

Book Review

Reconceptualizing the Writing Practices of Multilingual Youth: Towards a Symbiotic Approach to In- and Out-of-School Writing

Youngjoo Yi

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Given that second language (L2) writing research has traditionally overlooked K–12 contexts (Ortmeier-Hooper & Enright, 2011), Youngjoo Yi's *Reconceptualizing the Writing Practices of Multilingual Youth: Towards a Symbiotic Approach to In- and Out-of-School Writing* adds to the growing body of work in this area. The focus of the book is in- and out-of-school writing by adolescent multilingual students, a relatively new area in the field of L2 writing. As such, the book adds important insights into what we know about L2 writing in secondary school contexts and provides researchers with important theoretical and empirical foundations for studying L2 writing in such settings. Yi uses recent research to advance her arguments for "a symbiotic approach to examine and cultivate the connections between in-school and out-of-school writing and literacy" (p. 91) by adolescent multilingual students, making the book a great resource to those who are interested in studying L2 writing.

The book is divided into six chapters. In Chapter 1, Yi introduces adolescent multilingual writing and unpacks the key concepts. For example, she discusses the nature of in- and out-of-school writing and its importance to gain an understanding about multilingual writing. Also, she provides the backgrounds of adolescent multilingual writers. Later in the chapter, Yi qualifies various key terms such as "adolescence," "multilingual," and "writing" as they are used in the book and concludes the chapter by discussing the aim of the book and providing an overview of its organization.

The focus of Chapter 2 is writing theories. Yi has divided writing theories into three main strands: *cognitive*, *sociocultural*, and *critical*. Yi's review of cognitive perspectives on writing encompasses the original writing process theory by Flower and Hayes (1981) and a recent version of it by Hayes and Olinghouse (2015), as well as writing process theory by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987). For sociocultural approaches to writing, Yi reviews important works by composition and literacy scholars to demonstrate the "social aspects of writing" (p. 25). Underlining the importance of power relationships, identity, and ideology and how they play out in writing, Yi introduces critical approaches to writing by surveying seminal works by composition, L2 writing, and literacy scholars. Thus, Chapter 2 serves to provide readers with important theoretical foundations to situate adolescent multilingual writing.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on out-of-school and in-school adolescent writing, respectively. In Chapter 3, Yi introduces out-of-school writing by surveying important studies to shed light on the sites, characteristics, and importance of out-of-school writing. She notes that with the increasing importance of technology, the interconnectedness among technology, writing, and identity has been closer than ever, and this phenomenon is expected to evolve further in the future. In particular, Yi highlights out-of-school adolescent writing that occurs in various social media and networking sites. She also reviews out-of-school adolescent writing in home, community, and workplace settings. The focus of Chapter 4 is in-school or academic writing. Yi's discussion focuses on students' academic literacy and writing development. She discusses different kinds of academic writing activities, with a particular focus on content-area writing and

writing processes, strategies, and products. Yi notes how factors such as L1 and L2 proficiency, writer identity, and technology also play out in academic writing.

Yi advances her core argument, namely a symbiotic approach to in- and out-of-school adolescent writing, in Chapter 5. She urges readers to view in- and out-of-school writing as a continuum rather than as separate entities. As such, she calls for legitimizing out-of-school writing as valid writing efforts by multilingual writers to develop their writing skills, and she points to the need to explore if and how in-school writing activities have an impact on writers' literate lives outside schools. She substantiates her claim by examining literature that underscores the connections between in- and out-of-school writing. She discusses five principles of a symbiotic approach to in- and out-of-school writing: "cultivating mutually beneficial and bidirectional relationships," "equally legitimate practices," "attention to layering writing practices," "considering student perspectives," and "sharing responsibility" (pp. 91–99). These principles provide fresh perspectives about how adolescent writing should be viewed and taught in the classroom.

Chapter 6 revisits some of the key ideas discussed throughout the book. Yi recapitulates her main arguments for a reconceptualization of adolescent multilinguals' in- and out-of-school writing as she highlights its implications for future writing research and pedagogy. She concedes that it is challenging to conduct out-of-school writing research, considering the difficulty in documenting students' everyday writing activities. However, she argues that a recognition and integration of such writing activities through appropriate pedagogical approaches could be a step in the right direction.

Overall, Yi's book is an excellent addition to the extant literature on L2 writing in secondary school contexts. Researchers working in an area related to K–12 multilingual writing will find this book valuable. Through her symbiotic approach, Yi offers fresh perspectives on how adolescent multilingual writing should be viewed and taught, which has the potential to reshape L2 writing pedagogy in secondary school contexts. Clearly, as Yi points out, more research in this area is needed. Through her analysis, she provides a future research agenda for scholars. Some readers may find the book somewhat lacking, however, as it has little to offer to classroom practitioners. For instance, it would have been helpful for teachers to have a framework about how in- and out-of-school writing activities for adolescent multilingual writers can be linked. Consideration could have been given to what writing pedagogy would look like if in- and out-of-school writing were linked, what writing assignments would look like, and the kind of writing activities that would be appropriate in such contexts. Adding a chapter on these matters would have made the discussion on in- and out-of-school writing more complete and, more importantly, would have provided readers with tools to implement the symbiotic approach in the classrooms. Nevertheless, *Reconceptualizing the Writing Practices of Multilingual Youth* is a well-written book that contributes immensely to our understanding of adolescent multilingual writing.

The Reviewer

Subrata Bhowmik is an associate professor of teaching in Language and Literacy at the Werklund School of Education of the University of Calgary. His academic interests include L2 writing and sociocultural approaches to L2 education.

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