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Reimagining Language and Literacy Education in the Digital Age

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Reimagining Language and Literacy Education in the Digital Age

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The 21st Annual Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada (LLRC) pre-conference invited scholars, educators, and researchers to explore the evolving landscape of language and literacy education in the increasingly digital world. The lines between traditional and new literacies are blurring, requiring us to reimagine how language and literacy education can adapt to these changes. Burnett and Merchant (2020) remind educators and researchers to cultivate equitable and just relations: "[E]ducation—and educational research—is not just about preparing children for the world but helping to construct that world; it involves working with what emerges, responding to opportunities as they arise, imagining what could be, as well as responding to what is." (p. 97) The theme *Reimagining Language and Literacy Education in the Digital Age* called for innovative research and critical dialogue that addressed the role of digital technologies in reshaping language and literacy practices, educational methodologies, and the broader socio-cultural and material contexts of learning. We were particularly interested in research that explored the intersections and entanglement of digital technologies, languages, literacies, and diverse learning environments, thereby reimagining language and literacy education.

The pre-conference afforded an opportunity for further reflection through exquisite conversations with other scholars. Exquisite conversations are small, thematically-grouped presentations and attentive conversations where attendees provide exquisite attention to authors, sharing their work as they give feedback and learn from each other (Lather, 2007). As a follow-up to this engagement, authors were invited to contribute completed papers to a special issue in the journal *Language & Literacies* on the pre-conference theme. In this special issue, four different groups of authors reflect on digital literacies in a range of different contexts.

Opening our collection, Deborah Toope, through her piece on *Becoming Writers: Intra-activity with Digital Bookmaking,* draws on posthumanism and new literacies to examine digital literacies in Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2 classrooms. This article explores

how young children co-create meaning with digital tools, illustrating how these human-tech entanglements expand our understanding of inclusive literacy education.

To foster inclusive literacy education in the classroom, the next paper, *Attuning to the Digital: Inquiring into Our Teacher Educator Literacies Practices*, focuses on how we can prepare future teachers. Tara-Lynn Scheffel and Lori McKee explore how digital media entangle with human elements in elementary English Language Arts courses to reshape teacher education. Through a self-study of teacher educator practices (S-STEP), the authors examined the relationality of digital and analog materials.

From another angle in teacher education, this paper, *Apprendre à enseigner la syntaxe et la ponctuation grâce à une autoformation numérique,* shifts our attention to teacher autonomy in self-directed professional learning. With a lens for equity and accessibility in digital learning environments, Giguère and Quevillon Lacasse examine syntax and punctuation in writing through a professional training program in education. Their work within this digital self-directed learning format allowed for deeper examination of the connection between writing, digital literacies, and teaching.

Expanding our scope beyond school contexts, the last paper, *Through Green's Three-Dimensional Model: A Newcomer Parent's Perspectives on Children's Digital Usage,* shifts our attention to a critical but often overlooked role of family dynamics in literacy education in the digital age. Yina Liu, Linda Laidlaw, and Suzanna Wong explore how a first-generation newcomer parent supports her child's digital practices, highlighting the significance of home contexts that shape young learners' literacy practices.

References

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Author Biographies

Chuan Liu is a Ph.D. candidate at Western University, Ontario, focusing his research on language and literacy, technology integration, and curriculum studies. Prior to his graduate studies, Chuan worked as a language teacher, curriculum manager, and school director. Chuan is committed to fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments that recognize and celebrate linguistic, semiotic, and cultural diversity.

Dr. Li Li is a Postdoctoral Fellow and alumna of Western University and a specialist in AI education with a robust background in academic publishing. Her doctoral journey was

marked by significant scholarly output, resulting in multiple publications across leading journals in her field, including *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence* and the *Journal of Futures Studies*.

Dr. Katie Brubacher is an Assistant Professor of Elementary Education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. As president of the Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada, Katie collaborates with scholars and educators across the country, advocating for multilingual students in schools and teacher education.