wide array of industries (Watkins 1998; Stoute 2011), scholars have taken up these understandings of Black youth communication and technologies and applied them to their documentation of the development of global hip-hop literacies (Pennycook 2003; Androutsopolous 2004; Alim et al. 2009; Richardson 2006, 2011).

Hip-hop refers to urban/youth popular music and culture that began in the early 1970s. Hip-hop's conventional elements refer to emceeing/rapping, DJing, breaking/dancing, and graffiti writing. Hip-hop also refers to break beat, beat boxing, street fashion, street language, street knowledge, and street entrepreneurism. As discussed by Pough (2004), we can now speak of raptivists, hip-hop theater, cinema, hip-hop-inspired poetry and literature, and the world of hip-hop in technology, music videos, and online gaming, as means of seeing, hearing, and interacting with and co-creating hip-hop cultures. Hip-hop is now practiced worldwide with youth from around the globe adapting and creating aesthetic principals derived from African American, Latino/Latina, and Black diasporic practices (Richardson 2011). Hip-hop ideology is partly a response to Reagan/Bush era ideologies of social and civic abandonment of inner city communities. A resistance discourse, Morgan (2001, p. 190) identifies hip-hop as "a new form of youth socialization that explicitly addresses racism, sexism, capitalism, and morality in ways that simultaneously expose, exploit, and critique these practices."

The growing popularity of hip-hop culture(s) that has been stimulated by, and serves to stimulate, processes of cultural globalization, capitalism, and cultural mixing can be seen in the ways that hip-hop has been appropriated in most all societal spheres. Though African American language and literacy achievement has been stigmatized and held up as the last barrier to Black upward mobility, hip-hop language and culture is a global ambassador of the English language and American culture and is a symbol of both resistance and compliance with oppressive power systems (Richardson 2006). Many students from diverse and mainstream backgrounds identify with hip-hop as their culture. Kitwana (2002) argues that the hip-hop generation grew out of Black Americans born after 1965, whose values are more heavily influenced by pop culture and market-based values, rather than more traditional Black institutions. Hip-hop performance/expressive traditions reflect this tension of compliance and resistance. Hip-hop literacies encompass the myriad ways in which youth from the hip-hop generations extend and wield meaning making systems to project and protect themselves (Richardson 2006). Hip-hop and

popular culture pedagogies at lower and higher levels of schooling are being enlisted in critical literacy education (e.g., Jackson et al. 2001; Morrell and Duncan Andrade 2002; Haas Dyson 2003; Yasin 2003; Alim 2006).

There is movement among educators and activists to build on the hip-hop literacies of youth, rap, poetry, prose, song, spoken word, dance, graffiti and other hip-hop arts, along with investigation of popular culture, to bring about social change and educational reform (Akom 2009; Alim 2007, 2009, 2011; Fisher 2007, 2009; Hill 2009; Emdin 2010; Emdin and Lee 2012; Hill and Petchauer 2013; Meacham et al. 2013; Ladson-Billings 2014; Lindsey 2015; Love 2015; Petchauer 2015).

A special 2013 journal edition focusing on social justice approaches to African American language and literacy practices (Edited by K. C. Nat Turner and Denise Ives) (Turner and Ives 2013) was published in *Equity & Excellence*. This special journal issue sought to highlight work that embraced the language and literacies of Black students and to locate where such work is being done and how it is received, the content and consequences. The volume included work on an advanced placement high school English class that used Critical Language Pedagogy (Baker-Bell 2013); Carpenter Ford's (2013) piece discussed the culturally congruent pedagogy, how a white teacher incorporated the "verbal ping pong" of Black students into instruction in socially just and effective manner; Green's (2013) work showed how Black youth explored their literate identities through a radio collective; Turner, Hayes, and Baker-Bell (2013); Carpenter Ford (2013); Green (2013); Way (2013) drew on digital and multimodal literacy practices of students to promote critical literacy (see also chapter "▶ New Literacies, New Times: Developments in Literacy Studies" by Street, this volume), while Williams (2013) in the tradition of Smitherman used African American verbal traditions in the teaching of effective rhetoric and written composition pedagogy; Swindler Boutte and Johnson (2013) focus upon the need to respect African American Language speakers as bilingual and biliterate. Watson (2013) argues that teacher professional development should include training in the community's language standards (Turner et al 2013; Williams 2013; Swindler Boutte and Johnson 2013).

Other new work in African American literacies extend theorization as well as practices that revolve around overcoming the struggle in terms of the politics of knowledge, schooling, language usage, writing, identity assault, gentrification, impoverishment, and various forms of cultural subordination and hegemony (Gilyard 2011; Kinloch 2010, 2012; Kynard 2008, 2013; Morrell 2008; Winn and Behizadeh 2011; Staples 2011, 2012, 2013; Muhammad 2014a; Winn 2015).

This work promotes diverse teaching and learning experiences, motivation for language acquisition, both speech and writing, rhetorical prowess, language change, identity negotiation, linguistic dexterity, globalization, and the conflicting evaluations of Black representations, how Black symbols are representative of power and powerlessness, the resilience, identification, and commodification of the global youth village. Such issues provide a complex view of African American language and literacies, their potential in the larger scheme of things.

Problems, Difficulties, and Future Directions

Though there has been significant support for application of knowledge of African American language and literacy in educational institutions, there are a range of problems of which institutions and instructors must be aware. A question that often arises is how will educational institutions become a site where no single historic group dominates the core experience in a dominating society? Further, as cultural practices and identities are always in flux so are literacies. This situation requires that educators become more open to learning their students' literacies, recognizing their strengths, drawing upon them and helping students to build a more equitable (ever-changing) world while simultaneously recognizing the role of identity, history, and context in literacy. This should not be understood reductively as using students' home discourse to indoctrinate them into "traditional literacy," the mythical literacy received as isolated ideologically neutral skills. Rather a school of scholars, educators, and activists concerned with African American/Black, Brown, and urban literacies are interested in helping students challenge the sociopolitical arrangement of the relations between institutions, languages, identities, and power through engagement with local hip-hop narratives of inequality and lived experience in order to critique a global system of oppression (Alim 2011, p. 10; Kinloch 2015). Literacy scholars who foreground the lives of hip-hop generation youth see hip-hop as providing a framework to ground work in classrooms and communities in democratic ideals. This movement converges with critical literacies and the current #BlackLivesMatter modern civil rights movement "created in 2012 after Trayvon Martin's murderer, George Zimmerman, was acquitted for his crime, and dead 17-year-old Trayvon was posthumously placed on trial for his own murder" (http://blacklivesmatter.com/about/). #BlackLivesMatter addresses the legacies of slavery that still oppress Black people in the United States of America: state-sanctioned killing of Black people, state-sanctioned poverty, hatred and oppression of queer people, the prison industrial complex, school-to-prison-pipeline, ineffective schooling, and more.

Gender-focused literacy work with Black males and females takes up these issues (Lanehart 2002; Richardson 2003; Tatum 2005; e.g., see the chapters of Slaughter-Defoe and Richards; and Fine in Gadsden and Wagner 1995). More recently, works in Black girlhood studies, hip-hop feminisms, new literacies, communication studies, and adult education, among others, are emphasizing movement for social change and overall well-being (Brown 2009, 2013; Richardson 2009, 2013; Haddix 2010, 2012; Kynard 2010, 2011; Brown and Kwakye 2012; Winn 2010, 2011; Winn and Jackson 2011; Wissman 2011; Kinloch et al. 2012; Koonce 2012; Love 2012; Staples 2012, 2013; Durham 2014; Muhammad 2014b, 2015; Matabane 2015; Sealey-Ruiz and Johnson-Bailey 2015; among others). For example, Winn's (2011) study, *Girl Time*, focuses upon a theater program for (formerly) incarcerated teen girls and highlights the ways race-, gender-, and class-specific ideas about Black and urban girls render them as disposable. Through writing and acting out plays about their lived experiences and exploring the circumstances surrounding their incarceration, the girls develop critical literacies of liberation. A common thread in

these works is the centering of Black girls and women in their own complex experiences, to identify their humanity, their intellect, their beauty, their survival/thriving strategies, and their voices, to divert oppressive social constructs and practices, and to build coalition and support networks.

Work focusing upon Black men and boys pays attention to relevant pedagogy, texts, discourses, identities, experiences, and histories central to their critical literacy and lives (Tatum 2008, 2009; Young 2007; Kirkland and Jackson 2009; Kirkland 2013; Johnson 2014; Craig 2014). Cutting-edge work such as that by Kirkland (2009) "The Skin We Ink: Tattoos, Literacy and a New English Education" argues for the valuing and deep investigation of the distinct literacies of Black male youth. He reports on a focal Black male high school student and the literacies embodied in his tattoos and finds that the young man's life, his struggles, tragedies, and commentaries are connected to the larger story of Black males surrendering their pain in symbols. "My Brother's Keeper," the US Government's initiative, funded with support from private foundations, promises to assist schools and organizations in providing Black male youth the foundation they need to change their disproportionate dismal life outcomes. In his announcement of the initiative to the public, President Obama discusses the problem of poor children not being ready for kindergarten and how this affects their middle school achievement, how children who struggle to read in third grade are less likely to graduate high school, and how Black kids are four times as likely as white kids to be suspended from school, while Latino kids are two times as likely as white kids. President Obama expounds:

> The plain fact is, there are some Americans who, in the aggregate, are consistently doing worse in our society—groups that have had the odds stacked against them in unique ways that require unique solutions, groups who have seen fewer opportunities that have spanned generations. And by almost every measure, the group that is facing some of the most severe challenges in the 21st century in this country is boys and men of color. (Reprinted in *Reclaiming Children and Youth, Spring* 2014, (1). p. 6)

Future Research Directions

Heightening awareness of the politics of literacy education of African American students cannot be overstated. In 1996, the media provoked a controversy surrounding the Oakland, California, Unified School District's resolution on Ebonics by mishandling, misrepresenting, and distorting the purpose of the resolution, the meaning of Ebonics, and the importance of teacher training. This maelstrom revealed not only the continued devaluation of Black culture and racist positions held by the general public but by the US government as well. Research has continued to plumb the language and literacy acquisition of African American students, much of it providing fodder for comparative studies of literacy in various contexts and how the various strengths of Black students, their families, and their teachers can be built upon for successful delivery of literacy education. Investigation of school policies and attitudes toward Black students is another important area that deserves continued work. It is safe to say that the current system of education continues to reproduce

inequality and failure and that society along with schools must be reimagined. Though we must pay attention to the ever-evolving condition of globalization, emigration, and continued cultural contact and shift as these affect the ever-expanding nature of literacy, I agree with Auerbach (2005): it is abundantly clear that major global forces, not individual competence, shape life possibilities and that to promote new multimodal literacies as the key to participation in the globalized world risks becoming a new version of the literacy myth (p. 369).

Nevertheless, for decades, sociolinguists and others have discussed the integrity, systematicity, competence, and utility of African American language use, and literacy scholars have shown the value of new literacy approaches. Yet, the continual disrespect and dehumanization of Black students in the name of education are not the result of what is unknown. As Kynard (2008) asserts without a critique of knowledge, "we will simply reproduce more studies and workshops about the literary/literacy value of students of African descent that cannot/will not be used to reimagine their education because the discipline [and dominant society] is incompatible with any such treatise of their worth." (22)

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Literacies in Latin America

Judy Kalman

Abstract

Latin America is a heterogeneous region with deep cultural, social, economic, and linguistic differences, the dominant language in continental Latin America is Spanish, except for Brazil where Portuguese is spoken. Over 400 indigenous languages exist in the region, 76 some of them with fewer than 10,000 speakers. Latin American countries made universal literacy a national goal and began expanding their school systems in order to guarantee all children a place in a classroom. As a result, literacy rates climbed, reaching 89% region wide in 2005. During the last decade, definitions of what it means to literate have come under scrutiny, as researchers, policy makers and practitioners search for notions of what it means to be literate that reflect changing regional realities, the rise of digital culture and the growing participation of diverse populations in the public sphere.

Contents

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Introduction

Latin America is a heterogeneous region with deep cultural, social, economic, and linguistic differences. International agencies such as UNESCO, the World Bank, and the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) refer to the region as Latin America and the Caribbean in order to include not only the land mass stretching from Mexico to Argentina but also the small English-, Spanish-, and French-speaking islands as well.

Despite region-wide efforts to expand access to schooling, the illiteracy rate for people 15 years of age or older is still 9% (Infante and Letier 2013), although this measurement varies from country to country given the difficulties for agreeing on what constitutes literacy. Disparities in class, race, language, and ethnicity shape literacy and illiteracy in Latin America. According to data recently reported by Hopenhayn and Gerstenfeld (2013), 28.2% of all households are impoverished and 11.3% live in extreme poverty. In absolute numbers, this means that of the 164 million poor people, 66 million are indigent (p. 11). In Honduras and Dominican Republic, for example, the poorest 20% of the population earns only an average of 5% of total income, while the richest 20% earns an average of 47% of the wealth. Similarly, in these same countries, the illiteracy rate is 7.8% and 6.6%, respectively (CEPAL 2012). However, indigenous peoples are often more illiterate than other groups, as illustrated by Guatemala's illiteracy rate of 14% and Ecuador's 11.4%. Indigenous women are more likely to be illiterate than indigenous men and although illiteracy in urban centers tends to be 6%, it is twice that in rural areas (UNESCO 2006). This is also true for women in general in the region; in a note on literacy attainment published in 2013, UNESCO reports that while overall literacy rates are rising, women and girls are still far behind (http://goo.gl/yZ1H2t). Any discussion of literacy in Latin America needs to contemplate its socioeconomic disparities, the role of schooling in the dissemination of reading and writing, and education policies promoted by international agencies (Aparicio et al. 2009; Prins 2001; Rivero 1999; Paiva y Sales 2013; Seda Santana 2000; Tenti 2008).

Early Developments

School is the social institution traditionally responsible for the education of readers and writers. Starting as early as the 1950s, Latin American countries made universal literacy a national goal and began expanding their school systems in order to guarantee all children a place in a classroom. As a result, literacy rates climbed to 70% in the 1970s, reaching 89% region wide in 2005 (La Belle 2000; Socialwatch. org 2005). While most children enroll in school, many fail the early grades and/or drop out before finishing their primary education, creating a potential population for

adult education and literacy programs (Ferreiro and Schmelkes 1999). However, the role of formal schooling of children should not be underestimated. Latapi and Ulloa (1993) studied the relationship between schooling and the dissemination of literacy. After considering the expansion of the Mexican public school system and adult literacy programs and policies, they concluded that declined illiteracy rates were due more to the growth of formal education and the steady increase in school attendance, rather than programs designed to teach adults to read and write.

By the late 1960s, official programs linked literacy to economic development and employment. Seda Santana (2000, p. 41) notes that "the general premise was that industrialized countries have high levels of literacy and therefore reading and writing were necessary conditions for national development." Adult literacy curricula tended to emphasize *alfabetización* or the learning of letters and sounds and then *postalfabetización*, the development of so-called complex skills and abilities considered necessary for the job market. However, many organizers of nonformal education programs associated literacy with Paulo Freire's theories of consciousness raising and oriented their efforts toward building a more socially and politically aware population. Perhaps the best-known endeavor of this type was the literacy campaign in Nicaragua. Before the revolution of 1979, clandestine educational activity persisted for many years. Following the fall of Somoza, the National Literacy campaign, involving 150,000 student volunteers, was launched. Employing Freire's methodology, the campaign used short narratives based on the nation's recent struggle as the basis for their program. The organizers claim to have reduced illiteracy in 3 months from 50.3 to 12.98, although there is not a clear picture of the types or depth of literacy achieved (Freeland 1995; Hornberger 1997; La Belle 2000; Lankshear 1988; Miller 1985).

The dominant language in continental Latin America is Spanish, except for Brazil where Portuguese is spoken. Over 400 indigenous languages exist in the region, some of them with fewer than 10,000 speakers. In countries such as Bolivia, Paraguay, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru, the rate of illiteracy among the indigenous population is much higher than the nonindigenous population. One clear example of this phenomenon is Mexico, a multilingual country with 28 languages having 20,000 or more speakers (and another thirty-four languages spoken by less than 20,000 people). Here 25% of all speakers of indigenous languages are considered illiterate while only 5% of Spanish speakers cannot read or write (INEA 2014).

Most of the literature on illiteracy and indigenous languages centers on bilingualism and national identity, the importance of literacy for development, the right to education in the mother tongue, and educational programs and policies. Shirley Brice Heath's 1972 publication of *La Política del lenguaje en México: De la colonia a la nación* is one of the earliest in-depth studies of the issues from a sociolinguistic perspective (Heath 1972).

It is important to observe that not all pre-Hispanic languages were unwritten. While Quechua, the lingua franca of the Inca Empire was agraphic, in the Peruvian highlands the Tupicochans kept thorough records of shared work, or *faenas*, through detailed accounting on knotted cords, or *khipus*, recording devices based on a positional system of knots made within a series of ropes arranged in a cape-like fashion. Several Mesoamerican languages also used ideographic systems of representation (Coulmas

1996; Salomon y Niño-Murcia 2011). In Mexico, writing developed around 600 BC and was passed on from one culture to another. At the time of the Spanish conquest, for example, the Mayans engraved stone and wrote glyphs on folded sheets of *amate*, a paper made from the bark of a local tree. Scribes and priests used writing to record historical events, sacred texts, almanacs, astronomical calculations, and mathematics. The Spanish destroyed the *amate* codices and pre-Hispanic literacy as part of their policy to impose social and cultural dominion in the New World (King 1994). While local literacy was shattered, the conquerors introduced their writing system and uses of written language as an instrument of authority, still associated by many with colonial power and domination (Zavala 2005).

Education programs developed for speakers of indigenous languages have historically been based on transition models and cultural assimilation policies aimed at building a homogeneous national identity. Schooling for indigenous children and education for adults have involved either teaching the colonial language and then reading and writing or creating a written representation of local languages and using it to teach reading and writing as an intermediate step toward literacy in the dominant language (Freeland 2003). Programs designed for adults have had different outcomes but most have been unsuccessful. Adults often do not register for programs, and if they do, they tend to drop out before completing them. Cutz and Chandler (2001) have noted that ethnic identity requires adults to adhere to standards of behavior that identify them with their communities. This may include working in the fields or the forests, dressing in typical clothing, and speaking their language. Literacy and/or the learning of Spanish may be seen as a sign of disrespect.

Research during the 1970s and the 1980s was mostly instrumental in nature, oriented toward material development and program design and description. However, there are some notable exceptions. The most prominent literacy theorist in Latin America is Paulo Freire (1970), well known for his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, his ideas about banking education, and his advocacy for *conscientizaçao*-conscious raising learning processes. His work is still widely referenced by adult literacy program designers, informal education programs, and grassroots organizations and is used as a theoretical basis for the development of pedagogical actions in Latin America and beyond. Another early contribution was made by (1979) Ferreiro and Teberosky with the publication of their book *El desarrollo del niño y los sistemas de escritura* (translated to English as *Literacy before Schooling*). Using a Piagetian framework, these two researchers from Argentina unearthed the process of conceptualization involved in understanding the alphabetic principle. This work has been the basis for rethinking emergent literacy throughout the region.

Major Contributions

During the 1970s and 1980s, various countries in Latin America were ruled by military dictatorships and authoritative regimes or engaged in civil war. The impact of these extreme circumstances on human rights, combined with the general decline

in living standards, fostered social movements during these years. According to La Belle (2000), women were protagonists of these social movements. Their momentum was assisted in 1980 by the United Nations Declaration of the Decade for Women. Many of the activities that women engaged in combined various forms of social action with literacy efforts (Prins 2001). Many publications explore women's literacy learning and experiences within community-based organizations, official programs, and religious organizations (Aikman and Untehalter 2005; De Oliveira Galvão et al. 2013; Guerrero 2014; King 1998; Medel-Añonuevo 1997; Prins 2001; Purcell-Gates and Waterman 2000). A recurring theme in this literature is the role literacy classes play as spaces for socialization (Kalman 2005; Stromquist 1997). Women tend to be confined to their households and hindered by domestic responsibilities and oppressive family structures with few opportunities to interact with other women. Stromquist observes "the literacy classes constitute very desirable social spaces. The classroom emerges as a setting that is socially approved for women and can offer services that are not available elsewhere" (p. 90). These services function as a site for social distractions, a self-help group, and an informal social club.

There is consensus in the literature that the majority of current literacy research continues to be instrumental, what Arnove and Torres (1995) call "under-funded and under-theorized." Jáuregui et al. (2003) note that a great wealth of work has been done on curriculum design and evaluations of performance and quality. Seda Santana (2000, p. 49) points out that "in the midst of multiple demands, research has not been a major priority for Latin American countries." The applied nature of literacy research is due, at least in part, to its close ties to education programs and the sense of urgency to understand and solve what are conceived to be obstacles to obtaining the long-standing goal of universal literacy. Furthermore, adult literacy tends to be divorced from other areas of educational research and perceived basically as a problem of remediation (Kalman 2005).

In the late 1990s, UNESCO supported research on the characteristics of functional literacy. The study, published under the title *Functional Illiteracy in Seven Countries in Latin America* (Infante 2000), was carried out in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, and Venezuela. Using standardized tests for reading and mathematics, the study aimed to measure adults' abilities to comprehend texts with various degrees of difficulty, to do arithmetic calculations, read graphs, and understand numeric information. One of the most important conclusions was that all those tested showed some knowledge about reading and writing, leading the author to question the widespread belief in a literacy–illiteracy dichotomy (Kalman and Street 2013). Adults classified in the lower levels of literacy had approximately 6 years of schooling, while those with higher reading levels had at least 11 years. This led the researchers to conclude that functional literacy is correlated with at least 6 years of schooling. It should be noted that this finding did not consider more qualitative factors such as opportunities to read and write in everyday contexts or the availability of print materials.

The Education for All (EFA) initiative was promoted in 2000 at a United Nations' sponsored conference held in Dakar. Its main objective was to meet the learning

needs of all children, youth, and adults by 2015 as set out in the *Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments*. Since 2002, UNESCO has published yearly Global Monitoring Reports as a way of following up on different aspects of this agenda, such as gender, early childhood education, teaching, and learning, among others. In many of the yearly reports, reading and writing have been an important topic; the 2002 volume was dedicated completely to literacy (see below).

Several studies have recently contributed a more qualitative perspective to a small but growing body of research on literacy, schooling, and social practice in Latin America. A study from Mexico documenting the dissemination of literacy in a semiurban township won the UNESCO International Literacy Research Award (Kalman 2004). In this analysis, the author makes a conceptual distinction between availability (the material conditions for reading and writing) and access (the social conditions for appropriating written culture). She first draws on historical and interview data to portray the development of the town over the last 50 years as a context for using written language. Then she describes in detail a literacy class for some of the townswomen where the local history and culture were backdrops for learning to read and write. She notes that for those whose lives are basically confined to their town, their opportunities for accessing literacy are limited to the reading and writing contexts they encounter there. She concludes that opportunities to interact with other readers and writers are intrinsic to becoming literate.

Rockwell (2001) has also made important contributions to the study of literacy as cultural practice in classroom settings. Her study centers on reading in a rural school in Mexico analyzing how the layout of the textbook and the ways in which reading was accomplished influenced the outcome of the lesson. Zavala (2002) published an ethnographic study of Umaca, a small Quechua community of 70 families in the Andes. There she studied the different ways the townspeople perceive written language, how they associate different meanings to reading and writing and struggle with literacy in both their relationship with their traditional culture and with their efforts to relate to the dominant culture. Because written culture has been associated with Spanish and perceived as foreign to Umaca life, people there have never considered literacy as necessary or found its integration into their lives particularly desirable. Not only did the participants not use literacy in Spanish, they found reading and writing in Quechua cumbersome and pointless.

In 1991, María Lucia Castanheira studied the way children from a working class neighborhood on the outskirts of a Brazilian city had access to reading and writing. Twenty years later, Castanheira (2013) revisited the same neighborhood and contrasted intergenerational data collected from the same subjects, now adults, with data from their families, children, and grandchildren spanning her analysis across three generations. She sets her analysis in the context of social changes affecting the neighborhood – processes of rural to urban migration, the proliferation of written texts in the public thoroughfare, the arrival of the Pentecostal church, and new opportunities for formal education – and provides insights into how transformations in wider contexts affect local literacy practices and residents' relationship to reading and writing.

Finally, two important volumes on literacy in Latin America have been published in the last 5 years. In the spring of 2008, an international seminar at CREFAL (The *Centro de Cooperación Regional para la Educación de Adultos en América Latina*) brought together researchers from Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Brazil, the USA, the UK, and New Zealand to examine topics related to reading, writing, and language and how they relate to discussions elsewhere. *Lectura, escritura y matematicas como prácticas sociales* (Kalman and Street 2009) published in Spanish by Siglo XXI Editores and CREFAL presents the papers presented at this meeting and is a first of its kind – a collection of studies on the ongoing theoretical, school, community, and political issues central to regional concerns. Its originality can be traced to the insertion of Latin American debates to more global discussions; the construction of new theoretical directions based on Latin American conceptualizations of literacy, numeracy, practice, and discourse; and the relationship of these innovations with other paradigms such as multimodality, semiotics, and sociolinguistics.

A second volume, *Literacy and Numeracy in Latin America: Local Perspectives and Beyond* (Kalman and Street 2013) published in English by Routledge, continues the discussions started in the first one. Its purpose was to make the work of Latin American scholars available to academics and interested readers elsewhere and to examine the complexities of reading and writing practices, their local specificities attributable to their context as well as their place in global sites and institutions, and the new directions literacy and numeracy research is taking in the region.

All of the studies referred to in the paragraphs above offer different perspectives on the study of literacy, taking into account linguistic, cultural, discursive, and generational issues. Their goal is to further the understanding of the factors, contradictions, and processes that contribute to the dissemination of written culture, connect the local with the global, explain why literacy is not always rapidly embraced, and recognize the complexity of literacy practices. Overall, these lines of research contribute to a growing body of knowledge about literacies in Latin America and beyond. The value of these studies is not the potential for their immediate application in a given program but the specificity of the cases that they examine, the thoughtful insights they offer, and the critical questioning of narrow accounts of literacy and illiteracy as found in more official and dominant discourse.

Work in Progress

One of the ongoing discussions in Latin America and the Caribbean is around the meanings of the term literacy and its representation in different languages. In Spanish, *alfabetización* (*alfabetização* in Portuguese) refers to both the process of learning to read and write and the presence of written language in a given society. Similarly, in Brazil in Portuguese, a distinction that has been important, especially in education circles, is that between *alfabetizaçao*, referring to literacy in the sense of decoding and encoding, and

letramento, referring to literacy as social practice (cf Soares 2003). Until the 1990s, the notion of literacy was divided into two phases prevailed. This concept claimed that an initial phase involved learning the most *rudimentary* aspects related to encoding and decoding written language, followed by a second phase of learning how to use written language known as *post alfabetización*. The majority of programs for unschooled and under-schooled youths and adults were built on this principle directing their efforts toward the acquisition of an isolated set of mechanical skills. Those unable to recognize the alphabet, name letters, read and write their names, or read and write simple messages were referred to as *analfabetos absolutos*. Those deemed as lacking in the abilities related to reading, writing, oral expression, and basic arithmetic thought necessary for employment were considered to be *analfabetas funcionales*. It should be noted that during the last decade, these definitions have come under scrutiny. Broader notions of literacy and what it means to be literate have become subjects of dispute. These concepts have been debated in international meetings, academic publications, and among educators and policy makers in the region linking their arguments with similar debates in the international context (cf. Rogers 2006; Street 2006; UNESCO 2006).

Researchers and educators have expressed concerns about the narrowness of the term *alfabetización* and its tendency to conceal the use of written language as social practice. In Brazil, for example, the term *letramento* has been used to analyze literacy as social practice and examine its pedagogical implications (Kleinman and Moraes 1999; Masagao Ribeiro 2003; López-Bonilla and y Pérez, C 2013; Cerutti-Rizzatti 2012; Verdiani et al. 2014), whereas in Mexico *cultura escrita* is currently in use to broaden the concept of *alfabetización* to include both culture of reading and writing and the culture found in written text. The definition of literacy as social practice (cf. section "Introduction" of this volume; cf. Street 2001) now has widespread acceptance, as shown by its recent inclusion in the curriculum for language arts in countries such as Argentina, Mexico, and Chile. However, this does not imply that it has been easily integrated into teaching practices.

In the 1990s, the term "youth" was officially introduced to region-wide adult education and literacy and education efforts to explicitly refer to the large number of young people who leave school before finishing their basic education. During this period, Latin America has witnessed the proliferation of education programs aimed at reincorporating learners of 15–30 years of age (or more) back into the education system. These programs tend to be more flexible, focusing on the social, economic, and cultural issues young adults face (Jáuregui et al. 2003). An example of this type of *approach* is the recent program developed by the Instituto Nacional de Educación para Adultos (INEA) in Mexico. The accelerated basic education program based on academic subjects such as mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies also includes courses based on health, family, domestic violence, *child rearing*, and employment issues.

The *Centro de Cooperación Regional para la Educación de Adultos en América Latina* (CREFAL) published, in 2003, a theme issue of its journal *Decisio* on the topic of written culture and adult education. This collection of papers, written for literacy practitioners and program designers, emphasized the relationship between written and oral language, the notion of multiple literacies

(chapter "► Women, Literacy, and Development: An Overview" by Robinson-Pant, Vol. 2; "► Learning: Embedded, Situated, and Unconscious" by Rogers, Vol. 2), the use of writing as a vehicle for learning and self-expression, and the complex relationship between those who read and write well and those who want to read and write well. All of these notions extend the traditional boundaries of the concept of *alfabetización*. A second special issue of *Decisio* in 2008 was dedicated to adult literacy learners' experiences and sentiments regarding reading and writing. It begins with two short portraits written by the Nobel Laureate José Saramago and is followed by short texts either written by adults in the process of becoming literate or oral testimonies that were later transcribed. As a collection it gives voice to those who are often not heard, the young people and adults who learn to read and write late in life.

International agencies continue to play a major role in shaping literacy policies and related programs. As part of the policy aimed at achieving universal primary education (UPE) for all children, UNESCO currently promotes the development of libraries, the publication and distribution of books, and access to information, themes partly articulated through the shift of focus from individuals to "literate environments" signaled in the *Global Monitoring Report* (Street 2006; UNESCO 2006). In Latin America, this has been translated to a series of programs referred to as *fomento del hábito de la lectura* (promoting reading habits). Currently, 19 Latin American countries have national reading plans with similar objectives and schemes of action. *The Centro Regional para el Fomento del Libro en America Latina y el Caribe* (CERLALC), an offspring of UNESCO, provides countries technical support for running their programs; organizing events; training teachers, librarians, and other literacy personnel; and circulating information. It is not coincidental that these programs have developed simultaneously: the region is currently facing what has been called an education crisis, provoked at least in part by the recent concern caused by the low achievement scores that students are obtaining on standardized tests and their poor rating in comparison with students in other countries, even after most Latin American nations have given priority to expanding their school systems over the last 45 years (Peña and Isaza 2005).

The national reading programs are very similar in approach. They are based on the premise that reading is necessary for the development of democracy, the fight against poverty, the advancement of science and technology, and, in general, a higher standard of living (Peña and Isaza 2005). The idea that reading is essential for personal development, instills morals and values, and contributes to democracy by strengthening national identity and social economic development is ideologically reminiscent of the 1960s literacy campaigns. The various ministries of public education seek to promote reading beyond the usual language arts curriculum, through book distribution programs for neighborhood groups, schools, and public libraries, publishing programs to support the production of reading materials for young people, and working closely with teachers and school.

However, the programs do not exist without critics. Zavala (2005) notes that they operate from a single notion of reading and do not contemplate realities of people in Latin America struggling to get by. Kalman (2006) questions the idea that becoming a reader is a matter of habit and argues that written language use is deeply embedded

in other communicative processes. Citing Seda Santana (2000) noted that legislating literacy often comes up against the conditions and variations of cultures. Becoming "a region of readers" will only be possible when the social world of diverse groups and cultures are taken into account. All authors agree that the distribution of books alone will not turn people into readers. The appropriation of literacy requires opportunities to interact with other readers and writers and participate in social situations where written language is key to communication (Kalman 2004; Rogers 2014; Also see Robinson-Pant, Vol. 2; Rogers, Vol. 2).

Problems and Difficulties

One problematic situation for countries in this region is the heavy influence that international agencies have in shaping policies and programs. From 1981 to 2000, UNESCO organized and directed its education policies for the region through the Principal Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PPE). From 1981 onward, the main thrust was to promote primary education for children (Ames 2003; Torres 2004). Despite the importance official policies gave to literacy and basic education for adults, few resources were channeled toward these areas. In countries where two-thirds of the rural population were illiterate, only 1% or 2% of their education budgets are/were directed to adult education (Arnove and Torres 1995; Jáuregui et al. 2003). This is partially due to the emphasis in international policy directives on UPE and the ensuing reluctance of national governments to fund adult literacy and basic education (cf. "Informal Learning and Literacy" by Rogers, Vol. 2). The World Bank has also promoted the idea that investing in education programs for children brings a higher rate of return than investing in adults (UNESCO 2006; World Bank 2006), although the Global Monitoring Report has scope for reintroducing emphasis on youth and adults (Street 2006; UNESCO 2006).

This policy has had several impacts on the direction of literacy work with communities and target populations. It has led educators in the region to separate literacy for children and adults, based on the premise that they could not learn together or from each other. As a result, many opportunities for intergenerational learning may have been missed despite the important findings on parent–child interactions around literacy from research in other contexts (cf. Ames 2003; "▶ Learning: Embedded, Situated, and Unconscious" by Rogers, Vol. 2). It has also contributed to adult programs being second rate, depending on untrained volunteers, improvised spaces, and low social prestige. The poor funding and status of adult literacy and basic education have led to the dismantling of important state-funded organizations previously responsible for designing and coordinating learning opportunities. While adult literacy initiatives have often been criticized for their irrelevancy, inefficiency, and compensatory nature, these policies have been a major obstacle to professionalizing literacy teachers, systematically documenting programs, and improving practice (Rivero 1999). The current tendency in Latin America is to think of literacy policy as a two-pronged agenda: preventive measures to provide high-quality education for children and keep them in school and the development of programs for marginalized

youth and adults (Torres 1998). In order for this approach to be translated into action, international agencies and lenders will have to reconsider their policies and create mechanisms for more local participation.

Although countries in the region are making efforts to provide education opportunities, both oral and written, to indigenous populations in their own language, literacy in indigenous communities continues to be problematic and insufficiently understood. Today, even with the development of some alphabetic representations, most of these languages are unwritten. The issue of literacy and illiteracy among speakers of indigenous languages poses important questions for the conceptualization of what it means to be literate (King 1998; Freeland 2003; Jones and Martin-Jones 2000). In the strictest sense, one would have to conceive these cultures and peoples as agraphic, without writing, rather than illiterate, unknowledgeable of reading and writing. In school contexts, indigenous languages continue to be used mostly as a bridge to the dominant language. What is needed is that the local languages be used as a means of communication and reflexion as well as the language of instruction. For writing to thrive, literacy policies will need new strategies that promote the use of writing and the development of indigenous writers who can create written texts from and for their cultures (Ferreiro 1993). Currently, countries such as Mexico, Nicaragua, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru are developing programs that emphasize the need to develop a strong sense of identity among learners in addition to learning to speak, read, and write both the dominant and indigenous languages. If the context allows it, this would also include teaching indigenous languages to nonindigenous speakers (Schmelkes 2001).

In recent years several researchers have continued to broaden the view of literacy research, which for the most part is permeated by a sense of immediacy that overrides other agendas. For example, Lorenzatti (2008) in Argentina analyzed the inclusion of educational programs for under schooled youth and adults as part of her university's extension program. As a result of democratization processes of the 1980s, some universities in Argentina diversified their extension programs by offering educational services designed for popular sectors. This has provided opportunities for researchers to design and analyze literacy processes that include the appropriation of written culture by enhancing learners' reflection on their current realities and using reading and writing to examine, confront, and express their views and understandings.

Zavala's work (2008) reveals the "gap" that exists between what Peruvian literacy campaigns seek for "illiterates" and what these "illiterates" actually need by comparing official discourse with a case study of a bilingual Quechua and Spanish speaker conceived of as a "functional illiterate" by the State. Zavala reveals how this woman manages Spanish literacy practices within the core of her identity as a mother and a grandmother and discusses how literacy appropriation may be related to cultural transmission and to affection. Cragnolino and Lorenzatti (2013) examined the problems of underprivileged youngsters, their access to basic education, and the written culture in Córdoba (Argentina). They focus on how educational policies are materialized in specific actions, how school and job training proposals are articulated, and the place written culture occupies in both spaces. And Gloria Hernández (2013) examines the relationship between rural students' reading and writing practices with school expectations and curriculum. She finds that young people who have constructed

experiences with writing throughout their lives acquire a distinctive place in the way they position themselves in relation to literacy at school. This positioning surpasses the mere oral function announced in many textbook activities to include their understanding of the contexts in which these practices are used and constructed. Unamuno (2014) discusses the beliefs and values associated with writing in Wichi (spoken in the Chaco region of South America that spreads across parts of Bolivia, Paraguay, and Argentina), its current uses in the community, and their implications for teaching reading and writing in this language. And Castanheira (2013), as noted above, describes the tension in a Brazilian context between everyday uses and meanings of literacy and the narrower view imposed by local schools.

In general, research in literacy in the Latin American region has been characterized as dispersed and weak. For the most part, universities and other institutions of higher education lack infrastructure, funding, and qualified personnel in this field. For this reason, much of what is available in local publications is centered on immediate program applications, program evaluations, material development, and policy analysis. There is an urgent need for a broader research agenda, graduate programs for training of new researchers, and increased collaboration and academic exchanges among researchers.

Future Directions

Over the last six decades, countries have expanded their school systems and strived for all children to receive a basic education. As a result, the population of young people reaching postprimary, upper secondary, and tertiary levels is increasing. While precise data is scant, and varies from country to country, there are a couple of telling examples: according to the data available at the Organization of American States website, between 2005 and 2008, the number of people between the ages of 20 and 24 who completed a secondary education in Chile and Venezuela grew to 8.2% and 7.15%, respectively (http://www.prie.oas.org/espanol/cpo_indicadores.asp). The implication of these statistics is that in just 3 years, the demand to go on to postsecondary levels increased considerably.

This is pressuring the national education authorities to accommodate more and more students in their high schools, technical schools, and universities. While historically these levels of education were reserved for the upper middle class and well to do, the population is growing more and more diverse, creating new challenges at the curricular level and for teachers. It is also increasing the presence of students who are members of sociolinguistic minorities, either speakers of languages other than the national languages (mainly Spanish or Portuguese) or speakers of nondominant varieties of the national language. Others may be members of communities where education beyond primary school is very recent or where reading and writing practices are scarce or related to domains other than academics.

This has led to a proliferation of research on the topic of academic literacies (cf Lea and Street 1998). For example, a search on Google in Spanish using the key words *literacidad académica* produces 2650 titles for the year 2007, 4270 titles for

2010, and 6000 for 2013. The growing literature around this topic is multidimensional: work can be found from several angles as pointed out by Bañales et al. (2013) in their comprehensive review of academic literacy research in Mexico. They note that key work is centered on knowledge and beliefs about academic literacy, analysis and production of academic texts, reading and writing practices for academic purposes, and issues regarding teaching and learning. Much of this work challenges the prevailing fear that "new" students coming to university "can't write" and instead focuses on the variety and diversity of writing genres they bring with them and that different disciplines require (cf. Lillis et al. forthcoming).

Carrasco and Kent (2011) discuss the challenges of learning to become an author in sciences by examining the writing of doctoral students in Puebla, Mexico. Zavala (2011), also studying university students' written texts, presents the academic trajectory of two Quechua-speaking students in Peru, arguing that their processes for appropriating academic literacy (specifically writing) are related to their indigenous identity and a display of agency. These case studies show that they are actors in the world, who participate in communities of practice and who may negotiate institutional positionings in order to read, write, and participate in academic contexts. Marinho (2013) also presents the case of indigenous students at her university in Brazil and notes different practices that tend to hinder students' learning even though they have been accepted as students. Also in Brazil, Castanheira and colleagues (2015) have described the linguistic and literacy issues involved as students from Angola have come to Brazilian universities.

Carrasco et al. (2013) review the characteristics and specificities of reading and writing in high school and universities in Mexico, noting that literacy demands vary not only from discipline to discipline but also from one educational level to the next. Hernández (2013) discusses the issues related to the real-life demands for literacy of young students and their attempts to make sense of school reading and writing requirements from these practices, often finding official uses of written language strange and irrelevant. Carvajal (2013) examines students' collaborative writing for a science class and details their processes of collecting information.

New directions in literacy research should also include the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) (see chapter "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies" by Leander and Lewis, Vol. 2). Present efforts are concerned with the distribution of equipment and "technological readiness" while the ways in which ICTs shape literacy use (how people learn to use these technologies, the place they play in everyday communication, or how new formats and connectivity are inserted into the language life of communities) are still unexplored. The impact of handheld devices and the types of transformations in reading and writing messages have not been investigated. While there have been some experiences in using computers in classrooms in Mexico, Chile, Brazil, and other parts of the region, there is an assumption that their mere presence in schools will improve learning. It is often assumed that past curricular contents of literacy will continue to be essential for the future. As a result, computers have been installed in classrooms without much thought given to how teachers and learners will use them (Kalman 2013; Kalman and Guerrero 2013; Kalman and Rendón 2014; Kalman and Hernández 2013).

Emilia Ferreiro (2011) points out that despite the extensive campaigns coming from international agencies that promote the use of computers in school, there is deep resistance to incorporating them into classrooms, even in more technologically advanced countries where the adoption rate is a mere 20%. She questions the immediate benefits for learning that are often associated with so-called computer literacy or information literacy. She argues that we need to educate young people to be critical readers, capable of questioning and probing what is written on paper or screen and apt writers who are able to express themselves in persuasive and convincing ways. Dussel and Quevedo (2011) argue that there is a tension between the traditional ways schools organize knowledge in fragmented subjects and topics, divide time into small time parcels (e.g., 50 min periods), and use space and the ways young people now experience time, space, and knowledge in their daily lives as these become more and more mediated by digital media.

Researchers are now turning their attention to community uses of digital technologies as a way to understand how they are disseminating into the activities of daily life. Hernández (2015) discovered the incorporation of digital embroidery machines and computers in cottage industry sewing shops. Kalman (2013) described the appropriation of handheld GPS devices by lobster fishermen. Guerrero (2012) describes how she worked around the precarious conditions for using the internet in a small town in Mexico in order to organize adult literacy class using computers. In each case, the procurement of equipment, connectivity, and know-how is closely articulated with situated practices and specific local conditions such as the possibilities for acquiring devices and purchasing machines of different sorts, the existence of infrastructure (electricity and connectivity), and the investment of time for learning how to use them.

In the last decades, literacy in Latin America has been contextualized by tensions for educators, policy makers, and researchers. Literacy has been seen as a step toward the labor market and at the same time as part of the road to liberation. It has been promoted as a means of cultural assimilation as well as the means for preserving local cultures. It has been prioritized for children yet almost abandoned for adults, and efforts to understand literacy have been so instrumental in nature that many questions remain unanswered. A deeper view of literacy in *everyday life*, the emergence of ICTs, and the role of symbolic representations in identity building among youth, *indigenous people*, women, and other historically marginalized groups will contribute to the development of a broader notion of literacy in Latin America. In turn, this understanding can help frame new courses of action for shaping literacy research and practice in this part of the world.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Luis Enrique Lopez and Inge Sichra: Indigenous Bilingual Education in Latin America. In Volume: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

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City Literacies

Eve Gregory

Abstract

Cities, the home of many of the world's great libraries, have traditionally been recognized as a hub of both literacy and illiteracy; proudly boasting literacy excellence in their wealth and variety of resources and practices and sadly acknowledging high levels of literacy failure in their inner-city schools. Below is a review of existing literature documenting the history and development of "city literacies," translated into "literacies in cities." This is followed by a more detailed account of recent major contributions to the field and trends in research in progress with special reference to individuals growing up and becoming literate at the beginning and the end of the twentieth century in London, one of the largest and most ethnically diverse cities in the world. During the early twentieth century, research is reflecting the "superdiversity" (Vertovec, New complexities of cohesion in Britain. Superdiversity, transnationalism, and civil-integration. Commission on Integration and Cohesion, HMSO, West Yorkshire, 2007) of migration and movement between countries taking place and a brief outline of just a few current directions is given. The contribution then summarizes problems in this field and finally points to possible future directions for the research on literacies in cities during the coming decades of the twenty-first century. Throughout time, we see the contrasts and contradictions between studies documenting informal literacies taking place in homes and communities, which show a wealth of skills, knowledge, and inventiveness in cities, and reports relating to school literacy which laments poor performance of city children in classroom tests.

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Functional illiteracy • Graffascopes • Ideological model of literacy • Lancaster •
Local literacies • London • Rome • Papal documentation • Superdiversity • UK •
Unofficial literacies

Contents

Early Developments

> Until then, I had thought each book spoke of the things … that lie outside books. Now I
> realised that, not infrequently, books speak of books; it is as if they spoke amongst
> themselves. It (the library) was, then, the place of a long … murmuring, an imperceptible
> dialogue between one parchment and another, a living thing, a receptacle of powers not to be
> ruled by human mind, a treasure of secrets emanated by many minds, surviving the death of
> those who produced them or their conveyors… (Eco 1980, p. 286)

A number of historical studies include literacy in cities as part of a more general
history of literacy. A comprehensive account of the history of literacy by Levine
(1986) stresses the importance of Athens as the first city with widespread institu-
tionalization of literacy around 500 BC. However, although literacy made possible
the wide diffusion of Greek ideals throughout the Mediterranean world, there was
still a strong preference for oral dialectic. By the twelfth century, this was changing
to the written word. Indeed, Papal documentation in Rome reveals 300 writs (letters
declaring papal doctrine) in 1130, a similar concentration of literacy to the whole of
the city of Rome. Throughout history, however, it is clear that city life gradually
facilitated and fostered the written mode and that literacy competences were gener-
ally more developed in cities. London was particularly advanced in this respect.
Thus, wills were officially listed in London from 1258 and records kept by royalty of
personnel in the state chancery etc. from the Early Middle Ages.

From the Renaissance on, cities were regularly populated by a higher proportion
of literates and attracted more literate immigrants. They also held more formal and
informal opportunities for learning and literacy education. Among other studies,
Cressy (1980) documents impressively high rates of literacy among the merchant
classes of late medieval London where literacy had a practical value for most
professions and crafts. Cressy stresses that sixteenth century London women were
precocious readers – something unknown in the rest of England – and highlights the
fact that seventeenth century Londoners were unique in Britain whereby only 22%
made marks as opposed to 70% who were unable to sign outside the capital. Studies
of similar cities, for example Florence, show rates of literacy far exceeding more

rural parts of Italy. As Graff (1987) stresses, not only were people in cities more likely to be in trades and professions needing literacy, they were also more likely to understand national vernaculars than rural folk, giving them not only an additional stimulus for acquiring literacy but also access to more materials. According to Graff, cities across Europe were hosting groups of readers, whereby books would be read out loud to both literates and illiterates (see also chapter "▶ Literacy Myths" by Graff and Duffy, Vol. 2).

Social historians focus on the importance of literacy as a means for galvanizing workers, often in cities, into rebellion against oppression. In "The History of the Working Class" (1963), Thompson stresses the uniqueness of "radical London" for 200 years (from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries), which was always more heterogeneous and fluid in its social and occupational definition than the Midlands or northern towns which were clustered into two or three staple industries. The population of London read more widely and was more sophisticated in its agitations. However, as the city grew, not all were able to be so literate. Altick (1957) stresses the contrasts between the literate artisans of London's West End who were "almost to a man red-hot politicians" (267) and the unskilled laborers of East London who remained "a different class of people" who, through their lack of literacy, "have no political opinions at all" (51).

The nineteenth century, indeed, saw a huge expansion of industrialization in cities in Europe and the USA leading to two very separate developments which would later influence late twentieth century and early twenty-first century research into literacy and illiteracy. Both took place within the context of the burgeoning of industry leading to the necessity for a literate workforce and both reveal opposite sides of the coin of literacy and illiteracy resulting from this. In Britain, for example, although basic literacy was offered to all children through the 1870 Education Reform Act which paved the way for free elementary schooling in 1891, it was clear that the government's aim was for workers only to be literate enough to be able to follow instructions rather than being literate enough to begin to question the conditions in which they were forced to work. This tension between the growing demands of industry and the low standard of literacy delivered to and achieved by workers was to be the subject of a number of more recent large-scale studies on illiteracy in cities. On the other hand, literacy for poorer urban workers was generally improving. In smaller as well as larger cities people were rapidly developing their literacy skills by turning to the radical press in order to further their case for more humane working conditions. Thompson (1963) documents working-class radical papers, such as *"The Gauntlet," "The Poor Man's Advocate,"* and *"The Working Man's Friend"* highlighting the spurt in working-class urban literacy as well as noting that Cobbett's Second Register sold between 40,000 and 60,000 copies in 1817.

Historical studies, therefore, leave us with contrasting views of literacies in cities: of both a lively and radical reading public encompassing not only the wealthy and artisans but also the newly urban working class, as opposed to a large group of illiterates from the unskilled or unemployed laboring urban populace. It is a theme that pervades in different forms until the present day.

Major Contributions

During the last decades of the twentieth century, considerable concern was growing over the poor literacy skills of inner-city children as well as the "functional illiteracy" (Vélis 1990) of adults in urban European contexts. In a short document published by UNESCO, Vélis argues passionately for a greater understanding of the complexity of what he terms "functional illiteracy" in Europe. He cites the 1986/7 study carried out at the University of Lancaster in the UK on behalf of ALBSU (Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Agency) based on data gathered from the National Child Development Study of 10,000 children born from 3rd to 9th March 1958 who were monitored until reaching the age of 23, which indicated that 13% of the group encountered difficulties with reading and writing. Extrapolating, this would put the number of functional illiterates in the UK at about 6 million, a figure allowing *The Guardian* (27/11/1987) to announce "Illiterate Six Million: Only Tip of the Iceberg." Parallel to government action in setting up more comprehensive adult literacy and family literacy programs, a literacy research group was formed at Lancaster University who were also founder members of a national network linking practitioners and researchers in adult basic literacy, known as RAPAL (Research and Practice in Adult Literacy).

During the 1990s, members of RAPAL set out to put the insights and perspectives of literacy learners and users themselves at the center of research about literacy. The resulting "*Worlds of Literacy*" (1994) edited by Hamilton, Barton, and Ivanic opened readers' eyes to the literacy lives of a number of urban readers setting out to improve their own literacy skills. These studies set out to question the notion, hitherto accepted, of literacy as an autonomous cognitive skill. Instead, they drew upon an "ideological model" of literacy as outlined by Street (1984), whereby literacy is culturally and socially embedded in peoples' lives. Thus, instead of referring to "literacy" it becomes more appropriate to refer to "literacies" or "literacy practices" (Scribner and Cole 1981) in which people engage and of which they become "members," using the materials, methods, participation structures, and mediators that are appropriate. Within the framework of "literacy practices" or habitual usage of certain types of literacy (for example Bible reading, shopping, playing monopoly, choirs, etc.) that include specific "literacy events" or one-off occurrences of literacy, ethnographers were able to detail a particular cultural or learning practice and its importance in the individual's life (see also chapter "▶ Community Literacy Practices and Education: Australia" by J. Cairney, in this volume).

Two in-depth studies of urban literacies written at the end of the twentieth and the turn of the twenty-first centuries were "*Local Literacies: Reading and writing in one community*" by Barton and Hamilton (1998) and *"City Literacies: Learning to read across generations and cultures"* by Gregory and Williams (2000). "Local Literacies" provides an in-depth study of literacies in the lives of ordinary people in Lancaster, a city in north-west England. Data were collected from over 100 participants in the study in the form of interviews, case studies, and a survey, and these are embedded in a social history of the city, photographs, original literacy documents, and information on the scope and variety of literacy resources in the community. The

theory of literacy put forward is "an ecological approach where literacy is integral to its context" (4), whereby different chapters provide first the context (past and present) of literacy in the city before offering in-depth case studies of four different participants. These are followed by chapters analyzing (a) the range of practices, (b) the patterning of practices, (c) the web of literacies in local organizations, (d) literacy and sensemaking, and (e) vernacular literacies. The whole study is designed within an ethnographic framework, where the authors explain the purpose of their work in empowering the literacies of ordinary people. Integral to the study is the aim to provide an emic perspective (literacy as viewed by the participants themselves) and part of this is the use of photographs of original documents, for example, notes on horses for information at the betting shop as well as a residents' committee newsletter composed by one participant. Overall, the study provides an intimate yet broad picture of literacy lives in one city, revealing a wide range of practices, spanning the predictable, such as library visits, reading newspapers, bills, working on the computer, etc. to the less predictable, such as those tied up with the twenty-five local groups listed, as diverse as the Quiz League, Machine Knitting Club, and People Opposed to Noxious Gases (PONG)!

"Local Literacies" is focused on home and community literacy practices and on adults rather than children or the role of the school as part of the community it serves. In contrast, "City Literacies" uses as its focus two primary schools, one set within the square mile boundary of the City of London and the other, just to its east, in the area of Spitalfields, Tower Hamlets. Using a similar ethnographic approach to "Local Literacies," this study presents a tableau of literacy in the lives of different generations of pupils attending or with children attending the two schools. Similar to "Local Literacies," "City Literacies" aims to "make visible the lives of people whose lives are not normally told" (16). In this case, those lives represent a heritage that is ethnically much more diverse than the Lancaster participants. The authors of "City Literacies" interviewed over fifty people, aged between three and ninety-three, whose origins could be traced back to the French Huguenots, East European Jewish, Bangladeshi British, or Anglo London backgrounds. Again, set within the context of the area, past and present, participants relate their memories of learning to read in one of the two focus primary schools, at home and in their community language or religious classes. The last section of the book presents classroom reading experiences for children at the end of the twentieth century and contrasts these with their very different literacies in Qur'anic and Bengali classes. Throughout, the argument is made that "contrasting literacies" (hitherto regarded as a cultural clash leading to school failure) instead are a strength and that emergent bilingualism and biliteracy equips children with advantages rather than problems.

"City Literacies," written on the cusp of the twenty-first century, was beginning to reveal a major new development and area for research on literacies in cities: that of multilingual literacies (see ▶ Second Language Academic Literacies: Evolving Understandings by C. Leung, in this volume). The end of the twentieth and the early years of the twenty-first centuries have witnessed a massive exodus of people from both economically and politically unstable countries to live in cities across Europe, Australia, and the USA. It is now clear that many children in urban contexts

across the world enter school speaking a different language from that in which tuition will take place. Detailed demographic documentation on the scope of this in Europe and the USA is given in *Urban Multilingualism in Europe: Immigrant Minority Languages at Home and School* edited by Extra and Yağmur in (2004). This collection draws together findings from the Multilingual Cities Project, a project based at Tilburg University, The Netherlands, that investigated the scope and breadth of multilingual literacies as well as language choice in Gőteborg, Hamburg, The Hague, Brussels, Lyon, and Madrid at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The collection of papers highlights ways in which migrants are often, although not always, highly literate in their mother tongue and take with them numerous literacy practices from their country of origin. These practices or "unofficial literacies" (Gregory and Williams 2000) may remain separate from the "official literacies" in school in their new country. With time, however, and for younger children, both heritage and adopted literacies may syncretize, forming a new and dynamic whole.

A number of ethnographic studies falling into the former category, showing dual or parallel literacy practices in the lives of migrants, can be found in Martin-Jones and Jones' (2000) edited volume "*Multilingual Literacies. Reading and Writing different Worlds.*" This book provides a collection of largely ethnographic studies of multilingual literacy practices, largely in cities in Britain. Thus we learn of the different heritage literacies of, among others, Sylheti/Bengali speakers both in Spitalfields, East London, and Birmingham; Gujarati speaking women in Leicester and children in London; Punjabi speakers in Southall, London; Mandarin speakers in Reading; Arabic speakers in Sheffield; and Punjabi and Urdu speakers in Manchester. Most of these studies signal on-going work on a new and fascinating phenomenon taking place in cities, where people are operating in different languages and using different literacies according to the group within which they find themselves.

Work in Progress

Studies on urban literacies in school settings at the start of the twenty-first century tend to focus on the classroom as an active site for negotiating cultures, including definitions of teacher/student knowledge and values etc. A variety of examples showing ways in which this is beginning to happen across the globe is presented in "*Portraits of Literacy across Families, Communities and Schools*" edited by Anderson et al. (2005). Authors in this volume explore the intersections and tensions between "unofficial" and "official" literacies in multilingual cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa; Vancouver, Canada; London, UK; Australia; Quebec, Canada; and the USA. In every case, literacies are multilingual and, as in children show themselves as able to live in simultaneous worlds. The subtitle of this volume "Intersections and Tensions" highlights the very contrasting experiences faced and managed by children as they confront different practices, styles, and interpersonal relationships as well as languages from those of their parents. In some cases, children manage these very positively, practicing with their siblings or

other cultural and language mediators. In others, particularly for example where indigenous groups have been ostracized within their native country, shown by the example of First Nation children in Canada and aboriginal families in Australia, the task is more complex and by no means resolved.

One major group of urban literacy practices in which early twenty-first century multilingual children are engaged can be grouped under the umbrella of "community classes." These are the subject of interest by a number of linguists and educationalists and may involve both religious and secular literacy classes. Community classes have, of course, long existed in cities, usually entailing both religious and heritage language classes. However, research studies now reveal a shifted interest from simply the factual and historical to the ways in which community classes might enhance both cognitive and literacy skills as well as the effect they might have on children's identities. A number of studies in this field at the beginning of the twenty-first century are focusing on the multiple identities of children participating in community classes as well as the notion of identity choice (Creese and Martin 2006; Helavaara Robertson 2006).

Since 2000, studies on literacy in cities have taken a postmodern perspective, revealing the multiple and overlapping literacies in which children and their families engage (see also chapter "▶ New Literacies, New Times: Developments in Literacy Studies" by B. Street, in this volume). For example, work by Pennycook on literacy as a local practice shows how artifacts including texts of different kinds are important signifiers of literacy practices and their historicity. City dwellers might be engaged in producing the public literacy of graffiti while also participating in the literacy practice of writing postcards whereby the graffiti changes assumptions of who decides what the city looks like while the picture on a postcard "frames" the city in a certain way, deciding how it should be represented. He refers to graffiti as "graffascopes" or "counter-literacies." Work on Hip Hop (Gee 2012) also shows how literacy can be used as a form of resistance or "counter-literacy," mainly in city contexts (see also chapters "▶ African American Literacies" by E. Richardson and "▶ Literacies in the Lives of Global Youth" by J. Mahiri, in this volume).

Problems and Difficulties

There are a number of problems and difficulties for future research on literacies in cities. Some of these are listed below, followed by a section on possible directions for future studies which might address some of these:

- There have always been (and still are) contradictions concerning the extent of illiteracy existing in cities. Different research approaches produce different data. In the UK, for example, on the one hand surveys conducted among employers as well as Universities appear to reveal considerable cause for concern at the standard of literacy. Most of this concern centers on the standard of children in urban contexts. On the other hand, however, national examination results improve

year by year. Immense problems have always existed in measuring standards of literacy and illiteracy, and this is most apparent in city contexts;

- What is found tends to reflect the research methodology employed. Performance in national tests may well fail to reveal the breadth of urban children's "unofficial literacies." Ethnography has begun to open up insights into these but we still lack knowledge of the literacy practices of many multilingual and/or urban groups. For this knowledge to improve, we shall, at the very least, need:
  - Life histories of those who have migrated so that the role and scope of different literacies in life as well as the way in which these link with changing and/or multiple identities are uncovered. We also need life histories of those becoming literate for the first time later in life
  - Longitudinal studies showing how peoples' membership of different literacy practices changes over the years and the effect of these changes (particularly where the language in which the literacy takes place also changes) on the identities of individuals
  - A greater range of ethnographic studies on different local literacies, showing particularly what people are actually reading, the materials they use, and the purpose for which they are used
  - Studies that trace the influence and importance of religious literacies in children's lives
  - The huge effect of computer and text messaging literacies – not only found in cities but having a major impact on urban youth cultures

Future Directions

During the second decade of the twenty-first century, the *complexity* of literacies in cities is becoming the focus of research. In 2007, Vertovec coined the term "superdiversity" to distinguish the scope and complexity of diversity in the population of cities, whose literacies reflect this in the number of languages, scripts, and practices taking place. Globalization, migration, and transnationalism as well as a huge expansion in social media and new literacy forms, such as Twitter and Facebook, are crucial issues for investigation as the century progresses. Ethnographic studies are unpicking individual practices at the local level while viewing these against a backdrop of hybridity and globalization. In 2006, Albright et al. pointed to the tension between the local and the global in literacy studies. Working with a group of 8th graders in New York's Chinatown, they argued that the students could not compartmentalize between home (informal) and school (formal) literacy practices and that certain practices, such as Internet gaming and other social media activities, form a "third" or "safe" space, while simultaneously informing pedagogical contexts. They challenged the new literacy studies to extend their remit and include the pedagogical implications of different literacy practices taking place outside school. This will, indeed, be important during the coming decades. The number of publications relating to digital literacies is increasing rapidly (Gillen 2014), and this is likely to continue into the next decades of the twenty-first century

(see also chapter "▶ Literacy and Internet Technologies" by K. Leander and C. Lewis, in this volume).

Research studies on literacy practices are reflecting this interplay between the local and the global. While ethnographic research on local literacy practices in cities are revealing complex language, literacy and social skills, and knowledge held by members, regardless of whether they are children or adults, other studies detail literacies with global implications and scope. Examples of the former include, for example, the literacies learned as children become members of a faith community. A study on the literacy learning of children from four faith groups in London, (Bangladeshi Muslim, Polish Catholic, Tamil Hindu, and Pentecostal Ghanaian, 2013) (Gregory et al. 2013) and a study on the role of faith in literacy learning in a Brazilian barrio (Castanheira and Street 2014) begin to open up this very significant area for future work in local contexts. At the same time, two major studies in their infancy are focused on the global significance of superdiversity and its effect on literacies in cities. One takes place in London, Leeds, Cardiff, and Birmingham and aims to understand how people communicate, both orally and in written form, multilingually across diverse languages and cultures. The team will show how meaning is made through linguistic signs using a full range of repertoires and how these develop in superdiverse areas (Creese 2014–2018). The other takes a multimodal approach including poetry and literature alongside other art forms and will explore how revisiting the past shapes imagining the future, with a focus on the histories of the steel industry and textile industry in Rotherham (Pahl 2013–2017).

This brief review traces how city literacies have come a very long way in the short space of the twenty-first century. However, in the rush towards applauding diversity and globalization, the same contradiction remains as in previous centuries: complaints about the "illiteracy" or lack of school literacy skills of some children while acknowledging the huge range of home literacy practices and school literacy skills of others. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, it is the literacy skills of the white British working class that are being deplored, while those of bilingual children are celebrated. It will only be seen whether the excitement of globalized and digitalized literacy research will extend to the rather more depressing aspects of this group.

The quotation opening this chapter linked literacy with libraries and libraries with cities. It is clear that libraries are no longer the sole or even the major repository of reading materials. Even the most rural environment can often be connected via satellite or Internet to a wealth of literacies, both oral and written, in numerous languages. Nevertheless, cities still remain a hub of literacy. Through facilitating face-to-face interaction for people of all nations and backgrounds they will always provide a haven for the development of new and dynamic literacies.

Related Articles in the Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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Ingrid Gogolin: Superdiversity, Multilingualism and Awareness. In Volume: Language Awareness and Multilingualism

Kate H Pahl: Language Socialization and Multimodality in Multilingual Urban Homes. In Volume: Language Socialization

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