Literacy, Language, and Learning

LITERACY PEDAGOGIES IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

Indigenous, Translingual and Cross-cultural Perspectives



EDITED BY

DESIRÉE PALLAIS • ZALINE ROY-CAMPBELL • CHINWE IKPEZE

Literacy Pedagogies in Global Contexts

Praise for *Literacy Pedagogies in Global Contexts*

A powerful collection of case studies, *Literacy Pedagogies in Global Contexts: Indigenous, Translingual and Cross-cultural Perspectives*, is a serious engagement with the pluralities of Indigenous, translingual and Cross-cultural literacies in global context. This co-edited collection addresses a complex perspective of literacy pedagogies as approached within local nuances of teaching, learning, and evaluating and its applications in everyday practice. With tangible examples of creative, innovative, and culturally sustaining approaches to literacies from across the world, this book *shows* us how children, youth, educators and communities are actively involved in negotiating, organizing and orchestrating their cultural and linguistic productions.

—*Luis Urrieta*, Professor, The University of Texas at Austin, USA

Prioritizing the literacy development and literate identities of indigenous and multilingual learners in culturally sustaining ways is a clearly articulated global mandate resounded in the voices of the expert contributors to this book. This book is a much-needed resource for every teacher or preservice teacher who values diversity and is committed to creating classroom environments, using culturally informed literacy instruction, and supporting learning experiences in which all indigenous and multilingual children and youth thrive.

—*Doris Walker-Dalhouse*. PhD, Professor of Literacy, Marquette University, USA

Literacy, Language and Learning

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Books published in the *Literacy, Language and Learning* (LLL) series should address diverse literacy practices and research across socio-economic boundaries, cultural-linguistic contexts, and learner-educator variables in broad K-20 and other international educational settings. In particular, the editors are interested in proposals that address culturally responsive/sustaining and social justice pedagogy, literacy/content literacy strategies, literacy practices in diverse settings, curriculum-based reading and writing activities, digitalization/technology and literacy, including AI and VR based literacy, English language learners, home-school-community connections, and global, national and local perspectives to teacher education. Proposals from both national and international communities are welcome. Please visit the Emerald's website for proposal guidelines. Specific inquiries about proposal preparation/submission can be directed to the co-editors, Claudia Finkbeiner cfink@uni-kassel.de and Wen Ma maw@lemoyne.edu

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Literacy Pedagogies in Global Contexts

Indigenous, Translingual and Cross-cultural Perspectives

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This book is dedicated to all Indigenous and multilingual children and youth whose voices, languages, and identities become visible in the classroom through the work of dedicated teachers and educators.

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Dr. Adelheid Bwire is a senior lecturer in the School of Education at Kenyatta University, Kenya. She holds a PhD in language education and is the departmental chairperson. Dr. Bwire has experience in preservice and in-service teacher education and research spanning 30 years. Her research covers English language teaching and learning, literacy in early grades, adolescence literacy, teacher professional development, literacy materials development, multilingual story development and education, ICT integration in teaching and learning, language teacher mentoring, capacity building for academic teachers in higher education, and curriculum review. She is involved in the World-Bank-supported national project on teacher professional development in Kenya, which aims to re-tool early childhood, primary, and secondary school teachers with skills to handle the competence-based curriculum.

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Dr. Pelusa Orellana is professor of literacy and director of the Center for Research and Innovation in Reading (CIIL) at Universidad de los Andes, Chile. She has developed reading assessments and reading practice platforms and has conducted extensive research on Spanish reading development in Chile and other Latin American countries. Other research interests include reading motivation and reading habits of students in school and university.

Dr. Leah Panther is an associate professor of literacy education in the Tift School of Education at Mercer University in Atlanta, Georgia. Her experiences with teaching, teacher leadership, nonprofits, and research centers on identifying, designing, and sustaining community literacies to prepare youth for active participation in their own linguistically and culturally diverse communities. This includes humanizing qualitative methods that foreground participatory, sustained relationships with local communities. Recent projects include the Linguistic Justice Collaborative, youth participatory action research projects to preserve local history, supporting the creation of a Deaf studies curriculum, and sustaining Appalachian language and literacy practices in North Georgia. She has published in journals such as English Journal, Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, Journal of Literacy

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Dr. Michelle Vaughn was an associate professor for the Tift College of Education at Mercer University. She has led Mercer on multiple trips that integrate service learning with international study abroad. Additionally, she served as the director of the Mercer University Dominican Republic partnership supporting teacher education throughout the entire country through strategic partnership, professional development conferences, and long term, sustained relationships with universities and the government. Her research interests center on literacy, teacher education, and the use of virtual simulations to support teacher candidates' metacognition. This has led to success in revising the reading endorsement program at Mercer University. Her work has been published in Practice and Evidence of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Journal of Research on Technology in Education, Intervention in School and Clinic, Journal of Educational Technology Systems, and Education and Information Technologies.

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Dr. Eun Young Yeom has served as an English teacher at public middle and high schools in South Korea for 18 years. She received her doctoral degree at the University of Georgia and has returned to South Korea to resume her teaching at a high school. Her research revolves around the integration of young adult literature written in English for English teaching based on the theories of translanguaging and dialogism. Her work also delves into critical literacy, transnational literacy, and transnationalism.

FOREWORD

Literacy Pedagogies in Global Contexts: Indigenous, Translingual, and Cross-cultural Perspectives

Catherine Compton-Lilly
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Whenever I encounter the word "global," my mind goes back to my elementary school classrooms. I envision the globe of the world that was a staple in every classroom as I moved from grade one to six. It was the quintessential globe that you could spin and watch as the world became a blur of color. Then you would drop your finger on a random spot, stopping the world and wondering about the place you had tagged. You would ask, "Where is this? Who lives there? And how is this place different from where I am?"

In this lovely, edited collection, we are presented with a glimpse of intriguing literacy pedagogies across global contexts. Specifically, we explore literacy practices in Kenya, Ecuador, South Korea, India, and Peru. We visit Indigenous communities, including Amazon communities, in many of these spaces. We hear ancient languages and unfamiliar voices. At the same time, we occupy familiar territory as we explore reading assessment and intervention, student engagement, multilingual/bilingual education, teacher education, research methods, and culturally situated reader response. Yet the familiar is presented in a new key (Langer, 2009), and stories have a new cadence. Chapters address Indigenous perspectives and concerns for eco-cultural literacies, true readings of our world.

Two messages can be gleaned from these chapters. There is the insight, information, and inspiration in describing and documenting promising practices, as well as a set of lessons that relate what it means to be a global citizen. What can we learn from others? What is our role in making sense of and fostering literacy pedagogies in and across global contexts? Most of all, how can our work make the world a better place? These are questions that have haunted my own educational career. As a White educator working in

Communities of Color, what is appropriate? What is possible? And what role might I play?

I am reminded of parallel studies that I am conducting with colleagues in Taiwan (see Hsin et al., 2023) and in South Carolina. Both are bilingual book-making projects that involve working with Indigenous leaders to create simple patterned books to teach young children Indigenous languages. In both places, we worked with community leaders to identify book topics, the sentence structures for the children to learn, and vocabulary words to be introduced. We then crafted the books and vetted the drafts with the Tribal leaders, with the understanding that we would make all the changes they recommended. We shared revised drafts and re-revised drafts until Tribal Leaders were satisfied. Based on Tribal leader concerns, several changes were made to vocabulary and illustrations. We even re-wrote a book when Tribal members alerted us to incongruities between the text and Tribal practices (See Hsin et al., 2023 for details). We then produced multiple copies of the books for use in schools and the community. Our goal was to learn from the Tribal leaders and, in the process, experience what it might mean to be truly culturally responsive and relevant.

While on the surface the two projects look much the same, the unique histories and current policies of Taiwan and the Southeastern USA are different, and this affected what we did, how we did it, and how the books are being used in the two communities. In Taiwan, Indigenous tribes are increasingly recognized as important and valued cultural communities. Current educational policies require that all children receive an hour of native language instruction each week. For children in Taiwan, this instruction includes lessons related to languages brought by immigrant parents, Indigenous languages, Taiwanese, or Cantonese. Because of this, Taiwanese preschool and kindergarten teachers were hungry for the books we created. They needed instructional material that addressed Indigenous language and culture with young children. Since introducing our eight titles, preschool and kindergarten classroom teachers have teamed up with Indigenous language teachers to create an additional 23 books, as well as a set of Indigenous folk tales illustrated by children. In addition, recognizing the power of music to aid language learning, teachers spontaneously wrote and recorded songs based on the books.

In South Carolina, where Indigenous languages are not taught in schools, the process has been very different. First, unlike the Indigenous Taiwanese communities where most Tribal leaders were fluent speakers of their Indigenous languages, the South Carolina Cherokee community that we worked with had few fluent speakers. A fraught history—involving the Trail of Tears which drove most Cherokee people out of South Carolina, alongside Native American boarding schools, and complications related to Cherokee Tribal recognition—has complicated the project. While the

Tribal leaders identified the Indigenous animals, plants, birds, and foods to feature in the books, we relied on a Cherokee-speaking graduate student and her connections to the language community to produce the texts in Cherokee. In addition, Tribal leaders could not help extensively with vetting and revising the written Cherokee text, and, because we were working with a Tribal community that is not state or federally recognized, the officially recognized Tribe in North Carolina was reluctant to work with us. Finally, because Cherokee is not taught in local classrooms, we needed to be resourceful in how we distributed the books. We have participated in a Powwow, worked with local schools and libraries, provided books to the state Cherokee museum where Cherokee language is being taught, and collaborated with the state's Department of Natural Resources. In short, we have had to seek out opportunities to share the books with Cherokee children and community members who have no dedicated Tribal land and are widely dispersed across the state.

In short, context matters. Local communities matter. As we work with communities, it is not enough to know about a culture, a language, or a history. We must continually re-learn all this and much more. There are differences within communities and different histories that have defined communities. At some point, all teaching is local. Thus, as Moll and his colleagues (1992) explained over three decades ago, educators—both teachers and researchers—must be ceaseless ethnographers who are willing to learn from communities and adjust what they do according to the communities they serve. The chapters across this book invite us to do just that as we circumnavigate the globe, enter local spaces, and learn from true experts.

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INTRODUCTION

Desirée Pallais

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This publication emerged from discussions during the International Study Group meetings at the Literacy Research Association (LRA) Conference beginning in December of 2019. We discussed the need to investigate the tensions of policy and the promises of research around literacy implementations in different international contexts. Interest on the topic of international literacy research grew at the meetings, with participation in the international study group that ranged between 20–30 attendees each year. The 2020, 2021, and 2022 study group meetings addressed Indigenous literacies, local expertise, traditions, and perspectives amidst the challenges of global discourses universalizing English-only and/or monoglossic perspectives.

In those meetings, we discovered that some LRA scholars were engaged in innovative research, initiatives, and publications in very different contexts around the globe, especially in multilingual environments. Consequently, in 2021 the study group coordinators solicited abstracts for book chapters on Indigenous, translingual, or cross-cultural literacies. This book contains the chapters we selected from the abstracts. In this introduction, we expand on the significance of our volume and provide a synthesis of each chapter, highlighting its specific Indigenous, translingual, or cross-cultural contributions for a better understanding of literacy in a global context.

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SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BOOK

"Indigenous literacies" refer to the varied ways in which Indigenous communities create, interpret, and communicate knowledge and information. These literacies are rooted in Indigenous communities' worldviews, values, and languages. They encompass a broad range of knowledge, including traditional ecological knowledge and cultural practices that are integral to the maintenance and transmission of Indigenous cultures and identities. They also play a crucial role in Indigenous peoples' struggles for self-determination and sovereignty. Indigenous literacies have been marginalized or ignored in mainstream education systems, which tend to prioritize Western ways of knowing and learning. This volume is part of global efforts to incorporate Indigenous literacies into educational curricula and to create spaces for Indigenous peoples to share their knowledge and perspectives.

Empirical evidence and theoretical proposals point to the contribution of local perspectives and local knowledge as part of international literacy efforts (Bloch, 2018; Graff, 2011; Kiramba, 2017). A major strength of this volume is the discussion of perspectives from very different geographical and cultural contexts. It includes data and analyses from Kenya and Zimbabwe in Africa; from Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica in Latin America; from South Korea and China in Asia; from Iceland in Europe; and from the southeastern United States. Another strength lies in the variety of research approaches, which include quantitative, mixed-methods, and qualitative techniques.

The chapters in this volume coalesce around Indigenous, translingual, and cross-cultural approaches to literacy research and development around the globe. Most of the chapters focus on local perspectives and knowledge emerging from multilingual contexts marginalized by colonial histories. Chapter authors join scholarly efforts to recognize the multiple literacies that are needed in diverse contexts, and that go beyond skills and school-based activities (Street, 2013) around the globe. In addition, the variety of examples provides avenues to appreciate the agentic work that uncovers otherwise invisible literacies (Kiramba, 2017) and hidden funds of knowledge in teachers and students (Martínez-Roldán & Fránquiz, 2009). Further, the excavation of local sources of knowledge in various parts of the world reveals the potential contribution of alternative epistemologies (Llorente & Sacona, 2013) that can guide educational improvement efforts as well as a new vision for a healthier planet (Gualinga, 2002).

BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE CHAPTERS

Three chapters by **Bwire** and **Roy-Campbell**, **Yeom**, and **de Oliveira** and **colleagues** explore local multilingual practices in Kenya, South Korea, and the United States. **Bwire and Roy-Campbell** studied the impact of an early literacy

intervention in Kenya with an innovative approach to raising education quality in primary schools, a translanguaging strategy involving three languages: the Indigenous languages Kiswahili and Maa, and English, the official language. Their chapter describes a project that was done with different school cohorts during each of the three years of the project. Baseline data from a survey of students' language and literacy practices before they began school and pretests of students' reading proficiency in English, Kiswahili, and Maa were collected, and, after three years, posttests were administered. The chapter also describes how reading materials were produced in Maa. Results demonstrated a positive impact from having received instruction in the three languages.

Yeom's chapter provides an example of a combination of translingual and cross-cultural approaches toward literacy development in international contexts. It highlights the meaning-making process of emergent bilinguals in South Korea using translanguaging strategies in book club discussions of young adult novels written in English. The chapter describes how utilizing translanguaging pedagogy helped the students produce sophisticated ideas, delving deeper into cultural and racial diversity depicted in the novels while navigating between the Korean and English languages.

Multilingualism is also the focus of the chapter by **de Oliveira** et al., which describes ways an elementary teacher has continuously supported multilingual learners through culturally sustaining teaching practices based on five principles. Some of the principles addressed include: considering students' funds of knowledge, incorporating home languages and cultures, and promoting multimodal instruction. The authors consider how teacher training programs could adopt this framework and through these principles promote a language-as-a-resource perspective (Ruiz, 1984).

Four chapters address the tensions and challenges of Indigenous literacies in South America. The chapter by **Valdivia and Villamizar** contributes a methodological innovation in bilingual literacy development with Quechua and Spanish in Huancavelica, the poorest region of Peru. A bilingual literacy program inspired by Paolo Freire and the Peruvian scholar José María Arguedas enabled 1700 adult women, who previously had been excluded from expressing their oral language of Quechua through writing, to eventually attain literacy in those languages. Conclusions of the initiative demonstrate the potential of considering participants' prior linguistic knowledge and lived experiences as part of the effort to increase access to written knowledge in indigenous communities.

The three other chapters on Indigenous literacies address communities in the South Rodríguez American Amazon. **Pallais-Downing and Pari** analyze the curricular and evaluation contributions of the Bilingual Intercultural Project for the Amazon (EIBAMAZ). The authors highlight case study research that illustrates examples of specific curricular products that reflect an Amazonian view of education, where learning serves the needs of the local community, thereby providing a local perspective to literacy that challenges the universalization of reading and writing practices

emerging from canonical research in industrialized settings. These authors used logic modeling to review the various outcome data of the project, revealing the limitations of prioritizing classroom-level impact factors when evaluating educational interventions in Indigenous communities that have experienced historical exclusion.

Extending the Amazonian view of knowledge, **Trapnell** investigates a teacher training program in Peru that was re-designed to incorporate the voices and ideas of indigenous elders in the curriculum. Her ethnographic research reveals the contribution of indigenous teachers and elders in teacher training efforts that go beyond active participation. Trapnell contends that an epistemological contribution opens up when spaces are available for Indigenous elders to participate with new knowledge generation practices as part of the design and assessment of teacher training study plans. In that vein, Trapnell argues for the need of going beyond the passive incorporation of Indigenous knowledge in teacher training curricula.

Veintie's chapter, also focusing on the Amazon, considers intercultural bilingual upper secondary schools as potential spaces for sustaining and revitalizing Indigenous languages, literacies, and eco-cultural knowledge. Based on ethnographic research in secondary schools where students speak Kichwa and Shuar, Veintie elaborates on the potential in schools to revitalize and sustain Indigenous languages and literacies; the importance of promoting partnerships between schools, communities, and families; and the role of eco-cultural literacies that would promote critical reflection around the environmental issues that would involve transformative action. She calls for the promotion of culturally sustaining pedagogies as a mechanism to bring to life the ancestral knowledge and to change language and cultural practices of Indigenous communities, advocating for the promotion of eco-cultural literacies as part of those partnerships.

Four chapters explore the potential of uplifting local language and cultural perspectives to reverse systemic inequities or distortions around literacy development that originated in top-down approaches. **Orellana and Melo Hurtado** describe their process of developing valid and reliable reading assessments in Latin America based on an awareness of the language and culture of the implicated population(s). They share their process for determining a balance between the customizing features of the diagnostic tool (e.g., cultural adequacy) with its generalizing features (e.g., internal validity). Based on their experience in several countries, they offer a promising approach for supporting reading assessment tools in Latin America by creating local versions of their tool that can generate valid data for local communities in order to inform pedagogical practices.

The chapter by **Tripath and Sinha** takes a sliding door approach to exploring the impact of providing access to literature in Hindi, a local Indian language representative of marginalized groups, in sixth grade

classrooms. The presence of these texts marks a strong commitment by the authors to address societal inequities in the classroom. They also investigate the literacy educator preparation program to foreground cultural and linguistic diversity of students from different social classes to these texts.

Panther, Vaughn, and Luther's chapter describes the features of a literacy educator preparation program that was responsive to contextual differences, thereby promoting linguistic justice and a framework for learning teaching as an interpretive process. Their work identifies the difficulty of shifting teacher candidates away from representing and approximating instructional practices that maintain the status quo for marginalized students and toward seeing teaching as a complex, interpretive process.

Laster and Christenson's chapter synthesizes their experiences in a variety of countries across the world to generate five principles to guide collaborative professional development in international settings. Some of the principles include: serving educators with honor, enacting culturally sustaining pedagogies, creating a community of learners within the local power structures, and sustaining PD over time. They point to ways of empowering educators across continents, countries, and locales to improve literacy instruction for all students.

Originally the plan was to publish our work around indigenous literacies together with a second group of chapters on autobiographic teaching in one volume. However, due to the importance and significance of both topics, as well as the strong response we received to requests for submissions on both themes, we decided to organize the work into two volumes. The first volume is *Redirecting the Flow of Knowledge Across Languages and Cultures: Autobiographical Teaching and Literacy Pedagogies* and focuses on the ABC's of cultural understanding and communication (Finkbeiner & Lazar, 2015; Schmidt & Finkbeiner, 2006; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998), identity texts (Cummins & Early, 2011; Zaidi & El Chaar, 2022), autobiographical and biographical research, and culturally sustaining pedagogies (Gay, 2002, 2010; Paris, 2012; Schmidt & Ma, 2006; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). It provides insights into how the ABC's model is being implemented in various contexts internationally. Our chapters in Volume 2, *Literacy Pedagogies in Global Contexts: Indigenous, Translingual and Cross-cultural Perspectives*, address culturally sustaining pedagogies and Indigenous literacies and knowledge in linguistically diverse countries to support education around the globe on all levels. They provides insight into teaching and learning in different local, national, and global settings and give examples of Indigenous literacies from a variety of countries.

This book will add to the sparse literature addressing local literacies and utilizing local languages in varied global contexts. It should be of interest to educators globally in illustrating how various countries are harnessing Indigenous languages to engage previously marginalized sections of the populations.

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CHAPTER 1

TRANSLANGUAGING AS A COMPREHENSIVE EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN LIVING IN MARGINALIZED AREAS IN KENYA

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Zaline Roy-Campbell

ABSTRACT

This study documents an early literacy intervention in an Indigenous language aimed at raising education quality through the translanguaging strategy. Teacher capacity was developed for teachers to produce books in an Indigenous language and to utilize translanguaging with three languages, with the goal of developing early primary school students' literacy skills. Pre and posttests were administered to determine the impact of the intervention, and results were compared with a control group that had not received the intervention. We measured the differences in performance between students who were taught through the translanguaging strategy and those who were not. Results showed a significant impact of translanguaging, learner-centered reading strategies, and multilingual literacy materials on learners' reading achievement.

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VIGNETTE

"I will not go to that school, I do not want school," Lemayian told his mother one early morning as he wailed loudly. He had had a sleepless night thinking about the incident where his teacher had him kneel in front of the class for hours because he had responded in his home language to an oral comprehension question. He left school feeling frustrated, embarrassed, and bewildered, with tears in his eyes. Lemayian is in Grade 4 in Kajiado, Kenya. He had for a long time been trying to answer oral comprehension questions to the stories they read in class. But all the times he tried, he would not get the right vocabulary to use in English, so he always kept quiet in class. Deep in his mind, Lemayian knew that he understood the stories and would have loved to share his answers in the language in which he could express himself best. Now he fears speaking in his home language, Maa, because he thinks his classmates will laugh and his teacher will punish him. Lemayian is not alone in this problem. Most of his classmates are struggling. They also wish they could be understood. No one seems to understand what they need. Lemayian says that he would like to read and hear stories of the great men and women of Maasailand and of Kenya and of their cultural heritage. But there are no storybooks on this.

INTRODUCTION

Language and Early Literacy

There is considerable evidence that teaching children to read in their first language helps them learn to read a second language because language skills that are developed in a first language are transferable to a second language (Bialystok, 2016; Geva & Genesee, 2006; UNESCO, 2008). However, as much as 40% of the global population does not have access to education in a language they speak or understand (UNESCO, 2016). In many countries with a colonial legacy, schools utilize a foreign language for early literacy development (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Hélot, 2012; Kubota, 2016). Africa, for example, a continent with 53 multilingual countries, has a legacy of using European languages such as English, French, or Portuguese as the language of formal education. This chapter focuses on one African country, Kenya, which has developed a procedure of using the children's first language alongside a foreign language in early literacy development in school.

Early Literacy in Kenya

Kenya is a multilingual nation in East Africa, with over 48 languages. Kiswahili, one of the local languages, is the national language and one of