

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION  
SECOND EDITION

# Encyclopedia of Language and Education

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## VOLUME 9: ECOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

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# Encyclopedia of Language and Education

Volume 9

## ECOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

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## GENERAL EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

### ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION

This is one of ten volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* published by Springer. The Encyclopedia bears testimony to the dynamism and evolution of the language and education field, as it confronts the ever-burgeoning and irrepressible linguistic diversity and ongoing pressures and expectations placed on education around the world.

The publication of this work charts the deepening and broadening of the field of language and education since the 1997 publication of the first Encyclopedia. It also confirms the vision of David Corson, general editor of the first edition, who hailed the international and interdisciplinary significance and cohesion of the field. These trademark characteristics are evident in every volume and review of the present Encyclopedia.

In the selection of topics and contributors, the Encyclopedia seeks to reflect the depth of disciplinary knowledge, breadth of interdisciplinary perspective, and diversity of sociogeographic experience in our field. Language socialization and language ecology have been added to the original eight volume topics, reflecting these growing emphases in language education theory, research, and practice, alongside the enduring emphases on language policy, literacies, discourse, language acquisition, bilingual education, knowledge about language, language testing, and research methods. Throughout all the volumes, there is greater inclusion of scholarly contributions from non-English speaking and non-Western parts of the world, providing truly global coverage of the issues in the field. Furthermore, we have sought to integrate these voices more fully into the whole, rather than as special cases or international perspectives in separate sections.

This interdisciplinary and internationalizing impetus has been immeasurably enhanced by the advice and support of the editorial advisory board members, several of whom served as volume editors in the Encyclopedia's first edition (designated here with\*), and all of whom I acknowledge here with gratitude: Neville Alexander (South Africa), Colin Baker (Wales), Marilda Cavalcanti (Brazil), Caroline Clapham\* (Britain),

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<sup>1</sup> This introduction is based on, and takes inspiration from, David Corson's general editor's Introduction to the First Edition (Kluwer, 1997).

Bronwyn Davies\* (Australia), Viv Edwards\* (Britain), Frederick Erickson (USA), Joseph Lo Bianco (Australia), Luis Enrique Lopez (Bolivia and Peru), Allan Luke (Singapore and Australia), Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (Denmark), Bernard Spolsky (Israel), G. Richard Tucker\* (USA), Leo van Lier\* (USA), Terrence G. Wiley (USA), Ruth Wodak\* (Austria), and Ana Celia Zentella (USA).

In conceptualizing an encyclopedic approach to a field, there is always the challenge of the hierarchical structure of themes, topics, and subjects to be covered. In this *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, the stated topics in each volume's table of contents are complemented by several cross-cutting thematic strands recurring across the volumes, including the classroom/pedagogic side of language and education; issues of identity in language and education; language ideology and education; computer technology and language education; and language rights in relation to education.

The volume editors' disciplinary and interdisciplinary academic interests and their international areas of expertise also reflect the depth and breadth of the language and education field. As principal volume editor for Volume 1, Stephen May brings academic interests in the sociology of language and language education policy, arising from his work in Britain, North America, and New Zealand. For Volume 2, Brian Street approaches language and education as social and cultural anthropologist and critical literacy theorist, drawing on his work in Iran, Britain, and around the world. For Volume 3, Marilyn Martin-Jones and Anne-Marie de Mejia bring combined perspectives as applied and educational linguists, working primarily in Britain and Latin America, respectively. For Volume 4, Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl has academic interests in linguistics and sociolinguistics, and work in the Netherlands and the USA. Jim Cummins, principal volume editor for Volume 5 of both the first and second editions of the *Encyclopedia*, has interests in the psychology of language, critical applied linguistics, and language policy, informed by his work in Canada, the USA, and internationally. For Volume 6, Jasone Cenoz has academic interests in applied linguistics and language acquisition, drawing from her work in the Basque Country, Spain, and Europe. Elana Shohamy, principal volume editor for Volume 7, approaches language and education as an applied linguist with interests in critical language policy, language testing and measurement, and her own work based primarily in Israel and the USA. For Volume 8, Patricia Duff has interests in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, and has worked primarily in North America, East Asia, and Central Europe. Volume editors for Volume 9, Angela Creese and Peter Martin, draw on their academic interests in educational linguistics and linguistic ethnography, and their research in Britain and Southeast Asia. And for Volume 10, Kendall A. King has academic interests in sociolinguistics and educational

linguistics, with work in Ecuador, Sweden, and the USA. Francis Hult, editorial assistant for the Encyclopedia, has academic interests in educational and applied linguistics and educational language policy, and has worked in Sweden and the USA. Finally, as general editor, I have interests in anthropological linguistics, educational linguistics, and language policy, with work in Latin America, the USA, and internationally. Beyond our specific academic interests, all of us editors, and the contributors to the Encyclopedia, share a commitment to the practice and theory of education, critically informed by research and strategically directed toward addressing unsound or unjust language education policies and practices wherever they are found.

Each of the ten volumes presents core information and is international in scope, as well as diverse in the populations it covers. Each volume addresses a single subject area and provides 23–30 state-of-the-art reviews of the literature on that subject. Together, the reviews aim to comprehensively cover the subject. The volumes, edited by international experts in their respective topics, were designed and developed in close collaboration with the general editor of the Encyclopedia, who is a co-editor of each volume as well as general editor of the whole work.

Each review is written by one or more experts on the topic, consists of about 4,000 words of text, and generally follows a similar structure. A list of references to key works supplements the authoritative information that the review contains. Many contributors survey early developments, major contributions, work in progress, problems and difficulties, and future directions. The aim of the reviews, and of the Encyclopedia as a whole, is to give readers access to the international literature and research on the broad diversity of topics that make up the field.

The Encyclopedia is a necessary reference set for every university and college library in the world that serves a faculty or school of education. The encyclopedia aims to speak to a prospective readership that is multinational, and to do so as unambiguously as possible. Because each book-size volume deals with a discrete and important subject in language and education, these state-of-the-art volumes also offer highly authoritative course textbooks in the areas suggested by their titles.

The scholars contributing to the Encyclopedia hail from all continents of our globe and from 41 countries; they represent a great diversity of linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary traditions. For all that, what is most impressive about the contributions gathered here is the unity of purpose and outlook they express with regard to the central role of language as both vehicle and mediator of educational processes and to the need for continued and deepening research into the limits and possibilities that implies.

Nancy H. Hornberger

## INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME 9: ECOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

Language ecology may be defined as the study of interactions between any given language and its environment . . . The true environment of a language is the society that uses it as one of its codes. Language exists only in the minds of its users, and it only functions in relating these users to one another and to nature, i.e. their social and natural environment. Part of its ecology is therefore psychological: its interaction with other languages in the minds of bi- and multilingual speakers. Another part of its ecology is sociological: its interaction with the society in which it functions as a medium of communication. The ecology of a language is determined primarily by the people who learn it, use it, and transmit it to others. (Haugen, 1972, p. 325)

Since Haugen made this statement, the term ‘language ecology’ has increasingly appeared in the literature, in a range of guises. This literature on language ecology includes discussion related to cognitive development and human interaction, the maintenance and survival of languages, the promotion of linguistic diversity, language policy and planning, language acquisition, language evolution, language ideology, the ecology of (multilingual) classroom interaction and the ecologies of literacy, oracies and discourses. Indeed, it has been noted that there is an ‘infinite world of possibilities’ for language ecology (Barron et al., 2002, p. 10).

This volume collects together chapters concerned with ecologies of language, literacy and learning. The study of language ecology is the study of diversity within specific socio-political settings where the processes of language use create, reflect and challenge particular hierarchies and hegemonies, however transient these might be. It will be at once apparent that all of the themes above (language, literacy and learning) are central to our understanding of education and an ecological perspective demands a particular view of education and classroom practice as situated and localised. However, it also views these schools and classrooms and their interactive practices as part of a bigger and more powerful political state in which ideologies function to reproduce particular balances of power. It is not surprising then that many of the

chapters in this volume start small and describe big with authors reporting on how an ecological perspective provides researchers and practitioners with the means to argue for political rights and challenge prevailing views of knowledge and patterns of schooling. Many of the chapters in this volume are overtly 'political' in arguing for the 'rearrangement of power' (López) in support of minority and indigenous groups. This interest in counter hegemony is also apparent in seemingly less political debates such as new and community literacies where we see how people use new technologies and existing resources to create new diversity in their literacy and oral practices.

An ecological approach does more than describe the relationships between situated speakers of different languages. Rather, it is proactive in pulling apart perceived natural language orders. That is, where a particular language and its structure and use becomes so naturalised that it is no longer seen as construing a particular ideological line, an ecological approach attempts to make this transparent. 'Unnaturalising' these discourses becomes necessary to make clear 'what kinds of language practices are valued and considered good, normal, appropriate, or correct' in particular classrooms and schools, and who are likely to be the winners and losers in the ideological orientations (Heller and Martin-Jones, 2001, p. 2). To take this one step further, Hornberger (2002, p. 30) argues that 'multilingual language policies are essentially about opening up ideological and implementational space in the environment for as many languages as possible'.

The volume reflects major theoretical debates within language ecology. In particular it discusses the usefulness of the metaphor itself and we see running through the chapters different interpretations of the term 'ecology of language' with some claiming its essential place in the human rights agenda and others questioning the metaphor's fundamental usefulness arguing that the term weakens theoretical accounts of diversity.

For the majority of writers in this volume the metaphor offers a space for creativity and extension through connection to the term biodiversity. Today we are very familiar with the concept of biodiversity and its concern with variety of life. We have a better understanding of biological connectivity and the importance of conserving and maintaining the variety of life forms. Many of the writers in this volume use the metaphor of language ecology to creatively and pragmatically describe languages/literacies and their speakers in particular kinds of relationships to one another. An example of this is the ecological approach to multilingual language policies and the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger). Hornberger states that the language ecology metaphor 'captures a set of ideological underpinnings for a multilingual language policy' (Hornberger, 2002, p. 35). In particular, she points to how languages exist and evolve in an ecosystem along with other

languages, and how they [their speakers] ‘interact with their socio-political, economic and cultural environments’. A further example of using the ecological metaphor creatively is classroom ecologies (Creese and Martin, 2003) in which classrooms are described as ecological micro-systems where local interactions are linked to wider socio-political ideologies.

The volume is made up of five sections. The chapters in Section One, Historical and Theoretical Perspectives, reflect on some of the major themes in language ecology which have emerged since Haugen first introduced the term in 1972, and they demonstrate how the discussion of the ecology of language has evolved since Haugen’s seminal work. In the first chapter, Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson provide a human rights perspective on language ecology. The authors stress the need for language rights in the present world context where many languages are becoming endangered. Using examples from a range of contexts, Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson show how the subtractive learning of dominant languages may violate linguistic human rights and contribute to what they refer to as ‘linguistic genocide’. In the second chapter, Edwards argues for a broader ecological sensitivity but, at the same time, cautions against the ‘new’ ecology of language and its concern with linguistic human rights, particularly the way it is used in educational contexts. His chapter problematises some of the issues associated with linguistic rights in the new ecology of language.

In the third chapter, Blackledge argues that language ecologies can be better understood if they are linked with a discussion of language ideologies. This is particularly salient as language ecology relates to the inter-relationships between speakers of languages, and these relationships are seen in the way in which languages are used, and in the speakers’ attitudes to and beliefs about language. Kaplan and Baldauf, in Chapter Four, provide an ecology perspective on language planning. In their review they emphasise the usefulness of the ecology metaphor, and how it allows for a move away from the traditionally narrow way in which language policy and planning have been seen. Using the Japanese context as an example, Kaplan and Baldauf illustrate the relationships between language ecology and language planning. The final chapter in Section One, by van Lier, explores the ecology of language learning and sociocultural theory. He notes the prominence of sociocultural theory in language education in recent decades, much of it emerging from the work of Vygotsky. In this review, van Lier takes forward the work of Vygotsky by discussing it from within an ecological worldview, placing key ecological themes within a sociocultural theory perspective.

Section Two consists of reviews of the Language Ecologies of Selected Countries and Regions. Each review focuses on some aspect

of the linguistic ecology of the country or region, with specific links to important educational issues. Some reviews focus on the 'whole' language ecology of the country or region while others describe a particular ethno-linguistic group within the wider language ecology of the country or region. Kipp's chapter considers the language ecology of Australia's community languages, focusing on the complexity of the multilingual history of the country, and steps that have been taken to ensure the maintenance of these languages. The review makes particular reference to the position of these languages in the education systems in the country. Chebanne discusses the language ecology of marginalised ethno-linguistic groups in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa within the framework of language diversity as a problem and as a resource. In reviewing the language ecology of these groups, Chebanne illustrates the various difficulties faced by the groups, and the role that education plays for these groups.

Fraser Gupta focuses on the language ecology of Singapore and the way that this has been shaped by educational policy. An important aspect of the language ecology of Singapore is language shift, which according to Fraser Gupta, is motivated by pragmatism and linked to educational policy, which is in turn linked to the politics of race. Tosi reports on the language ecology of multilingual Italy, focusing specifically on the issues of language survival and language death. The chapter provides an historical review of the linguistic transformations in Italy since 1861, including the spread of Italian and the impact of education on the survival and maintenance of languages in the country. Suleiman reviews the language ecology of Jordan as a case study from the Arabic-speaking part of the Middle East. The review concentrates on the dialectal varieties of Arabic with reference to the standard form of the language used in education. In the final chapter in this section, López reports on indigenous contributions to an ecology of language learning in Latin America. He notes the lack of study on indigenous views of language in Latin America and points to the important insights, which would have major benefits for more situated and meaningful language teaching practices in the region.

Section Three, on Language Ecologies of Dispersed and Diasporic Communities, comprises four chapters, which focus on the language ecologies of four communities with specific reference to the dominant language(s) of education in these contexts. The chapter by Collins considers language ecologies in the Malay world, with reference to the languages of education in the area, Malay and Indonesian. He reports on the diversity of language in the Malay/Indonesian world, as well as the myriad varieties of Malay and Indonesian, many of which have never been studied. Wang explores the ecology of the Chinese languages in the USA. She reviews the assimilationist ideologies and

polices in the USA, and the role of Chinese heritage language schools and their contribution to the maintenance of Chinese. Sercombe reports on the language ecology of the Penan, a formerly nomadic group, in northern Borneo (Sarawak in Malaysia and Brunei). The chapter reviews the changing ecology of the Penan, from nomadism to sedentism, and links this to a discussion of educational issues and language shift. The final paper in the section is Nortier's review of the language ecology of the Moroccan communities in the Netherlands. Nortier considers how these communities settled in the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s, and the languages that they brought with them. The chapter reviews the history of Moroccan mother tongue teaching and what support has been provided.

Section Four provides five reviews of Classroom Language Ecologies in a range of multilingual contexts. The chapters in this section describe bi/multilingual classroom contexts in which 'concurrent' linguistic practices such as code-switching are usual and language separation strategies are often seen as problematic. Probyn reviews the language ecologies of South African classrooms, with particular emphasis on the issues of policy, practice and power. It is noted how the linguistic ecologies of classrooms in South Africa are embedded in complex local, national and global ecologies, and how this has major implications for access and equity in education. Jaffe reports on classrooms in Corsica in the context of the bilingual education system which is explicitly intended to change the language ecology of the island. The paper reviews the bilingual school practices and ideologies related to regional dialectal diversity of Corsican, and to diversity resulting from language contact, domination and shift. Kanno's focus is language minority education in Japan, with specific reference to the education of non-Japanese speaking children in public schools. She reports on the building of an infrastructure for the education of these children and on the many issues which emerge in these children's education. Saxena reports on the sultanate of Brunei Darussalam and, in particular, on the ideology, policy and practice in bilingual classrooms in the country. The final chapter, by Creese and Martin, provides a case study of the multilingual experiences in one complementary ('community') school in England, where the community language taught is Gujarati.

Section Five explores the Language Ecology of Literacies, Oracies and Discourses.

The chapters in this section explore how the literacy/oracy distinction has evolved and has resulted in an understanding of their connectedness through the local production of discourses. The contexts reported on in these chapters range widely both geographically and temporally. Hornberger's chapter reviews the conceptual origins and practical applications of the continua of biliteracy, an ecological framework in which

to situate research, teaching and language planning in linguistically diverse settings. We see the continua applied in the following two chapters in this section. Lin explores the ecology of literacy in Hong Kong, and begins to unpack youth sub-cultural literacies and the educational potential of these informal youth literacies. She speaks of the need to build bridges between school literacies and the everyday new media literacies of young people. This focus on everyday practice is also taken up in the next chapter, which also speaks of the heuristic importance of the continua of biliteracy. Pahl looks at the ecology of literacy and language, focusing on discourses, identities and practices in homes, schools and communities. She shows how the ecology metaphor provides a lens to reveal webs and connections in social relationships and texts in wider social practice. The final chapter, by Tusting, provides an ecological perspective on new literacies (mainly within the paradigm of New Literacy Studies) and the implications of these new literacies for education. Tusting shows how 'literacy' has extended its meaning in the digital age to encompass the understanding of information presented in many different ways and goes on to outline the debate within the social ecology of education.

In putting together this new volume in the *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*, we hope that the chapters that appear here will provide some indication of how far the study of the ecology of language has moved forward since Haugen used the term in 1972. The volume contains chapters which cover the historical and theoretical perspectives of language ecology, including areas traditionally associated with language ecology and areas such as the language ecologies of literacies, oracies and discourses, which have not normally been the focus of language ecology studies. In addition, the volume provides accounts of communities and geographical areas which are not traditionally covered in the literature on language and education. We believe that the chapters in the volume will contribute to the on-going debate on the ecology of language and its interconnectedness with education and lead to further critical reflection.

Angela Creese and Peter Martin

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