Book Review

Language Learning and Literacy: New Approaches and Different Perspectives in the New Globalized World[1]

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(Inaba, M. (2018). *Second language literacy practices and language learning outside the classroom*. Multilingual Matters.)

Miho Inaba's book, titled *Second Language Literacy Practices and Language Learning Outside the Classroom* (2018), explores extra-curricular contexts for emerging bilingual, second-language learners to investigate how language learning takes place in real-world, multilingual settings. Today, with the rapid advancement of technology, second language literacy practices have gained significant attention due to the presence of numerous linguistic contexts available outside of the classroom. To address the topic of bilingual learning in international settings, of considerable concern in the age of globalization, Inaba offers insights to educators, researchers, and policymakers on the dynamics of second language literacy practices, including formal and informal pedagogical approaches. Inaba's study examined learners who study Japanese at a university in Melbourne, Australia, and has its roots in the constructivist theory of education, which emphasizes the value of learning through active engagement in the processes of meaning-making, interaction, and the co-construction of knowledge, as opposed to the passive reception of information (Due et al., 2016). Moreover, Inaba demonstrates a profound understanding of the holistic principles of literacy and L2 learning, which stress that learning proceeds from the whole to the part.

Inaba's (2018) study examines the language literacy practices of adult learners of Japanese. Organized into seven chapters and five appendices, the book argues how extracurricular literacy practices can foster and promote the learning of a second language. More specifically, the book offers an in-depth account of social class-related and non-social class-related literacy practices, as well as various autonomous language learning strategies employed by adult learners of Japanese as part of their out-of-classroom learning experiences. The author draws on personal experiences teaching Japanese in Sweden, through which Inaba noticed multiple resources available outside of formal language-learning contexts. Due to the scarcity of research on non-instructed L2 learning in foreign contexts, Inaba strives to explore how language is learned outside of classroom walls, and specifically in foreign language contexts.

Second language literacy practices have undergone significant shifts following the rapid advancement of technology and technologically facilitated communication (primarily via the internet), which have created access to valuable linguistic and cultural resources. In Chapter 1, the author provides an introductory overview of these shifts, examining the sociocultural nature of non-instructed L2 learning, which she refers to as "out-of-class learning," and shares a thorough explanation of key terms in this discussion, such as *literacy, literacy activities*, and *literacy practices*. Framing the research in Vygotsky's (1987) sociocultural theory of learning (SCT), and drawing from existing research on L2 literacy and second language acquisition (SLA), Inaba argues for the importance of considering the social elements of SLA and second language literacy.

Chapter 2 of Inaba's text is titled "Out-of-Class Literacy and Language Learning from Sociocultural Perspectives." The chapter provides an overview of the relevant, existing pool of literature on L2 acquisition and literacy practices, such as research surrounding reading, writing, and digital literacy in naturalistic contexts. With her first chapter, Inaba builds a detailed explanation of Activity Theory, which is a theoretical framework relying on the key components of motives, mediation, and contradictions. Activity theory refers to the combination of both culturally and socially mediated behaviors in the development of human activities geared towards the processes of learning—specifically those of language learning (Lantolf, 2000). Additionally, Inaba examines types of out-of-class L2 learning activities and the individual, social, and contextual factors that impact learning processes. These factors include motivation, the social networking of learners, and information communication technologies (ICT).

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In Chapter 3 of Inaba's book, "Types of Literacy Activities Performed Outside of the Classroom," the author provides a thorough description of the types of literacy practices Japanese language learners engage in beyond classrooms. The author distinguishes between both class-related and non-class related activities (i.e., activities occurring within the classroom versus outside of the classroom), with the latter being a form of autonomous learning classified into three categories: "self-instruction, naturalistic language learning, and self-directed naturalistic learning" (p. 45).

In Chapter 4, "Class-Related Literacy Practices Outside the Classroom," Inaba continues exploring classroom-based literacy practices used by Japanese-language learners. In this chapter, the author examines the social and historical factors that influence the literacy practices examined in this study, namely the "...power relations between them and teachers or the university as a related community" of thought production and practice building (p. 87). In this chapter, Inaba clarifies that to understand learners' preferences of some types of literacy activities over others, and to understand "human behavior" (p. 70), subjective factors such as student perspectives on language learning should also be taken into consideration. Motives, teachers' evaluations, and learners' contradictory feelings towards learning are all also crucial factors that that help influence and determine literacy practices. This chapter supports prior studies on influential factors in second language literacy. A review of the extant literature argues that for learners to engage in any classroom tasks, they have to believe that the activity will provide them with feelings of growth and/or senses of satisfaction (Brophy, 1998).

Chapter 5, "Non-Class-Related Literacy Practices," focuses on the practices that are not class-related, the justifications behind learners' choices of such activities, and the factors influencing their adherence to said activities. Inaba's findings show that learners' attitudes towards language learning, as well as their desire to explore specific topics, were regarded as the most influential factors behind extending their literacy practices beyond classrooms. Evidence of this was seen in the students' interests in Japanese pop-culture, and how this interest influenced their various reading and writing activities.

Chapter 6, "Language-Related Mediation in L2 Literacy Practices," explores the ways through which the participants engage in L2 literacy practices. Participants utilized the mediational tools at their disposal, such as electronic dictionaries, Wikipedia, and Google, along with the resource of seeking help from their peers and native speakers. However, multiple factors impede L2 learning, such as the limitations certain technology platforms face in facilitating learning, as well as participants' "...insufficient knowledge about the useful functions of online dictionaries" (Inaba, 2018, p. 121).

Inaba's final chapter, "L2 Literacy Practices, and Language Learning in Out-of-Class Contexts," summarizes the main findings of this study, discusses the implications for second language teaching and learning, and considers avenues for future research. This research reveals that language is used differently according to the type of activity in which the users engage, i.e., classroom or non-classroom related activities. As far as motivational factors are concerned, Inaba's findings reveal that students who are extrinsically motivated are more willing to work on classroom-related activities. In a related sense, extrinsically motivated students were also more willing to work on non-classroom activities. This study supported the crucial role internet plays in facilitating language learning and literacy practices, specifically in its ability to provide valuable resources for students through arenas like digital dictionaries, Google, and Wikipedia. This chapter also provides several pedagogical tips for teachers to utilize in their teaching approaches, such as leveraging their students' beliefs, promoting their interests, and bridging the gap between their motivational factors and language classes.

In looking at Inaba's project as a whole, the book furnishes a valuable window into which EFL informal language learning contexts can be interpreted and understood. Chapter 6 of Inaba's text stands out as a comprehensive and informative explanation of how integrating technological platforms is crucial in language learning. However, even though the author has not said as much, a bias might be seen in terms of how the critical use of technology as a platform for language exchange is encouraged towards a more inclusive approach. Inaba provides a thorough description of the various domains in which participants engage in literacy practices. The book overall is highly informative for educators and policymakers, because it provides both a critical and a practical approach to L2 literacy practices, and elaborates on the dynamics of SLA and L2 literacy practices as learning modes influenced by new growth in communicative platforms. Inaba's book is a critical vessel that delves deeply into various EFL approaches for both in and out-of-class contexts, in which the current era is characterized by technology being leveraged in the learning environments.

Inaba builds on extant literature and adds a worthwhile piece of research to the field that advocates for language learners, specifically in foreign-language contexts. Still, Inaba could have expanded on other forms of literacy the participants employed, such as semiotics. Inaba mentioned that learners used gestures as mediational tools, yet they seem to fall short of providing a detailed account of the mechanics through which they engaged in this tool, as well as how they were able to interpret it. In a similar vein, Inaba fails to examine the interconnectedness between the participants' home lives as valuable resources to build upon when engaging in second language literacy practices (Willis et al., 2014). Inaba is not only successful in digging into every small detail, but she is also able to transform these details and let her readers "see" the multiple literacy approaches the participants took and the different mediational tools they leveraged. Languages are living, evolving entities, and literacy is necessarily intertwined with the ways language users interact with each other in specific contexts. Language and literacy, then, are cultural tools molded and manipulated by our species in order to mediate our sociocultural environments. Inaba's book helps in cultivating stronger implications to inform educators and policymakers of more effective policies, pedagogical approaches, and practices in schools and other institutions pertaining to L2 literacy practices, both in-and-out of class.

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