

## Empowering Language Learners in a Changing World through Pedagogies of Multiliteracies

Vander Tavares (Ed.)

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This volume is an assemblage of conceptual explorations of multiliteracies pedagogies and empirical studies based on classroom practices that foster learner empowerment and agency in multiliteracies pedagogy-informed L2 education in varied academic contexts of the world. The volume weaves thirteen chapters organically to show how theory informs practice and how practice further advances theory. It begins with theoretical and conceptual explorations and analyses of pedagogical and philosophical orientations to multiliteracies in Chapters 1, 2 and 3 and unfolds select qualitative studies focusing on multiliteracies-anchored practices in the rest of the volume, collectively reinforcing the fact that recognition of learners' diverse and unique subjectivities, needs, and identities is a centrifugal force of learner empowerment and agency in their learning and literacies development relevant to the current social world.

In the introductory chapter, Vander Tavares elucidates the theoretical underpinnings and conceptual principles of multiliteracies pedagogies that foreground the contributing chapters. In Chapter 2, Fei Victor Lim redefines literacies education in the era of diversifying linguistic landscape and media ecology, reconceptualizing multimodality in three dimensions of learning (i.e., multimodality *for* learning, multimodality *as* learning, and multimodality *in* learning) and identifying the *desiderata* (i.e., considerations for further investigation) for each dimension. In Chapter 3, Tavares critically synthesizes convergencies and divergencies between the New London Group's (1996) pedagogy of multiliteracies and Freirean educational philosophy. Despite the divergent temporal and spatial contexts and sociocultural and sociohistorical conditioning of the theoretical development of the two perspectives, they share a similar onto-epistemological stance, challenging essentialist ideologies and colonial discourses entrenched in many traditional language education settings.

Delving into empirical studies that connect the dots of theory and practice, in Chapter 4, Kristen Michelson promotes an alternative lens to language assessment that validates learners' interests and agency in the designing of their own learning and assessment. Informed by two French as a second language (FSL) learner cases in university, Michelson argues for a paradigm shift toward process-based, learner-centric/bottom-up assessment that embraces learners' subjectivities for meaningful language development for their lived realities. In Chapter 5, Noah Asher Golden provides a raciolinguistic analysis of a Mexican American learner's language-learning experience and critical discussions on contrasting onto-epistemological perspectives embedded in different language-learning models and projects, asserting that a raciolinguistic analysis in ELT is an incumbent means to challenge racist nativism. In Chapter 6, Susana Aparecida Ferreira discusses teacher professional development in Brazil that emphasized teachers' recognition of students' racial identities in teaching, contending that multiliteracies theory-informed practice orients teachers to organize their teaching to critically reflect and address learners' current sociocultural and sociopolitical learning conditions influenced by fast-evolving advent of technology and recurrent racism and other forms of injustice in the local and global contexts.

Through a case study of a plurilingual FSL learner in Germany, in Chapter 7, Lisa Marie Brinkmann examines pedagogical effects of student-designed portfolios for the development of learner multiliteracies and agency, highlighting that student-generated multimodal and multiliterate design for language learning recognizes learners' diverse capabilities and creative potential leading to meaningful academic performance and achievement with learner-designed curricular goals and strategies. Leonardo Veliz and Eveline Chan continue this account of multiliteracies pedagogy with diversity-oriented perspectives in

Chapter 8, showcasing innovative incorporations of multiliteracies in a Chilean EFL learning context. The study exemplifies how to create a multiliteracies-activated, learner identity-affirmed, social justice-advocated learning space and demonstrates how learners were able to critically engage with diverse voices and perspectives represented in multimodal and semiotic texts, developing agency to reposition their identities of race and resisting injustice embedded in the constantly evolving system of communication.

In Chapter 9, Agustín Reyes-Torres et al. introduce a gender-based multiliteracies pedagogy to empower women and advocate for social justice through a critical content analysis of a nonfictional heroine picturebook, focusing on its literary, artistic, and didactic pedagogical elements using a feminist viewpoint. Also centring on language education for young learners, in Chapter 10 Pauline Book explores learner-produced multimodal texts reflective of identity negotiations and investment and discusses how multiliteracies engagement through identity-invested multimodal (re)design of L2 learners' learning in science scaffolds and enhances scientific knowledge in Norway. Another CLIL context is introduced in Kathleen A. Ramos et al.'s study in Chapter 11 that examines two elementary-school teachers' adoption of infographic projects for teaching science to multilingual learners in the United States. The chapter illuminates how a transmodalizing, multiliteracies-engaging approach through infographic projects can contribute to improvement in L2 and scientific disciplinary knowledge.

In Chapter 12, Ekaterina Arshavskaya introduces multiliteracies-amplified, community-based experiential education (EE) approaches to instructional design for multilingual learners' language and literacies advancement in different L2 education programs in the United States. Arshavskaya emphasizes the incorporation of community-based engagement and real-life experience in relation to learners' sociocultural contexts to better prepare learners to use multiple literacies relevant to their educational and professional contexts and support their development of agency and identities to challenge injustice and biases embedded in their present and future social realities. Another community-based, EE-integrated learning context is explored in the final chapter where Tavares and Artëm Ingmar Benediktsson introduce a drama-based approach to L2 education, rejecting a traditional conception of language education and literacies engagement. Their in-depth investigation of Ukrainian refugee learners' Icelandic language-learning experiences through a drama-based project casts a light on a prototype of transformative multiliteracies engagement, a pedagogy of empowerment, social justice, and healing for socioeconomically, sociopolitically vulnerable learners living in unsettling times of life.

In sum, the volume encapsulates how multiliteracies pedagogies enable multilingual learners to recognize their already existing linguistic, cultural, and intellectual talents, claim ownership of the entire meaning-making process of their (re)defined and (re/co-)designed learning in L2, and (re)position their belonging to the world wherein their voices and perspectives are heard and represented. The classroom-based studies presented in the volume contribute to widening the scale and deepening the scope of multiliteracies pedagogies, reflecting on global voices and perspectives of L2 learning and teaching situated in evolving social upheavals. The volume invites and inspires readers in L2 education to further navigate their teaching, learning, and research endeavours to continuously envision pedagogies of inclusion, empowerment, possibility, and hope through creative adaptations from multiliteracies pedagogies, while continuously challenging the hierarchical status quo of language, culture, race, and identity.

### *The Reviewer*

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## Reference

New London Group (NLG). (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1), 60–92. <http://doi.org/10.17763/haer.66.1.17370n67v22j160u>

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