

**Book Review:**  
**Decoloniality, language and  
literacy: conversations with  
teacher educators Edited by  
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The book offers a view on the role of teacher educators as transformation agents of language and literacy practices in South African classrooms and PGCE/teaching programmes. The book explores the way in which the authors themselves as teacher educators/facilitators and researchers show how multilingualism and multiliteracies can be curated by working with different modalities and exposure to different school spaces across the economic spectrum in South Africa. The book offers a view on how teacher educators and pre-service teachers can build collaborative relationships with each other in developing creative ways in which their own positioning and knowledge aid in developing linguistically rich learning environments, breaking down the status quo of coloniality in education. Through the perspective of ‘third’ spaces (Gutierrez, 2008) the authors demonstrate ways in which pluriversality (Mignolo, 2013) can emerge through collaborative language practices in the classroom, which by and large paves the way for decolonised education in South Africa. In this book you get to experience the different ways in

which the authors demonstrate their own positionality within the education domain and their role in creating spaces that allow for bi/multilingualism and multiliteracies to take place ethically. The book is aimed at demonstrating ways in which to disrupt the transmission of modes of teaching in formal classrooms and offers a range of genres in its representation of the experiences that the authors had as teacher educators and the contributions they bring in their stance of disrupting anglonormativity and curating multilingualism as a norm. Apart from the rich data represented in the chapters, there are also instances of poetry and reflective pieces that offer another view to language inequality in formal education and demonstrate personal accounts of authors’ own language experiences. The book is thus constructed as a cause for language activism and social justice in education in South Africa and promotes the possibility for ‘third’ space learning in engaging with the decolonial challenges of thinking within rather than about complex power relations of border conditions. The book also lightly touches on education in the context of

Brazil, Canada and Chile and gives a glimpse to the similarities experienced in societies where education is equally entrenched through Western epistemologies and coloniality.

The book is divided into three parts, comprising thirteen chapters. The introduction (chapter 1) begins with the authors reflecting on times of turbulence that sparked conversations between peers in thinking about their positions as teacher educators and the influence they had in playing a role in opening up spaces that allowed for collaborative learning and teaching to take place. The authors trace schooling in South Africa and flesh out coloniality in education in the context of student protests in 2015-2017 and the inequalities further heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic. Further adding, how the aforementioned conditions brought to light educating teachers in conditions of coloniality and the entangled inequalities instituted in schooling as a result of apartheid. The authors speak toward the significance of 'third' space and pluriversality, suggesting that these (i.e. 'third' spaces) are safe and ethical spaces wherein multilingual and multiliteracy practices take place and gives plurality of voice and being. One important realisation offered from third spaces is that regardless of what the design of schooling may be, i.e. constructing English as normative, students and learners themselves are shown to deviate from the hegemony of English by unconsciously engaging with their repertoires to create meaning and inform critical thinking. So, instead of working against the language repertoires of individuals, it can be harnessed to create richer learning environments and develop multilingual actors in society and opening up the possibility of curating decolonised education.

Part one, titled de/coloniality in schooling from chapters 2- 4 offers a view of ways in which black children from townships are commonly constructed as deficient English monolinguals, however, demonstrating within the 'third' space that they possess rich multilingual repertoires and are competent critical thinkers. Chapter 2, for instance, offers a means in which teachers can utilise various modalities and include children from various age groups to develop their literacy skills. The chapter further touches on how power and marginalisation is asserted in formal educa-

tion wherein black African pupils are constructed as deficient and inadequate English speakers, however, as demonstrated through gameplay, black children are shown to be competent and intelligent users of their full linguistic repertoires to create meaning. Chapter 3, draws on how children's oral storytelling reveals the preservation of education through a Western episteme, in turn prohibiting or obscuring learners' histories and backgrounds. Chapter 4, offers a means to rethink classroom discourse in science subjects, inviting a new means of how learners recruit resources from other languages to make meaning. The chapter makes use of translanguaging and identity meshing as a means to demonstrate how learning can enhance literacy.

Part 2 titled, delinking from coloniality in teacher education (from chapter 5-10), offers a view on the positionality of teacher educators in creating spaces for pre-service teachers to envision teaching and learning as collaborative and interchangeable. Chapter 5, reflects on times of rupture and crisis and puts forth the notion of 'contact zones' to demonstrate a shift in power relations (i.e., between student and teacher educator). Reflecting on various teaching moments during times of rupture and crisis, the authors demonstrate how their role shifted from allies to collaborators and sharing vulnerabilities alongside their students. The chapter is a great means for teacher educators to reflect on their contributions of providing support to pre-service teachers during times of turbulence. Chapter 6 and 7, brings into perspective the impact teaching programmes have in preparing pre-service teachers for the socio-cultural backgrounds of their future learners as well as reflecting on their own learning and teaching experiences and positionality in their journey to becoming teachers and developing pedagogical competence. The chapters speak toward socially just education, expressing the importance of placing pre-service teachers in both 'functional well-resourced' schools and 'less-functional under-resourced' schools, noting that in doing so, pre-service teachers are afforded the opportunity to get a view of how education is distributed unequally in both settings and instil a sense of activism in their own approach to teaching in classrooms where learners are socially and linguistically di-

verse. Chapter 8 advocates the importance of pre-service teachers' exposure to multiple sites of spaces for learning that can aid in expanding their means of developing interactive classroom lessons and de-link from autocratic means of managing classrooms. Chapter 9 focuses on repositioning teachers in relation to their language and schooling histories. The chapter aims to highlight how bi/multilingual speakers are valuable and necessary to schooling as they bring along with them rich language resources that can be utilised in the classroom.

Chapter 10 ties in together the focus of chapters 1-9 by offering a view from the experience of Prof Catherine Kell who has 35 years of experience in the field of literacy in adult education, early literacy, digital literacy and academic literacy- here Prof Catherine Kell draws on the ideologies and myths around language and literacy and reflects on the 'invention of literacy'. Kell identifies three central threads to the 'invention of literacy', suggesting that they are all associated with ideas about universal 'truths'. She identifies these as: (1) the colonial invention of literacy, (2) the great divide or myths about what literacy does and is in society and (3) the way in which literacy has become schooled (175). One significant view held by Kell that is echoed in the works of the authors, is making it known to teachers that reinventing/ dis-inventing literacy practices involves taking risks that are needed to change the status quo.

Part 3, titled conversations with teacher educators in Brazil, Canada and Chile, Chapters 11-13. This section of the book offers a view of the Covid-19 Pandemic in further ushering in racial and lin-

guistic inequalities in contexts akin to South Africa. The Chapters speak to how preservice teachers and students alike remain marginalised in the time of the pandemic. The chapters note the importance of teacher educators to be sensitive to students' views, voices and their socio-economic constraints to educational access and success. More importantly, being able to comprehend a student's social position and understand education in broader social, cultural and historical contexts. The chapters further question the extent to which decolonised education takes place, the values that are foregrounded and shifting away from the reproduction of colonial tropes in education. One significant aspect drawn upon in chapter 12 particularly, is shifting from the ideology of education for mastery to education for depth- noting that education for depth leans toward education as integral, building quality relationships and capacity for movement.

As a final comment, an important message offered in the book is bringing to light how coloniality is stagnant in educational praxis in South Africa and abroad, viewing bi/multilingualism as problematic, however, as clearly offered through the perspective of 'third' spaces that bi/multilingualism can work if educators across the spectrum are provided with the knowledges of how to work with bi/multilingual actors in the classroom and also how to use their own repertoires, histories and positionality in changing the status quo. More significantly, if a decolonial praxis is to become realistic then it needs to become something that is intentional as Adreotti and Stein (211) suggest not only shifting our 'heads' but also our 'hearts' and our 'guts'.