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Authors
Warner, Chantelle
Michelson, Kristen

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Special Issue

Living Literacies: L2 Learning, Textuality, and Social Life

Introduction to the Special Issue

CHANTELLE WARNER

University of Arizona
E-mail: warnerc@email.arizona.edu

KRISTEN MICHELSON

Texas Tech University
Email: kristen.michelson@ttu.edu

Anthropological linguist A.L. Becker once argued that linguistic proficiency is a matter of "an accumulation of prior remembered texts" (1984, p. 435). As literacy has become a key critical term in second language education research in recent years, scholars have become increasingly interested in the role of accumulations of texts not only in linguistic development but in the social and professional life worlds of students and teachers. Language learning involves, to paraphrase Richard Kern's (2000) seminal work on literacy in L2 teaching, the exploration of not only new words, but also new worlds. This includes the linguistic and cultural landscapes of physical worlds, and the rich "social, symbolic and material ecologies" (Thorne, 2012, p. 21) of virtual worlds, as well as the imagined worlds mediated through cultural products and practices including literature, film and television, and gaming. We live, to expand Becker's original sentiment, in and through accumulations of texts and literacy—in the sense that our ever-unfolding histories of engaging with and making sense out of these texts are integral to our contemporary social lives and, consequently, to L2 learning and socialization.

This special volume on "Living Literacies" is an addendum to an existing body of work in L2 education that has amassed over the past few decades, which makes a collective case that literacy ought to be a central pedagogical objective for language and culture curricula. This has been a particularly predominant discourse in collegiate foreign language teaching, where the calls for a paradigm shift are often directly coupled with critiques of the bifurcated curricular models that have long shaped foreign language departments (e.g., Allen & Paesani, 2010; Kern, 2000, 2003), though interest in L2 literacy over the past couple of decades has also been associated with broader discussions around advanced linguistic development (e.g., Byrnes, 2005; Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010; Maxim, 2009) and in particular, language learning for specific or academic purposes (Hyland, 2007; Yasuda, 2011).

The articles in this volume contribute to these ongoing discussions by focusing more specifically on the complexity of L2 literacy, not merely as the interpretation and production of material texts, but also as *lived experience*: as practices that manifest across multiple languages, cultural contexts, and social ecologies; as a means of accessing and of developing identities, for example as a speaker of a new language, a researcher in a new field, or a language teacher working within a particular approach; as constituent of social sites, within which texts and text-based activities unfold.

Previous research from education—in particular, a booming body of scholarly literature on digital literacies—has paved the way for thinking critically about literacy and the social lives of individuals, for example, as they engage in online communities in fan sites or networked digital games in a second or foreign language (e.g., Lam, 2000; Thorne, Black, & Sykes, 2009). This special volume focuses in particular on contexts that are marked as pedagogical. Without forgetting to heed the caution expressed by Firth and Wagner over two decades ago that we ought not prioritize identities as *learners* over other social identities (1997, p. 760), our contention is that it is also important to recognize the ways in which experiences of literacy are phenomenologically different in situations where the social interaction at hand is markedly educational in nature and where the individual's identity as learner is salient—both in classroom practices (e.g., Blyth; Canning & Nelson; Elola, Nakatsukasa, & Tecedor; Allen & Goodspeed; Thoms & Poole; this volume) and in less formal learning contexts (e.g., Gilliland; Lotherington; this volume). Furthermore, if it is to function as a core principle for curricular design and pedagogical practice, it is equally important to examine the ways in which literacy as a concept and as a set of practices enters into the professional lifeworlds of teachers (e.g., Menke; Palpacuer Lee; this volume).

LITERACY: A BRIEF CONCEPTUAL HISTORY

Within contemporary North American foreign language departments and programs, *literacy* is often almost synonymous with the recent wave of curricular reform associated with the critiques of traditional two-tiered language programs described above; but within broader educational discourses, literacy has established itself over the last few decades as a critical term that extends beyond reading and writing to include ways of knowing (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, 2015) or ways of being in the world (Gee, 2012). The emergence of literacy as a conceptual mainstay in the field of education coincided with the advent of sociological approaches to teaching and learning. Lankshear and Knobel (2011, p. 4) identify five interconnected factors that led literacy to take hold in educational discourse during the 1980s: (1) the rise of critical pedagogy inspired in particular by the thoughts of Paolo Freire and a related growing sense of class-consciousness; (2) the "literacy crisis" of the 1970s; (3) increasing academic and public recognition of the connections between literacy, economic growth and social well-being—motivated in part by an awareness of the disparity with which the literacy crisis impacted different communities; which led to (4) the emergence of new institutional cultures of accountability within school systems and the rise of literacy as an arch-indicator for professional accountability; and finally, (5) the spread of sociocultural theory within academic discourses of education (e.g., Heath, 1983; Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Street, 1984).

The final factor marked a major conceptual shift in educational theory—one associated not only with the concept of *literacy* but with *literacy practices*, more specifically. Practice, here, is understood generally as "socially recognized ways of generating, communicating, and

negotiating meanings" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011, p. 33). Thus, literacy in this sociocultural sense does not reside in the minds of individuals, but in the relations between language users, texts, and contexts of use (i.e., what people do with literacies, see Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p. 6). One of the implications of this shift in thought was a greater attention to everyday literacy practices as of equal or even greater value to academic literacy practices. At the same time, ethnographic studies such as Shirley Brice Heath's seminal *Ways with Words* (1983) shed light on the diversity of everyday literacies even within close geographical range through an examination of how the ways that children from three communities within the same town learn to use language interacts with—and in some cases is at odds with—the expectations of schools. As Walter Ong meticulously documented in his 1982 book on the differences between oral and written language within their sociological contexts of use, if writing restructures consciousness in important ways, then it stood to reason that different ways of engaging with texts and textuality would structure thought in different ways. Literacy thus could be understood to entail not only culturally-neutral processes of decoding, but what Hasan (2002), drawing on the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu and Basil Bernstein, described as *invisible semiotic mediation*, the unself-conscious ways in which everyday discourse mediates our dispositions, including how we tend to respond to particular situations, our beliefs about the world around us, and our sense of our place within it.

Building on this backdrop and prompted by further sociopolitical developments within the 1990s, an international collective of education and literacy scholars calling themselves the New London Group (NLG) issued a manifesto in 1994, titled *A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures*. The multi- in multiliteracies was intended to capture both the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the contemporary globalized world **and** the multifarious forms of literacy practices that have emerged in the wake of digital, multimedia technologies. Language and other modes of communication are viewed as dynamic resources (*Available Designs*) for meaning making that undergo constant changes in dynamic acts of language use (*Designing*) as learners attempt to achieve their own purposes, thereby contributing again to the cycle of available designs (*The Redesigned*). Meaning is not viewed as something that resides in texts but rather, deriving meaning is considered an active and dynamic process in which learners combine and creatively apply both linguistic and other semiotic resources (e.g., visual, gesture, sound, etc.) with an awareness of "the sets of conventions connected with semiotic activity […] in a given social space" (p. 74).

While literacy, understood as a social practice, is contextually situated and historically shaped, texts themselves have a material nature that allows them to move across space and time in a relatively consistent shape or design; literacy is thus also *transcontextual* (Kell, 2015). This is indeed what allows us to bring authentic texts, such as literary works and other cultural realia into the classroom, but it is also what enables the *cultural flows* (Risager, 2006) that shape international media markets. But at the same time, because literacy is transcontextual, it is necessarily dynamic—that is, what a text can mean shifts as it comes into contact with new readers who encounter it in their unique contexts, even among learners in the same L2 classroom. And so, literacy also involves the multiplicity of meanings—ambivalences, ambiguities, intertextualities, and complexities—that emerge as texts and practices move across social lives. Building upon Bakhtin's (1981) much-cited characterization of language as dialogic, we could say that not only every word, but every genre, every text has a history of usage which it echoes and to which it responds and at the same time is highly contingent. What this means, is that even the most well-*designed* text in the midst of action is not projected "toward some textual end point but as living its life in the ongoing present, forming relations and connections across signs, objects, and bodies in

often unexpected ways," as Leander and Boldt (2013, p. 22) illustrate in their "re-reading" of the New London Group's original *Pedagogy of Multiliteracies*.

Within second language teaching and learning, literacy entered educational discourses against the backdrop of not only reading research but also—and perhaps more acutely—communicative language teaching. *Literacy-based* language teaching in this sense can be seen as a further realization or expansion of the proficiency-oriented approaches of the previous decades, which are often grouped together under communicative language teaching; however, while both literacy-based and communicative language teaching emphasize meaning making, the former no longer holds the old standard of *getting one's meaning across* as the core learning objective. Instead, proponents of literacy as a new organizing principle for foreign language curricula emphasize that the goal of language and culture teaching is first and foremost to foster active and critical language users capable of moving beyond literal meanings and of reflecting on the nuanced connections between semiotic form, meaning, context, perspective, and history.

Literacy-based language teaching is thus often framed as a direct critique of communicative language teaching, which is believed to rely too heavily on oral communication and on propositional language use where there is an assumed singularity of meaning and intent. At the same time, discussions of literacy in the foreign language classroom have followed on the conceptual coattails of a mounting dissatisfaction within L2 reading research since the 1990s (e.g., Bernhardt, 1991; Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes, 1991), rooted in the sense that comprehension alone is insufficient as a learning goal, that students too often cannot go beyond the level of descriptive content (who, what, when, where) to engage in interpretation and analysis, and that the predominant psychological models of reading have not sufficiently recognized the role of texts as socially embedded practices and as cultural artifacts.

The contrast between literacy-based teaching and both communicative language teaching and prior approaches to L2 reading is captured well by the two contrasting vignettes with which Kern opens his 2000 book *Literacy and Language Teaching*. The first represents a quintessential communicative classroom, in which the instructor begins class by peppering students with personal questions about their family members—numbers and ages of siblings—then prompting students to ask each other about familial relationships, followed by collectively reading a textbook passage containing stereotypical facts about French families. The second engages a range of literacy practices from comparing photos and letters received from students' respective pen pals to synthesizing family descriptions into family trees to asking students to critically reflect on the kind of information about families gleaned from the pen pal activity that might have been missing from the textbook passage. The second of these two classrooms, Kern argues, enables learners to do more than simply practice "vocabulary and structures, but to explore a different world and to relate that world to their own thinking and experience" (2000, p. 15). Kern expounds upon this idea in his more recent book, *Language, Literacy, and Technology* (2015), arguing for a *relational* approach to pedagogy, which emphasizes the myriad of relationships—between readers, writers, texts, modes, media, contexts, and cultures—involved in the design of meaning (pp. 233—234).

Literacy in a second language is thus not only about "what texts mean in an absolute sense, [but] what people mean *by texts*" and also "*what texts* mean to people who belong to different discourse communities" (Kern, 2000, p. 2, emphasis in the original). Because literacy as a concept has long been shaped by sociocultural approaches within education, it has seemed readily compatible with ecological (e.g., Lam & Kramsch, 2003; van Lier, 2004) and intercultural approaches to L2 learning (e.g., Kearney, 2010, 2012; Kramsch, 2011; Risager, 2006), which recognize the interconnectedness of psychological, social and

environmental processes in language use and learning. The transcontextual potential of texts makes them particularly well-suited as cultural artifacts for the classroom. At the same time, the multidimensional nature of literacy captured by the New London Group's cycle of design-designing-redesigned enables teachers to treat texts as design resources for future language use as well as sites of critical reflection on how and why designers make the particular choices they make. For this reason, literacy has had a close relationship with notions such as symbolic competence, which attempts to expand the goals of foreign language learning beyond proficiency to include the "[r]eflection that accompanies interpretation and explores the diversity of interpretations, assumptions, perspectives, positions, expectations, and judgments, and includes reflexivity that turns one's own experience into an object of critical examination" (Leung & Scarino, 2016, p. 90; see also Kramsch, 2008, 2011; Richardson, 2017; Vinall, 2012, 2016). At the same time, notions such as symbolic competence make clear that there is a need for educational frameworks that more sufficiently acknowledge the unique subjectivities and lived experiences of L2 language users as more than simply representatives of or mediators for the given cultures with which they are identified (see Kramsch & Nolden, 1994; Michelson & Dupuy, 2014; Warner, 2014; Warner & Gramling, 2013).

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF THIS SPECIAL ISSUE

The papers in this volume consist of a collection of empirical studies, outlines of pedagogical projects, and narrative essays of language learning and literacy experiences. Together they offer a palette of available designs for potentially redesigning existing pedagogies and educational frameworks in ways that incorporate the forms of agency, agility, and affect that come into play in interactions between people and texts. Each takes up the issue of living literacies in its own way, drawing in varying ways from the major conceptual frameworks mentioned above, notably: multiliteracies pedagogies, sociocultural theory, and ecological approaches to L2 learning. The contributions that comprise this volume can be broadly grouped into three strands: semiotic work by collegiate-level FL learners in instructed language settings (Blyth; Canning & Nelson; Allen & Goodspeed; Thoms & Poole); teacher development and socialization into literacy-based approaches (Menke; Palpacuer Lee), and literacy practices in pedagogical contexts outside the language classroom (Elola, Nakatsukasa, & Tecedor; Gilliland; Lotherington).

The first four papers each examine the complex literacy practices of university-level FL learners in instructed contexts. The authors use classroom-based research methods to explore how learners collaboratively construct meanings from texts both orally (Canning & Nelson) and in writing through digital annotation tools (Blyth; Thoms & Poole) and through their own practices of textual borrowing (Allen & Goodspeed). In quite different ways, each of the studies also considers the particular literacy activities that different texts might afford, thereby disrupting the monolithic commitment to authentic texts often hailed within foreign language teaching. Throughout the pieces in this section, we see the way in which intentional pedagogical design choices open up space for students to reflect and interact with one another, and to be transformed by the reading and writing experiences in which they partake in the language classroom.

In their piece, "Unraveling the affordances of 'Silas Marner' in a Japanese university context" Nicholas Canning and Mark Nelson look at reading as a social activity, through a careful analysis of Japanese L1 - English L2 learners' dialogues around the literary text 'Silas

Marner' (Eliot, 1861). Based on these oral conversational data, they demonstrate that lexically complex texts offer greater meaning-making potentials than simplified graded readers, by virtue of the slowed down reading process that ensues from learners dialoguing with each other around unfamiliar vocabulary. Through this process, which they dub "collaborative dysfluency," collective questions, prompts, and challenges afforded to one another in a group of peers allowed a richer set of individual meanings to emerge and take form. Hence authors argue that the pedagogical preoccupation with individualized acts of reading that has led educators and curriculum developers to opt for level "appropriate," graded readers may in fact restrict and reduce the possible accessible meanings for students, resulting in missed opportunities for learning.

Joshua Thoms and Frederick Poole also approach L2 reading as a collaborative activity, and similarly consider the relationship between text difficulty and literacy activities in their article "Exploring digital literacy practices via L2 social reading." Their study examines the collaborative reading practices of students in a fourth year Spanish class as they read a series of Spanish poems using the digital annotation tool *Hylighter*. Whereas the authors' previous research (Thoms & Poole, 2017), considered the kinds of annotations students favored while reading and found that learners focused on either literary commentary, social interaction, or linguistic issues, this study adds another dimension by considering how text difficulty (as defined by word frequency) might impact the particular ways of reading and reflecting afforded to the students. To the authors' surprise, the less difficult texts (i.e., those containing more frequent lexical items) corresponded with a greater number of linguistically focused comments. Further analysis revealed that these linguistic affordances tended to co-occur with literary affordances, (e.g., students asking each other directly about the implications of a particular metaphor). Thoms and Poole's findings can be understood as another lens on Canning and Nelson's conclusion that text complexity is not a singular measure, attributable to word frequency alone: a linguistically less complicated text can nevertheless be literarily complex. Both Canning and Nelson and Thoms and Poole demonstrate the possibilities that emerge when lexical items are not likely familiar to learners, in particular by showing how various forms of dialogue within a community of readers become generative, productive ways to collectively construct meaning from a text. This, in turn, has implications for how educators select and approach texts—and associated pedagogical tasks—for the language classroom.

Whereas Canning and Nelson and Thoms and Poole provide us with slow-motion accounts of readers' collaborative interpretive processes, the contributions by Carl Blyth, and Heather Allen and Lauren Goodspeed paint a picture of the literacy practices that emerged as a result of learners' individual ways of engaging with texts. Drawing on the Bakhtinian notion of dialogism and Kramsch's theorization of multilingual subjectivities, Blyth's paper presents case studies of two advanced learners of French in a collegiate setting, and traces how the students' identities as multilingual subjects were awakened through pedagogical experiences involving textual interpretation, dialogue, and reflection. Blyth depicts a pedagogical sequence entailing a digital social reading activity, in which students were asked to carry out the kinds of activities Thoms and Poole associate with linguistic affordances (e.g., glossing unfamiliar words) and to reflect on their affective responses to the texts read. The students then worked together on a back translation of a poem and used the digital social media tool to reflect on this process. This series of activities collectively created a context in which students could continually reflect on the nuanced meanings that particular word choices can bring about. Blyth argues that this process allowed these students to shift their perspectives on their own language development; rather than seeing themselves as

deficient French speakers, they began to view themselves as multilingual speakers, seeing their multiple languages as resources that expand the range of meanings they could make through their interactions with texts.

While Blyth's paper affords a look at individual learners' transformed conceptions of their identities in the process of textual interpretation and translation, Heather Allen and Lauren Goodspeed present a view of how students in a third year French course developed into purposeful reader-writers. Allen and Goodspeed outline a series of genre-based textual analysis activities and tasks designed to guide the learners in textual borrowing—in other words, encouraging them to appropriate forms of discourse from model texts for their own purposes. After reading and jointly analyzing genre features and moves in a public speech by former president Nicolas Sarkozy, students were asked to adopt the fictive identity of a French resident and then produce their own letter manifesto from this perspective. Through an analysis of the types of features borrowed and salient examples of students' manifestos, Allen and Goodspeed show that students neither blindly nor restrictively apply textual borrowings but rather that they begin to imbue their compositions with *life* by realizing their ideas of perspective and voice as they actively select among the possible resources.

The sometimes seemingly herculean task of guiding students through such fluid and oftentimes ambiguous reading, writing, and learning experiences requires teachers with views of language and learning that create space for the multiplicity of meanings that are made in and through texts, and who also possess the practical pedagogical knowledge to carry out such activities. The papers by Mandy Menke and Christelle Palpacuer Lee offer insights into the conceptual development of language educators as they attempt to reconcile academic notions of multiliteracies pedagogies with their professional lifeworlds and experiences.

Menke's paper, "Literacy-based curricula in university foreign language instruction: Perceptions from non-tenure-track faculty," reports on a Professional Learning Circle (PLC) formed within a university Spanish department so that faculty and graduate students could collaboratively explore multiliteracies pedagogies and relate them to their own curricula. Members of the PLC collectively read academic articles around literacy-based language pedagogy and participated in discussion groups led by a rotating facilitator. Menke focuses on the contributions of the non tenure track faculty (NTTF), who made up the majority of the group, examining how the NTTF conceptualized literacy and literacy-based instruction, and the benefits and challenges they articulated. Menke's findings echo those from previous research on graduate student instructors, in particular instructors' emphasis on pedagogical *objects* over pedagogical *approach,* and their inability to reconcile social and cognitive dimensions of literacy. In this case, NTTF's conceptualizations led many participants to construe literacy-based pedagogy as an extension of any communicative language teaching approach promoting the use of authentic texts. While faculty in Menke's study identified time and (curricular) space constraints as the greatest challenges to implementing literacy-based pedagogies, it would seem that their still developing understandings of literacy-based pedagogy were also a constraint of which they were not yet aware. Menke concludes that the participants' engagement with the academic texts as a source of conceptual knowledge seemed to be outweighed by participants' lived experiences, which implies that perhaps our current models for professional development ought to mirror the kinds of experiential learning we would hope to design for our own language classrooms.

In her piece, "Living 'lyrical moments' at the art museum: Multiliteracies in action," Christelle Palpacuer Lee describes one model of what a Multiliteracies-focused professional development program prioritizing experiential learning might look like. In an on-site program in Paris, in-service middle and high school teachers of French partook in a series of

workshops on multimodality and multiliteracies pedagogies, followed by a walking tour of the Musee d'Orsay designed by the participants themselves. Palpacuer Lee narrates the pathways and experiences of this group of teachers as they engaged with artworks in the museum and assembles a portrait of the participants' aesthetic and affective responses captured in their post hoc written reflections. By experiencing the museum as a living text, participants were able to reflect on literacy as a symbolic performance, that is, as an embodied, multimodal composition orchestrated as much through participants' movements through a designed space as through any static elements of its structure. In this way, Palpacuer Lee seems to share in a critique of literacy studies made by Catherine Kell (e.g., 2011), namely that the field tends to focus on literacy events and practices as situated 'in place' rather than examining their movement 'across places.' A particularly poignant aspect of this program for some of the participants was the opportunity to incorporate movement. Accordingly, this afforded learners the chance to reposition themselves in the role of experts in guiding interpretations and reflections on artworks by designing and leading their own tour. This suggests a parallel moral for the educators' own classrooms, where learners may likewise benefit from opportunities to move with and through texts in activities that accentuate experience over the production of particular text types or models.

In the same vein inaugurated by Palpacuer Lee's article, the final papers in this volume invite us to consider the many factors—relationships, communities, identities, agency, and investment—beyond the nature of the texts themselves that contribute to literacy development. In the introduction to their *New Literacies Sampler*, Michele Knobel and Colin Lankshear, assert that "reading and writing can only be understood in the contexts of social, cultural, political, economic, historical practices to which they are integral, of which they are a part" (2007, p. 1). The articles by Betsy Gilliland and Idoia Elola, Kimi Nakatsukasa, and Marta Tecedor share most deliberately in this claim, by placing considerable emphasis on the nexus of these social and contextual factors, within which individual acts of reading and writing are embedded, and the social actors who navigate them as they develop their identities as multilingual subjects.

Idoia Elola, Kimi Nakatsukasa, and Marta Tecedor's paper uses the lens of sociocultural Activity Theory to examine how three bilingual/multilingual doctoral students in a Spanish program develop their identities as researchers, and how these interrelate with their evolving investment over the course of two semesters. By establishing at the start of the article the advanced multilingual proficiency of the participants, this study expands the scope of literacy beyond the ability to produce the academic genres of graduate study. Instead, the article considers how their identities as academic researchers were mediated through the goals that these students set for their academic writing. Based on a comparative analysis of the different types of investment the three students made in their learning, the authors suggest a more social approach to graduate student literacy development that recognizes the production of academic genres as dynamically mediated forms of activity and participation within desired communities of practices (see also Dubreil & Thorne, 2017, for a more extended set of discussions around social pedagogies in L2 teaching and learning).

Betsy Gilliland's narrative of Ivan, a young English language learner, reminds us that literacy development is often impacted by the individual relationships that constitute one's broader social ecology. Focusing on the notion of literacy sponsors, Gilliland traces Ivan's various in and out of school experiences and the kinds of support offered—or not offered— by his teachers, demonstrating that literacy sponsors are not necessarily always the people we might expect them to be, namely teachers. In Ivan's case, the relationship he had with his police gang officer ultimately offered a type of literacy sponsorship that allowed Ivan, from

his own account, to succeed, and indeed thrive, both in and out of school. Reflecting on Ivan's experiences, Gilliland echoes much of Palpacuer Lee's call for L2 literacy pedagogies that focus less on the production of individual texts and more on significant moments that allow learners to connect in-school literacy experiences with their lived experiences in ways that acknowledge and affirm the ways in which those might challenge anticipated (i.e., ratified) forms of textual interpretation and production.

The final paper in this collection is Heather Lotherington's recount of her experiences testing various "mobile" assisted language learning (MALL) apps. The essay begins with a taxonomy of language learning apps and continues with an autoethnographic account of her experiences using two such popular apps. In a critical analysis of the apps based on her own experiences as an informed language learner, Lotherington describes her thoughts and frustrations as she interacted with these mobile apps, only to conclude that they do not afford the mobility promised. Here Lotherington effectively demonstrates that language learning through currently available MALL apps is, in fact, the antithesis of literacy: it is about uncritical memorization and translation of decontextualized language forms, where users are rendered a-literate. There is no space for individual meanings to be created in using these apps; rather, users' interactions are mechanical, and human capital is exploited to do the work of machines (e.g., translating text for free). If new technologies, in part, shape orientations to learning, Lotherington's essay offers a cautionary reminder to educators of the importance of aligning the use of a particular tool with a pedagogical design that coheres with carefully considered views of learning, teaching, and language.

EMERGENT DIRECTIONS IN L2 LITERACY

Although diverse in their scope, the papers in this volume suggest some clear areas for future work. Conventionally defined objectives for L2 education, which construe learning outcomes in normative terms—e.g., target language proficiency and cultural appropriateness—have perpetuated a tendency to underplay the instability and fluidity of meaning inherent in individual acts of meaning design. While research in applied linguistics and educational ethnography has become more adept at moving beyond a mere focus on representational aspects of texts to highlight the agility, agency, and affect that unfolds in interactions between people and texts (e.g., Leander & Boldt, 2013; Pinnow, 2011), several of the studies in the volume reveal the need for L2 pedagogical research to follow suit. This is perhaps seen most acutely in Blyth's case studies of undergraduate French learners who began to develop identities as multilingual speakers through their affective and aesthetic engagements with French language texts through digital social reading tools, in Canning and Nelson's account of English L2 learners' dialogues around the "appropriateness" of metaphor choices and their own subsequent literary expansions; and in Palpacuer Lee's investigation of in-service language teachers' expanded sense of situated literacies and of themselves as experts through their encounters at the art museum.

By locating literacy in lived experience, several of the contributions emphasize that literacy does not reside in individual acts of meaning making, but in collaborative dialogue, in relationships of sponsorship and social mediation, in complex trajectories of action and desire. Literacy has long been a socially-oriented term, as Barton (2008) has suggested: "We live in a textually mediated social world, where texts are part of the glue of social life" (p. 78). Within this selection of articles, the social comes to mean quite different things at different moments: interactions between learners, relationships with literacy sponsors, communities of

practice, or social identities such as multilingual or researcher or expert. While all of the studies collected here can be described as taking a social approach to language and learning, they also engage critically with simple notions of the social as cultural background knowledge (see Menke) or as reified opportunities for contact with native speakers (see Lotherington). Moreover, they collectively question the idea that literacy can be approached as an individual competence or set of skills, and instead compel us to consider literacy as inherently intersubjective. This has implications for language teaching and assessment that still need to be carefully considered, especially as programs and learners are often held accountable to measurements that valorize individual demonstrations of interpretive insight or communicative success.

Curricular imperatives of sequencing and accountability often reify common notions of literacy—i.e., that the right teachers and the right curricular materials (read: authentic texts) can bring about literacy and language development. However, as Gilliland and Elola, Nakatsukasa, and Tecedor demonstrate, we may often be looking in the wrong places: the critical ingredients for literacy and language development may instead reside in the relationships and activities taken up within the various spaces we have defined for learning. At the same time, the studies by Allen and Goodspeed, Blyth, Canning and Nelson, Thoms and Poole, and Lotherington make clear that the medium also matters—that is, that the formal elements of texts and technologies afford language users with different opportunities for learning, interaction, and engagement. As Menke's research and previous studies on teachers' conceptual development around literacy-based language teaching (e.g., Allen, 2011; Allen & Dupuy, 2013) demonstrate, there is a tendency to associate literacy with the integration of authentic texts. The articles in this volume stress the importance of more nuanced approaches to how we think about which authentic texts to bring into the classroom, and what we do, pedagogically, with those texts. In short, not all authentic texts are created equal, and standard measures of level-appropriateness tell us very little about what kinds of interactive, interpretive, and linguistic affordances a given reading might encourage. The studies also show the roles that pedagogical choices, such as the use of particular technologies or awareness-raising activities, can play in facilitating learners' perceptions of these textual affordances. Lotherington's critical autoethnographic essay of mobile assisted language learning apps reminds us that pedagogies also have the power to restrict the potential of a particular medium; but also that the indeterminacy of literacy activities makes them mutable. The medium may be the message, in that the affordances of a given app shape the kinds of learning activities most available, but savvy users can also repurpose those same technologies for their own pedagogical designs.

The institutional and disciplinary priorities of foreign language education, which are often framed tightly by and indeed identified through nationalist paradigms and dominant discourses, create certain constraints for more transnational, multilingual, dynamic approaches to literacy and language learning (Diaz, 2013; Hannauer, 2003; Kearney, 2015; Risager, 2007). After all, L2 programs and institutes often market themselves and their languages using linguistic and cultural tropes. Optimistically, the papers in this volume offer several counter-perspectives. Blyth's undergraduate French students' language learner autobiographies caution us of the constraints of a monolingual bias for language and literacy development, by demonstrating students' multilingual identity development through their affective and aesthetic engagements with French language texts. Elola, Nakatsukasa, and Tecedor's study raises the very important point that L2 literacy research may also sometimes be subject to a bilingual bias, which might lead us to miss crucial aspects of biliteracy development related to extralinguistic dimensions, such as one's development as an

academic researcher. These studies push us to look outside of L2 linguistic proficiency in order to understand literacy development more holistically, to look at the accumulation of relations surrounding the accumulations of texts.

In their ensemble, the papers in this volume provoke substantial consideration of how flexible pedagogies, and flexible orientations to what language and literacy mean for L2 learners and educators, can offer space for learners and teachers to see their own resourcefulness—by choosing which textual features to borrow for their own purposes, by musing on alternative literary choices in texts, by creating their own museum encounters, or by reflecting on the range of factors that contribute to the development of the kinds of literacies they *themselves* deem vital to their identities. Just as literacy is about learning to read new worlds, expanding literacy pedagogies also involves entering into new worlds. Imagining and indeed *redesigning* such pedagogies and educational frameworks calls for a synergy between concrete models, the educators reading them, dialoguing about them, and trying them out in their own teaching and learning contexts. It is our hope that this volume will stimulate such imaginings and dialogues such that the living literacies we imagine for L2 learners may also become living literacies for L2 educators as we continue to enter new worlds of teaching and learning.

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