

Review: Lillie Padilla & Rosti Vana (Eds.) (2024). *Representation, inclusion and social justice in world language teaching: Research and pedagogy for inclusive classrooms*. Routledge

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ABSTRACT

EN Scholars in World Language continue to underscore a critical need to center social justice in all language classrooms. Despite the extensive data illustrating this need, relatively limited resources assist instructors in implementing social justice-oriented initiatives in their classrooms. *Representation, Inclusion and Social Justice in World Language Teaching: Research and Pedagogy for Inclusive Classrooms*, edited by Lillie Padilla and Rosti Vana, fills this gap by serving as a comprehensive resource offering both theoretical and practical suggestions for individuals wishing to promote equity in their language learning spaces. The thirteen chapters offer stakeholders working in language departments or dual language programs perspectives that can be implemented in language classrooms, teacher preparation programs, and at the department level.

Keywords: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY, WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHING, SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY

ES La investigación en la enseñanza de lenguas del mundo continúa subrayando la necesidad crítica de colocar la justicia social en el centro de todas las aulas de idiomas. A pesar de la abundante información que ilustra esta necesidad, existen relativamente pocos recursos que ayuden al profesorado de idiomas a implementar de manera práctica iniciativas orientadas a la justicia social en sus aulas. *Representation, Inclusion and Social Justice in World Language Teaching: Research and Pedagogy for Inclusive Classrooms*, editado por Lillie Padilla y Rosti Vana, llena este vacío al servir como un recurso integral que ofrece sugerencias tanto teóricas como prácticas para quienes deseen promover la equidad en su espacio de aprendizaje de idiomas. Los trece capítulos proponen a quienes trabajan en departamentos de idiomas o programas de doble inmersión perspectivas que se pueden implementar en las aulas, en programas de formación docente y a nivel departamental.

Palabras clave: PEDAGOGÍA CRÍTICA, ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUAS DEL MUNDO, JUSTICIA SOCIAL, EQUIDAD

IT La ricerca nella didattica delle lingue del mondo continua a sottolineare l'esigenza critica di porre la giustizia sociale al centro di tutti i corsi di lingua. Nonostante i numerosi dati che illustrano tale necessità, sono relativamente poche le risorse che aiutino i docenti a implementare iniziative orientate alla giustizia sociale nelle proprie classi. *Representation, Inclusion and Social Justice in World Language Teaching: Research and Pedagogy for Inclusive Classrooms*, curato da Lillie Padilla e Rosti Vana, colma tale lacuna offrendo una risorsa esauriente, con proposte sia teoriche che pratiche per coloro che desiderino promuovere l'equità nei propri spazi di insegnamento linguistico. I tredici capitoli propongono a chi lavora nei dipartimenti o in programmi di lingua o doppia lingua, delle prospettive da implementare nelle classi, nei programmi di formazione docenti e a livello dipartimentale.

Parole chiave: PEDAGOGIA CRITICA, DIDATTICA DELLE LINGUE DEL MONDO, GIUSTIZIA SOCIALE, EQUITÀ

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Recently, scholars in World Language (WL) have underscored a critical need for centering social justice in all language classrooms (see, e.g., Anya & Randolph, 2019). Furthermore, researchers continue to point to numerous reasons why the language classroom is a particularly appropriate space to implement critical pedagogies that encourage students to engage with social justice-oriented themes such as race, power, and language ideologies (Anya, 2021; Leeman, 2015; Padilla & Vana, 2022; *inter alia*). Despite this emerging research outlining the need to emphasize teaching and learning strategies that are inclusive of the experiences of historically marginalized groups, there remains a gap in the scholarly literature regarding how to ensure that a social justice lens is included in WL curricula. *Representation, Inclusion and Social Justice in World Language Teaching: Research and Pedagogy for Inclusive Classrooms* fills this gap and serves as a road map for how stakeholders across a range of language teaching contexts (from Heritage Language to World Language to TESOL) can promote diversity, inclusion, and social justice in the classroom.

Following a brief introduction from the editors that outlines the need for WL classrooms to address social justice as a response to an increasingly diverse student body as well as to rectify WL curricula's historical failure to include diverse speakers or topics of marginalization, the volume is then divided into three sections. Section 1, titled "Challenging Hegemonic Discourse through Representation, Criticality and Inclusivity" features seven chapters. Chapter 1, by Hamza R'boul and Benachour Saidi, focuses on critically analyzing Native Speakerism and raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015) in TESOL and EFL contexts. Using a Critical Race Theory framework, the author reveals how using the White native speaker as the norm in TESOL classrooms perpetuates historical global power imbalances that privilege Western perspectives while marginalizing many of the students who populate English classrooms. The reader is encouraged to think about how TESOL can be reimagined in a post-colonial context. Though the chapter is largely theoretical, the authors suggest that educators take steps towards dismantling Whiteness as the norm in their classrooms by facilitating conversations about positionality and race. They also advocate for TESOL instructors to encourage their students to take ownership of and pride in their identities, cultures, and English(es).

In Chapter 2, Angélica Amezcua and Ana Sánchez-Muñoz explore Spanish as a Heritage Language classes (SHL) as a space to promote Critical Language Awareness (CLA) among students who grew up hearing or speaking Spanish at home. The chapter analyzes data from unique SHL classes at a large university that are housed within an Ethnic Studies department rather than a World Language department. Interview data revealed that students in these courses gained pride and confidence in being bilingual, built agency to resist and challenge discriminatory language ideologies, and they felt empowered to maintain their Heritage Languages. The chapter closes by encouraging all heritage classes to adopt an interdisciplinary approach as a way to support minoritized languages and cultures. To promote this interdisciplinary perspective, the authors suggest more collaboration between ethnic studies and language departments at universities.

Chapter 3 is written by three scholars of Portuguese pedagogy: Gláucia V. Silva, Cristiane Soares, and Eduardo Viana da Silva. It offers tangible suggestions on how instructors of Portuguese can support students of all identities in their classrooms by teaching inclusive language. The authors begin by pointing out an inherent problem that learners may face when they realize the genders already established in a language do not reflect their own identities. By choosing to incorporate inclusive and nonbinary forms, all students can fully participate in the learning community, regardless of their gender identity. The chapter provides ample resources that instructors can easily incorporate into their courses, including a nonbinary and inclusive language statement to add to course syllabi, examples of e-textbooks that provide input on inclusive and nonbinary language, and additional online resources. The authors contend that when students are able to express their identities, it positively impacts the learning acquisition process. This makes the classroom a more equitable space for all learners.

Chapter 4 provides another perspective on including nonbinary language, though this time, in the Spanish context. Having identified the need to teach inclusive forms to rectify the historical exclusion of nonbinary language in curricula, the two authors of this chapter, Liana Stepanyan and Maria Mercedes Fages Agudo, created a grammar guide featuring inclusive forms. The chapter analyzes data from students of Spanish at the University of Southern California to underscore the need for the grammar guide while understanding students' attitudes towards the use of nonbinary language in intermediate-level university Spanish classes. Overall, the majority of students favorably viewed the inclusion of nonbinary forms and found them easier to use than they had anticipated. To support current Spanish instructors wanting to incorporate inclusive language into their classrooms, the authors provide examples of how to use the nonbinary *-e* ending and the article *le* along with examples of numerous class activities to introduce students to nonbinary language in Spanish and familiarize them with LGBTQ history in Spanish-speaking communities.

In Chapter 5, Lillie Padilla discusses the historical exclusion of Afro-Latinxs in Spanish curricula and its ramifications. After explaining who Afro-Latinxs are and the history of Afro-Latinxs in Latin America, the author connects the invisibility of Afro-Latinxs to the formation of Latinx identity and *mestizaje*. The author contends that *mestizaje* has contributed to the invisibility of Afro-descended Spanish speakers (cf. Wade, 1993; Bonilla Silva, 2023), and that by excluding the representation of Afro-Latinxs in teaching materials, Spanish classrooms perpetuate this invisibility. To rectify this injustice, the author encourages leveraging a Critical Race Teaching Curriculum (Anya, 2020) with a focus on intersectionality, and offers numerous resources for Spanish educators seeking to center Afro-Latinxs in their classrooms. She also underscores the importance of forming partnerships between WL departments and African Studies departments, as well as community organizations serving Afro-descended communities.

Chapter 6 is written by Ofelia García, María Cioè-Peña, and Brittany L. Frieson. It focuses on inequities promoted in Dual Language (DL) programs and the critiques of modern-day bilingual education programs. After providing an overview of the history of bilingual education programs in the US and their origins in the civil rights movement, the authors note that bilingual education programs have substituted their focus on inclusion, cultural pride, and linguistic support with a more commodified view of bilingualism that is marketed to middle-class families. Using the frames of critical race and disability studies, the authors contend that modern-day DL programs lack representation of racialized speakers as well as students labeled as disabled (Cioè-Peña, 2021). They promote implementing a critical race-informed translanguaging pedagogy wherein programs adopt a multiracial and heteroglossic space which offers *all* speakers, including racialized and dis/abled students, the same opportunities for meaning-making. The authors provide ten suggestions on how to enact this pedagogy in a DL classroom.

In Chapter 7, the connection between language and race is explored by L.J. Randolph and Aris M. Clemons. Clemons' framework of Hemispheric Black Language Pedagogies is invoked to understand that the curricular erasure experienced by Black varieties of English is also prevalent in Black varieties of world languages. Thus, the authors underscore the importance of implementing anti-racist pedagogies in the WL classroom. They offer centering Black language practices across WL contexts as a necessary practice to destabilize colonial frames and challenge language ideologies that discriminate against Black language. The authors used Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as a framework to incorporate Black language practices. The chapter provides three example lesson plans demonstrating how to incorporate Blackness into TBLT. Two lessons are specific to Spanish, and one can be used in any WL context.

Section II of the volume is titled "New Directions in World Language Teaching: Tools for Researchers and Educators" and opens with Chapter 8, which focuses on study away as a tool to promote equity for Heritage Learners of Spanish (HLs). The authors, Leslie Del Carpio and Rosti Vana, open their chapter with a critical exploration of the notion that the "ideal" Spanish can only be studied abroad. This perspective ultimately denigrates speakers of US Spanish and their cultural identity. Furthermore, the authors contend that study abroad programs cater to the needs of White, middle-class L2 learners, which excludes the participation of heritage learners and racialized learners. The authors use study-away programs (domestic programs outside of a student's home institution) as a tool to resist negative discourses around US Spanish as well as to sustain US Spanish and its speakers. The chapter provides an overview of one successful university study-away program that is already in place and offers a road map for how other institutions could design and gain support for their own study-away programs.

In Chapter 9, Sergio Loza focuses on increasing equity in SHL classrooms by highlighting the need to increase support for receptive HLs. Receptive speakers understand language when heard, but generally have limited productive abilities. These students are often not admitted into SHL classes. The author argues that, in addition to the challenges faced by other HLs, receptive Latinxs face specific issues relating to deficit and monolingual ideologies, and that the CLA framework utilized in SHL classes would be particularly beneficial to this community of learners. Indeed, qualitative data from receptive HLs analyzed by the author showed that these students had a high degree of motivation to learn their HL and were not adequately served by L2/FL classes that focused on grammar and largely ignored US Latinx culture. The author argues that all HLs, regardless of their degree of bilingualism, deserve access to CLA and that including receptive HLs in SHL classes fosters more equitable opportunities for all Latinx people. Suggestions are given for how to differentiate SHL curricula for receptive HLs.

In Chapter 10, Xiaodi Zhou and Xiaochen Du begin by critiquing historical approaches to teaching language that promote strict language separation, a practice that ignores the sociolinguistic realities of being a bilingual speaker (Kramsch, 2014). The authors contend that students' bilingualism should be viewed as an

asset to instruction and encourage educators to utilize translingual and multilingual approaches. In the authors' analysis of two Mandarin case study classrooms, one of which utilized a strict target language-only policy and the other a flexible translanguaging policy, the authors noticed how the strict policy stifled student learning and made differentiation challenging. Students in the translanguaging classroom were more engaged both with content and each other. The authors close by advocating for a reconceptualization of the WL space as a heteroglossic context accepting all languages. Numerous tangible examples of how to employ translanguaging in the language classroom are provided throughout the chapter.

The last section of the book, titled "Critically Rethinking Language Teacher Training and Language Program Direction", also contains three chapters. Chapter 11 advocates for the need to infuse WL teacher training programs (TTPs) with preparation in Critical Language Awareness (CLA). Cynthia Ducar frames her argument by noting that WL classrooms often strive to prepare students to study a standardized, monolingual variety of the target language rather than focus on the local, bilingual communities (e.g., Spanish speakers in the US) where students will likely live and work. As a response to this historical monolingual bias, the author suggests that TTPs teach CLA so that educators have the framework to think critically about language, power, and race, and how focusing on standard language ultimately hurts both L2 and heritage learners by erasing the sociolinguistic realities of target language speakers and communities. The chapter offers numerous options on how to center bilingual and local language practices in the classroom ranging from Integrative Performance Assessments, to pen pals, to incorporating service learning with community organizations. The author also recommends that WL teachers at all levels incorporate CLA and conversations about linguistic variation into their classes.

Chapter 12 continues to examine TTPs, placing attention on how they can prepare candidates to foster diversity, inclusion, and representation in their classrooms, particularly in early learning contexts. The author, Kelly Frances Davidson, contends that Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) should be a cornerstone of WL TTPs as it promotes linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism and views the WL classroom as a space for positive transformation (Paris, 2012). The chapter analyzes data gathered from teacher candidates in WL education and ESOL programs in a Georgia university TTP. Interview data reveal that all educators believe in a strong connection between language and identity, and that all had a desire to utilize CSP in their classroom. However, teacher candidates felt their method courses lacked guidance on how to practically apply theories in their classrooms. In order to help develop critically engaged teacher candidates who will make their future classrooms a space for positive change, the author advocates for the inclusion of justice-oriented critical pedagogies like CSP and to include early language learning in TTP curriculum.

The last chapter of the edited volume draws on research from the field of monitoring, evaluation, and learning to provide a roadmap for enacting and sustaining diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives at the department level. Written by Alexis Vollmer Rivera and Sandra Williams, the chapter begins by noting that WL departments have historically promoted standard language ideologies and idealized native speakers to the detriment of bilingual and heritage speakers. In order for transformative change to occur in department culture that will impact both students and staff, the authors walk the reader through an evaluation framework that outlines how to (a) define the problem to be addressed, (b) identify the causes of said problem, (c) select changes to implement, and (d) create processes to monitor if the changes are leading to the desired outcome. Thus, this chapter provides tangible resources for how WL departments can define and plan how to address inequities, as well as assess whether their action steps have the desired impact.

The call to incorporate social justice themes into World Language curriculum and policies has been getting increasingly louder in recent years (see, e.g., Wassell, Wesely, & Glynn, 2019). Nevertheless, the onus to create and implement such initiatives can often fall squarely on the shoulders of instructors or other individuals seeking to make those changes, which can be justifiably overwhelming. *Representation, Inclusion and Social Justice in World Language Teaching* serves as a practical guide to support a wide range of constituents in promoting equity across contexts. Though much of the content in the edited volume is geared towards providing instructional strategies to be used in individual classrooms, various chapters also present strategies for promoting justice at the language department level and in teacher preparation programs.

One potential drawback to instructors picking up this text is that it centers largely around Spanish (either taught as a World Language or Heritage Language). While there *are* chapters dedicated to presenting resources for Portuguese and Mandarin classes, other major languages such as French, German, and Arabic are unfortunately absent. Furthermore, decisions around providing translations also make the text feel more marketed toward a Spanish-speaking audience. While translations into English are provided for original text

that appears in Portuguese and Mandarin, Spanish is never translated. In subsequent editions, it may be of value to provide English translations of Spanish text in order to increase accessibility among a wider readership.

Despite many chapters focusing on Spanish, much of the theoretical framing and practical applications presented in this volume could certainly be adapted to fit other World Language contexts. These include increasing the representation of afro-descended target language speakers, promoting Critical Language Awareness, and incorporating inclusive and nonbinary language practices. Furthermore, chapters focusing on teacher preparation programs and departmental equity initiatives can be applied universally to interested programs and departments. Thus, the volume is apt for both instructors looking for specific strategies in the languages they may teach, as well as for educators seeking to learn more about particular frameworks or approaches that can be mapped onto their classrooms or departments.

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