

Lau, S. & Van Viegen, S. (Eds.). (2020). *Plurilingual pedagogies: Critical and creative endeavors for equitable language in education*. Springer.

Reviewer: James Corcoran, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

The ascension of plurilingualism to the fore for theorists, researchers, and practitioners in the field of applied linguistics is noteworthy. Lau and Van Viegen's edited volume, *Plurilingual Pedagogies: Critical and Creative Endeavors for Equitable Language in Education*, capitalizes on this interest. The volume examines not only the onto-epistemological underpinnings of theories such as plurilingualism and translanguaging but also the implementation of aligned research methodologies and pedagogical practices (see also Payant & Galante, 2022; Piccardo et al., 2022). From the outset, readers are invited to intellectually wrestle with evolving terminology, the complexities of pluri-oriented theories, and the diverse ways in which these theories are taken up by practitioners across geolinguistic classroom contexts. This well-organized, expertly-curated volume is divided into four sections, the final three of which culminate with reflections from preeminent scholars, making it a must-read for both emerging and established scholar-practitioners. Section one includes chapters discussing competing theories and concepts of pluri-oriented language practice; sections two to four showcase how these plurilingual practices are enacted in different global contexts; and section five outlines tensions, challenges, and opportunities related to plurilingual assessment. The remainder of this review provides a brief description of individual contributions in each of the four sections, followed by a discussion of the volume's contribution to the field.

Section 1: Conceptual Shifts in Language Teaching and Learning

Section one outlines the theoretical foundations of plurilingualism, drawing from sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and education. In the introductory chapter, Lau and Van Viegen describe a shift in ways of conceptualizing the individual and collective language production of people who use multiple languages, and how this shift supports pedagogies that recognize and validate these multiple, fluid, dynamic practices. Next, the editors engage Danièle Moore in a wide-ranging discussion of the historical roots of plurilingualism and plurilingual competence, connections between plurilingualism and translanguaging, the potential of plurilingual pedagogies in supporting language-minoritized students, and the importance of engaging in reflexive, plurilingual educational practice. In the final chapter, Wu synthesizes a conversation on translanguaging between translanguaging scholars Angel Lin and Jay Lemke, where they challenge static, bounded concepts of language, and leave readers with food for thought regarding rapidly evolving translanguaging theorization.

Section 2: Plurilingual Engagement For Critical Literacy

Section two presents case studies highlighting connections between language learning and critical literacies in bilingual and indigenous school settings, specifically challenging deficit assumptions and language ideologies. In the first of three chapters, Aitkin and Robinson point to the potential of intergenerational, identity-affirming,

plurilingual pedagogies for educators working with indigenous students in a rural Canadian elementary school setting. Moving south, the second chapter by Lopez et al. introduces the term *praxicum* in describing how language teacher candidates in Oaxaca, México engage in critical, creative, plurilingual pedagogies responsive to their rich linguacultural repertoires and students' social realities. Next, Lau takes us to a Québec elementary classroom, where two teachers promote students' cross-linguistic practices and critical biliteracies by using social justice oriented children's stories in both English and French. Kelleen Toohey's discussion of this section's chapters highlights the potential of classroom teachers drawing upon both individual students' and their communities' linguacultural repertoires in service of affirming the cultural and linguistic practices of language minority students.

Section 3: Plurilingual Engagements For Language And Literacy

Section three examines three different cases of how pedagogues at different levels of K-12 education draw upon students' varied linguistic repertoires in order to improve language awareness, bilingual proficiency, and academic learning outcomes. Coehlo and Ortega begin with a detailed description of two "awakening to languages" teaching initiatives in elementary classrooms across four countries: Portugal, Colombia, United States of America, and Canada. Van Viegen then depicts how teachers in particular Ontario schools operationalize plurilingual pedagogies in their elementary classrooms, using instructional strategies that welcome students' translingual repertoires and practices. Finally, Seltzer introduces the notion of "translingual mentors" as a critical, translingual tool for English language arts instructors working in linguistically and culturally diverse communities such as the Bronx, NY. In the discussion chapter, Jim Cummins points not only to the vast pedagogical potential of pluri-oriented strategies outlined across K-12 educational contexts but also the collaborative potential of teacher-researcher partnerships that position classroom teachers as "knowledge generators". Cummins concludes with a challenge to the validity of certain unitary claims made by translingual scholars (e.g., García & Otheguy, 2020; Rosa & Flores, 2017), forwarding "consequential validity" as a utility-oriented measure of a theory's value.

Section 4: Plurilingual Engagements For Higher Education

Section four shifts to higher education contexts, exploring how postsecondary institutions and disciplines are taking up plurilingual pedagogies. In the first chapter, Tian presents a case study of a language teacher educator and her translingual practices in a pre-service TESOL classroom in the United States, culminating in recommendations for TESOL education programs. Next, Galante reflects on her use of critical engagement with plurilingual theory in Canadian university classrooms to promote student agency. Finally, Marshall reflects upon the potential application of plurilingual pedagogies in Canadian universities when working with faculty and students from varied disciplinary contexts, warning against a one-size-fits-all approach, and arguing for dynamic, non-dogmatic instruction that prioritizes students' academic success. Li Wei rounds out this section with a fascinating reflection on his own educational trajectory, making sense of past experiences that have influenced his critical language awareness and teaching.

Section 5: Future Directions for Policy and Practice

Section five discusses tensions, ideologies, and future opportunities connected to the implementation of plurilingual assessment practices. First, Piccardo and North walk us through the historical and theoretical underpinnings of the Common European Framework developed by the Council of Europe. They highlight updated illustrative descriptors associated with mediation and plurilingualism. Next, Kubota analyzes plurilingualism and translanguaging as they relate to academic writing instruction of EALs, pointing out dissonance between theory and real-world experiences while raising important questions for educators supporting plurilingual students at neoliberal institutions of higher education. Finally, Van Viegen and Lau conclude the volume with a chapter full of hope, elucidating the three dimensions – philosophy, principle, and practice – that they suggest might guide educators in implementing plurilingual pedagogical practices.

Lau and Van Viegen’s novel dialogical approach “pulls back the curtain” on how educators conceptualize and operationalize their practices. This volume is essential reading for scholar-practitioners seeking to make better sense of plurilingual terminology, theory, research, and pedagogy. Classroom educators and researchers will be inspired to critically reflect upon their practices and challenge monolingual approaches to curriculum, pedagogy, and empirical research (Kubota, 2021; Sousa Santos & Meneses, 2020). While there are some minor, yet noteworthy omissions – e.g., what about pluri-oriented approaches to supporting students’ more advanced literacies? – this volume leaves this reader optimistic about finding ways to enact pluri-oriented practices that support and affirm plurilingual students’ evolving identities while preparing them for a world full of gatekeepers that may be less welcoming to their linguistic production (see Kubota and Marshall chapters in this volume). As an interdisciplinary field looking to forge a way forward in an age of monolingual hegemony, let us hope that this impactful volume serves as merely an appetizer for further insight into how scholars and practitioners across global educational contexts are taking up pluri-oriented theory in critical and creative ways.

References

- García, O., & Otheguy, R. (2020) Plurilingualism and translanguaging: Commonalities and divergences. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 23(1), 17-35. <http://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2019.1598932>
- Kubota, R. (2021). Toward a performative commitment to heterogeneity. In T. Silva, & Z. Wang (Eds.), *Reconciling translanguaging and second language writing*. (pp. 163-171). Routledge.
- Payant, C., & Galante, A. (2022). Plurilingualism and translanguaging: Pedagogical approaches for empowerment and validation: An introduction. *TESL Canada Journal*, 38(2), vi-xxii. <https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v38i2.1363>
- Piccardo, E., Germain-Rutherford, A., & Lawrence, G. (2022). *The Routledge handbook of plurilingual language education*. Routledge.
- Rosa, J., & Flores, N. (2017). Unsettling race and language: Toward a raciolinguistic perspective. *Language in society*, 46(5), 621-647.

Sousa Santos, B. & Meneses, M. P. (Eds). (2020). *Knowledges born in the struggle: Constructing the epistemologies of the Global South*. Routledge.