8.   From biliteracy to pluriliteracies

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1.   Introduction

Literacy is, as Gee (1996: 22) has aptly described, "a socially contested term." Sociocultural studies of literacy have problematized the tendency to define literacy as a singular knowledge or developmentally ordered skill set; as unvarying across contexts and situations; and as primarily cognitive. Instead, they have demonstrated that literacy entails much more than the ability to read and write, that literacy practices are enmeshed within and influenced by social, cultural, political, and economic factors, and that literacy learning and use varies by situation and entails complex social interactions. If literacy is a socially contested term, the situation that has, in the literature to date, been dubbed 'biliteracy' is surely doubly contested, since the inclusion of more than one language system clearly points to power differentials and tensions about linguistic rights.

Yet, at this historical moment, people around the world engage daily in the complicated social, political, cultural, and psychological work of learning and using literacies in multiple languages and scripts that are enmeshed within other channels or modes of communication and diverse semiotic systems. In many parts of African, Asian, and Latin American post-colonial societies, multilingualism has long been the norm. However, in the 21st century, global flows of people, goods, and ideas across national borders have created complex forms of multilingualism in developed countries as well. Naturally, in each situation there are carefully negotiated linguistic hierarchies, with some languages (often colonial ones) having more power than others, and with schools often working towards academic monolingualism.

Ironically, the spread of English throughout the world and the important role it has assumed in globalized encounters (Brutt-Griffler 2004; Crystal 2003; Phillipson 2003) have been important mechanisms for the complex ways in which multilingualism is used today. Given the prestige granted English by its use in international business, tourism, and global communications, people around the world are increasingly obliged to incorporate English in their communicative and literacy practices. English has become both boon and threat to multilingualism, for English also threatens to overwhelm national and regional languages, especially in situations where language education policies privilege English over local or national languages (as, for example, the case of Tanzania). And yet, the prominence of English and the increased familiarity with multilingualism has bent the rigid power of some national languages, allowing other

languages voice and power within society. This is best seen in the context of Latin America where countries, such as Guatemala and Bolivia, have officialized indigenous languages (López 2006). It is seen worldwide, too, as immigrants use their many languages not only in ethnolinguistic communities, but also in more public spaces such as the web, and to communicate not only with their own local community, but also with others who speak their languages worldwide, and who do so, because of contact with other languages, in very different ways. The increased presence in public domains, including the web, of languages that had been previously relegated to private domains accentuates the variability, hybridity, and sense-making processes of literacy practices today.

In this context, it has become clear that, instead of bilingualism and biliteracy, the terms *plurilingualism* and *pluriliteracies* more accurately describe the complex language practices and values of speakers in multilingual communities of the 21st century (Beacco and Byram 2003; Conseil d'Europe, 2000; Clyne 2003; Coste 2001; Hélot 2004).[1] In terms of language use, plurilingualism entails "proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures" (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, p. 168). For Coste (2001: 15), plurilingualism involves practices and values that are not equivalent or even homologous in different languages, but that are *integrated, variable, flexible, and changing*. Further, scholars aver that plurilingualism should entail the awareness that all language varieties have equal value, although different functions (Beacco and Byram 2003). Plurilingualism, then, requires the *integration* of *unevenly developed* competences in a variety of languages, dialects, and registers, as well as the *valuing of linguistic tolerance*.

In this chapter, we review the existing literature on what has been called 'biliteracy' and the central concepts and theoretical approaches that have been used for its study. We include a section on the pedagogy of literacy and bilingualism, a topic that has received much attention because of the important role that school has played in the development of literacy. We pay special attention to Hornberger's landmark framework, which discusses the continua of biliteracy, and we consider new work on multilingual literacies. Then, reviewing scholarship in New Literacy Studies, multiliteracies, and multimodal literacies, and adding a plurilingual perspective, we reframe and extend the biliteracy scholarship to recognize more dynamic and hybrid uses of literacies in and out of schools, influenced by the new ways of using languages and literacies that are the result of new technologies and increased movements of people, services and goods in a globalized world. By integrating the different theoretical perspectives that surround biliteracy and sociocultural studies of literacy, we develop a *pluriliteracies approach* that, we argue, promises to address more accurately contemporary sociolinguistic practices.

2.   Biliteracy

Biliteracy in schools is often focused only on a skills-based view of an individual's literacy in one or the other language. But biliteracy is much more than what is learned in schools. Biliteracy, even more than monolingual literacy, also develops in families, homes, and communities (see Farr 1994a, 1994b; Gregory and Williams 2000 for biliteracy; and Hull and Schultz 2002 for monolingual literacy). Children and adults surrounded by different scripts in out-of-school settings often acquire the ability to read and write in two languages in functionally appropriate ways. They also acquire different attitudes and values about different literacy practices, including how these are associated with particular situated identities and social positions.

2.1.   Biliteracy definitions

Early scholars of biliteracy, such as Goodman, Goodman and Flores (1979), as well as Fishman (1980), defined biliteracy as *mastery* of reading and writing in two languages. Some scholars, retaining the notion of literacy as singular, did not refer to the term biliteracy and spoke instead of *literacy and bilingualism* (Williams and Snipper 1990) or of *literacy across languages and cultures* (Ferdman, Weber and Ramirez 1994). Most of these studies, as we will see below, focused on the acquisition of literacy in a powerful second language. Dworin (2003: 171) defined biliteracy as "children's literate competencies in two languages, to whatever degree, developed either simultaneously or successively." Reyes (2001: 98) also defined biliteracy as mastery, but she extended the concept to mean:

> mastery of the fundamentals of speaking, reading, and writing (knowing sound/ symbol connections, conventions of print, accessing and conveying meaning through oral or print mode, etc.) in two linguistic systems. It also includes constructing meaning by making relevant cultural and linguistic connections with print and the learners' own lived experiences [...] as well as the interaction of the two linguistic systems to make meaning.

Broader definitions of biliteracy have been proposed by Pérez and Torres-Guzmán (1996) and Lüdi (1997). Pérez and Torres-Guzmán (1996: 54) defined biliteracy as "the acquisition and learning of the decoding and encoding of and around print using two linguistic and cultural systems in order to convey messages in a variety of contexts."

Basing his understandings on Street's work (discussed below), Lüdi (1997: 207) proposed a broad definition of biliteracy as

> *the possession of, or access to, the competences and information required to accomplish literacy practices which an individual wishes to – or is compelled to – engage*

in in everyday situations in two languages, with their corresponding functions and in the corresponding cultural contexts, independently of the degree of mastery and the mode of acquisition (italics in the original).

Biliteracy, as defined by Hornberger, its most perceptive scholar, describes "the use of two or more languages in and around writing" (Hornberger 2003: xii) or "any and all instances in which communication occurs in two or more languages in or around writing" (Hornberger 1990: 213). Hornberger adapts the definition of "literacy event" given by Heath (1982: 83) as "any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretative processes" in a bilingual context. But precisely because bilingualism and biliteracy are so complex, Hornberger speaks of biliteracy "instances," encompassing not only events, but also "biliterate actors, interactions, practices, activities, programs, situations, societies, sites, worlds" (Hornberger 2003: xiii; Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester 2000: 98; Hornberger 2000: 362). And Hornberger proposes a multifaceted model of a "continua of biliteracy," which we describe below.

2.1.   Sequential biliteracy

Just as the definitions of biliteracy have shifted over time, theories regarding the acquisition of biliteracy and approaches to biliteracy pedagogy have also changed substantially. The most popular position at the end of the 20th century was that literacy in the first language (L1) had to be developed prior to literacy in the second (L2). UNESCO suggested in 1953 that there were advantages in using the child's mother tongue to teach initial literacy. This was the position of the early proponents of bilingual education, especially for children of linguistic minorities (Modiano 1968). The idea was not to develop biliteracy per se, but rather to advance literacy in the dominant societal language by teaching children to read in a language they understood. Most bilingual education programs of the transitional kind teach children to read and write in their mother tongue initially, with full transition to reading and writing in the child's second language only after the child has oral proficiency in the language to be read, as shown in Figure 1.

literacy in L1 and oral proficiency in L2 →	literacy in L2 and oral proficiency in L2

Figure 1. Literacy education in transitional bilingual education programs

Cummins (1981 and 1991), writing about second language acquisition, and Bernhardt and Kamil (1995), writing about second language reading research,

have proposed that there is an interdependence across languages. Cummins refers to this as the *Common Underlying Proficiency* and the *Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis*. Bernhardt and Kamil speak of the *Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis*. Both hypotheses posit that successful readers in L1 must reach a *threshold* of second language competence for transferability of literacy skills to occur (Bossers 1991; Brisbois 1992). They argue that there should be fluency and literacy in L1 before embarking on such instruction in L2; that is, that *sequential biliteracy* is necessary (Collier and Thomas 1989; Hakuta 1986; Wong Fillmore and Valadez 1986). Many correlational studies have indeed shown that at least reading proficiency transfers between languages (Carson et al. 1990; Elley 1984; Goldman, Reyes and Varnhagen 1984; Groebel 1980; Reyes 1987; Tregar and Wong 1984). Heath (1986) has referred to this same concept as *transferable generic literacies*.

This *sequential view of biliteracy* posits that literacy in the second language should not be introduced until a child has competence in speaking, reading, and writing the first language (Wong, Fillmore and Valadez 1986). This is consistent with research findings on the academic failure of indigenous peoples and immigrants who most often are given their initial reading instruction in a second language (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981, 2000; Francis and Reyhner 2002).

2.2.   Simultaneous biliteracy

The success of immersion bilingual education programs in Canada where anglophone children learned to read in French, a second language, without any adverse effects challenged the position that literacy in L1 was essential to acquire literacy in L2 (Cummins 1979; Lambert and Tucker 1972; Genesee 1980). Furthermore, in their studies of ethnic mother tongue schools, Fishman and colleagues (Fishman 1980; Fishman et al. 1985) and García (1988) found that children were able to *simultaneously* acquire literacy in two languages, even when languages differed significantly in script and discourse mode. Similar findings have resulted from studies of community language classes and complementary schools in Great Britain (Kenner 2000; Creese et al. forthcoming), as well as heritage language programs in Canada (Beynon and Toohey 1991).

Proponents of simultaneous biliteracy argue that children can learn to read in two languages at once, even as they are still developing cognitive-oral skills in L2 (Anderson and Roit 1996; Barrera 1983; Gersten 1996; Hudelson 1984; Reyes 2001; Weber 1991). This position has been supported by Edelsky's (1986) excellent study of children's writing in Spanish and English, as well as research by Hudelson (1984) and Dworin (2003). Dworin (2003: 179) posits the *bidirectionality* of biliteracy development, pointing to the "dynamic, flexible process in which children's transactions with two written languages mediate their language learning for both languages."

Notably, in all of these studies, children acquired literacy in the two languages simultaneously, but in different educational spaces, that is, in different classrooms, with different teachers, or with the same teacher but at different times. This instructional situation is very different from the more integrated approach of plurilingual literacy practices that we describe in section 3.

2.3.   The pedagogy of biliteracy

The view of sequential or simultaneous biliteracy holds that each language develops separately, even if simultaneously, and thus each literacy should be taught as monolingual literacy. Most handbooks to teach biliteracy propose reading and writing approaches that are similar to those that are used to teach literacy in one or the other language. This is so, especially, for the English-speaking world, and particularly in the United States for the teaching of literacy in Spanish and English (see, for example, Ada 2003; Brisk and Harrington 2000; Carrasquillo and Segan 1998; Freeman and Freeman 1996; Pérez and Torres-Guzmán 1996.)

Other texts focus on teaching literacy in a dominant language, most often English, to second language learners, especially immigrants (Gibbons 2002; Gregory 1996; Hawkins 2004; Peregoy and Owen 1996). Pérez (1998: 36) suggests that studies of reading in bilingual contexts have found that second language learners require:

- careful pre-reading preparation to activate and expand background knowledge for comprehension,
- use of good meaning-making strategies, such as ability to relate the text to prior experience or learning, and familiarity with genre and kinds of questions that students are asked (Langer et al. 1990),
- use of metacognitive strategies, such as self-questioning (Muñiz-Swicegood 1994),
- activation of three types of schemata – linguistic schemata, based on prior language development; content schemata, based on prior knowledge of content; and text schemata, based on knowledge of rhetorical structure of the text (Carrell 1987),
- explicit instruction in previewing, skimming, adjusting reading rate, recognizing the author's purpose, making inferences, and separating fact from opinion (Jensen 1986),
- reading extensively to become productive readers.

The use of process approaches to teach writing are favored with language minority children because of their focus on developing voice and fluency, although these approaches have been challenged (Delpit 1991). Derewianka (1990) has identified four stages of explicit literacy teaching that are important for second language learners:

 – building up the field
 – modeling the text type
 – joint construction
 – independent writing

Pedagogical approaches to literacy in a second language rely heavily on the concept of *scaffolding* social interaction so as to create contexts for linguistic and academic learning in the *Zone of Proximal Development*, that is, "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978: 86). According to Van Lier (2005) and Walqui (2002: 6), scaffolding in educational settings has six features:

 – the tasks are repeated, with variations, and connected to one another,
 – exploration is encouraged in a safe, supportive environment with contextual support,
 – there is encouragement and participation in a shared community of practice,
 – tasks are adjusted depending on actions of learners,
 – there is an increasing role for the learner as skills and confidence increase,
 – participants are focused on the task.

Walqui (2002) identifies six main types of instructional scaffolding to use with second language learners:

 – modeling
 – bridging
 – contextualization
 – schema building
 – text re-presentation
 – metacognitive development

2.4.   Beyond sequential and simultaneous biliteracy to the continua of biliteracy

As Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester (2000) have pointed out, studies of biliteracy most often focus on the development of literacy in a second language in school, and are accompanied by a skills-based view of literacy. Biliteracy pedagogies often continue to demand two separate, evenly developed competencies corresponding to equal contexts and separate identities, with literacy in one language often being more valued (and more assessed) than literacy in the other.

Hornberger's (1989) *continua of biliteracy* has created an integrated way of analyzing complex phenomena, including the contexts, development, media, and more recently (Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester 2000) the content of biliteracy. According to these authors, the continua of biliteracy include the following, with the left representing the less powerful end of the continuum and the right representing the more powerful end of the continuum:

Contexts of biliteracy
- The micro - macro continuum
- The oral -literate continuum
- The bilingual - monolingual continuum

Biliterate development in the individual
- The reception - production continuum
- The oral language - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - written language continuum
- The L1 - L2 transfer continuum

Media of biliteracy
- The simultaneous - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -successive exposure continuum
- The dissimilar - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - similar language structures continuum
- The divergent - convergent scripts continuum

Content of biliteracy
- Minority -majority continuum
- Vernacular - literacy continuum
- Contextualized - - - - - - - - - - - -decontextualized language texts continuum

This most recent version of the model (Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester 2000) emphasizes that not only are all points in a particular continuum interrelated, but that all points across the continua are also interrelated. This revision integrates a critical perspective, positing that there tends to be a privileging of one end of the continua over the other because of differences in power relations, and that biliteracy is better obtained when learners can draw on all points of the continua (Hornberger 1989: 289). The interrelated nature of Hornberger's continua supports the potential for positive transfer across literacies, but its nested nature also shows how transfer can be promoted or hindered by different contextual factors (Hornberger 2003: 25).

Hornberger's continua of biliteracy identifies the major social, linguistic, political, and psychological issues that surround the development of biliteracy, as they relate to each other. The framework has been most influential in studies of biliteracy and multilingual literacies throughout the world (see Hornberger 2003). What makes Hornberger's continua of biliteracy powerful and different from all other studies we have referenced is that it captures the complexity of biliteracy. It builds on the *differences* that are the result of the degree to which groups or societies have power; live in monolingual or bilingual societies; speak languages that have literacies, or that have similar/dissimilar language structures or scripts; have schools in which their languages are used or taught; have opportunities to receive or produce texts with different varieties of diverse languages. And yet, schools have ignored the complexity of Hornberger's continua, and pedagogical frameworks informed by the model have yet to be developed.

In an effort to emphasize the coexistence of not just two but multiple languages and literacies, Martin-Jones and Jones (2000) have proposed the term *multilingual literacies*. For these authors, the term highlights the "multiplicity

and complexity of individual and group repertoires" (p. 5) and the "multiple ways in which people draw on and combine the codes in their communicative repertoire when they speak and write" (p. 7). With this term, Martin-Jones and Jones wish to signal: that people use more than two "spoken or written languages and language varieties in their communicative repertoire"; that the communicative purposes associated with different spoken and written languages are multiple and complex; that there are "multiple paths to the acquisition of the spoken and written languages within the group repertoire, and people have varying degrees of expertise in these languages and literacies"; and that "people draw on and combine the codes in their communicative repertoire when they speak and write" in multiple ways (2000: 5–7).[2]

Yet, as we noted in the introduction, the contemporary proliferation of not only languages, scripts, dialects, and registers but also modes, channels of communication and semiotic systems requires an integration of the sociolinguistically grounded work being done in biliteracy and multilingual literacies, the sociocultural scholarship of new literacy studies and multimodal literacies, and the burgeoning field of plurilingualism. We turn now to that task.

3.   A pluriliteracies approach

In this section, we argue that the work being developed in the field of biliteracy can be enriched by integrating and adapting ideas from New Literacy Studies, multimodal literacies, and plurilingualism. Our *pluriliteracies* approach builds on and extends the continua of biliteracy and the concept of multilingual literacies by integrating key insights from other literatures. For us, a *pluriliteracies approach* captures not only literacy continua with different interrelated axes, but also an emphasis on *literacy practices in sociocultural contexts,* the *hybridity* of literacy practices afforded by new technologies, and the increasing *interrelationship of semiotic systems.*

The use of two or more languages in reading and writing makes evident the importance of the social contexts of literacy learning – that is, it reveals that literacy is not an *autonomous* set of skills stripped of its cultural contexts and social purposes (Street 1984, 1993). Situations of multilingual literacies need to be researched and understood within a sociocultural framework, which emphasizes that making meaning from and with print varies according to different sociocultural contexts (Hornberger 1989; Pérez 1998) and media. As such, biliteracy is most appropriately studied within an *ideological* framework (Street 1984: 3). One of the important ideas we adopt from New Literacy Studies is the focus on *literacy practices* which are "the socially regulated, recurrent, and patterned things that people do with literacy as well as the cultural significance they ascribe to those things" (Brandt and Clinton 2002: 342; see also Baynham

1995: 1). The notion of *plurilingual literacy practices* emphasizes that social and cultural contexts are integral to doing literacy, even as it acknowledges the transfer between contexts of ways of knowing and doing.

Recent scholarship (New London Group 1996; Cope and Kalantzis 2000; Jewett and Kress 2003; Kleifgen 2001, forthcoming; Kress 2003) has proposed that multiple literacies are not only associated with different cultural contexts and social structures, but also with different channels or modes of communication. These studies recognize that literacy practices are increasingly *multimodal* – that is, that written-linguistic modes of meaning are intricately bound up with other visual, audio, and spatial semiotic systems. On this basis, the New London Group (1996) has proposed a *multiliteracies pedagogy* consisting of *situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice.* This insight highlights the fact that, in the 21st century where new media are occasioning increased variation in multimodal discourses, biliteracy and multilingual literacies are practiced, as Coste (2001) averred, in an *integrated* fashion. Our pluriliteracies approach moves away from the dichotomy of the traditional L1/L2 pairing, emphasizing instead that languages and literacies are interrelated and flexible, and positing that all literacy practices have equal value.

The concept of *hybridity* is important in our understanding of plurilingual literacy practices. Extending the work of Bakhtin (1981) on the hybridity of the dialogue of languages, of Anzaldúa (1987) on the hybridity of being in the "borderlands," and of Bhabha (1994) on the hybridity of postcoloniality, we follow Shohat and Sham's (1994: 42) definition of hybridity as "an unending, unfinalizable process [...] [that] is dynamic, mobile, less an achieved synthesis, or prescribed formula than an unstable constellation of discourses." We agree with Gutiérrez and her colleagues (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López and Alvarez, 2001: 128) that "hybrid language use is more than simple code-switching as the alternation between two codes. It is more a systematic, strategic, affiliative, and sense-making process [...]" A pluriliteracies approach acknowledges the agency involved in doing literacy and the dynamic transfer between different contexts in ways of being, knowing and doing (Bartlett, forthcoming). And although grounded in the social, political, and economic processes of globalization, a pluriliteracies approach has the potential for transformation and change, precisely because of the dynamism and flexibility of integrated hybrid practices.

Gutiérrez and her colleagues (Gutiérrez et al., 1999a, Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López and Tejada, 1999b, Gutiérrez et al. 2001), as well as Reyes (2001) have demonstrated the diversity of, and interplay between linguistic codes and literacy practices in multilingual classrooms. The hybridity of plurilingual literacy practices is also abundantly evident in studies of biliteracy in the home and community, and especially among adult immigrants. For example, Kalmar (2000) demonstrated how Latino adult migrants' developed their own hybrid writing system that used the Spanish alphabet to capture English speech sounds.

Guerra (1998) and Farr and Guerra (1995) examined the interplay between English and Spanish literacy strategies among transnational populations as they moved between Mexico and Chicago.

A pluriliteracies approach better captures the sociolinguistic realities of the current epoch. Sridhar (1996) posits that, in 21st century plurilingual societies, languages are not compartmentalized in a diglossic situation, but rather they overlap, intersect, and interconnect. A fusion of languages, dialects, scripts, registers, and semiotic systems characterize how people communicate today. As political and economic alliances are shaped and technology advances, literacy practices and literacy identities are variable and integrated.

Practices of plurilingual literacies are not simply markers of national or ethnic identity, but have become a form of economic and social capital in integrated markets and a globalized world (Bourdieu 1991; Heller 1999). It is pluriliteracy that is being marketed as a unifying capacity for European citizens in the 21st century. For example, the European Union is actively seeking to develop its citizen's plurilingual literacy practices and values. To do so, it emphasizes the role of school not simply in teaching languages to a certain level of proficiency, but also in recognizing and valuing the plurilingual language and literacy practices of students in their full range. The development of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) is one attempt to record and recognize these practices, regardless of whether they are learned or valued in school (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages 2002).

Our pluriliteracies approach, then:

- emphasizes the integrated, hybrid nature of plurilingual literacy practices;
- values all plurilingual literacy practices equally;
- highlights the continuous interplay of multiple languages, scripts, discourses, dialects, and registers;
- calls attention to the ways in which multilingual literacies are enmeshed and rely upon multiple modes, channels of communication, and semiotic systems;
- adopts from new literacy studies a constant awareness of the ways in which cultural contexts and social relations influence literacy practices;
- and attends to the development of literacy practices beyond the school, even as work within this vein endeavors to bring theoretical insight to bear on pedagogical developments.

3.1.   Pedagogies for plurilingual literacy practices

A pluriliteracies approach, or integrated plurilingual literacy practices, is one way for educators to resist the hegemony of dominant national languages. Whereas in traditional language enrichment, language maintenance, or transitional bilingual education programs, practices of literacies in the two languages

were always kept separate, the heterogeneity of linguistic profiles in contemporary classrooms allows plurilingual literacy practices to naturally emerge. The linguistically integrated space of the classroom, coupled with the possibilities afforded to all languages by new technologies, fosters the development of pedagogies for plurilingual literacy practices that will increase the potential for communication, knowledge and understandings among all participants.

Even in the United States and other dominant English-speaking societies, where homogenizing literacy practices into 'standard English' is increasingly being imposed in schools (see García and Menken 2006; Hornberger 2006), emerging pedagogies are moving away from strict language compartmentalization. For example, in an interesting study of teaching ESL in Chinatown, Fu (2003) describes how she encouraged teachers to let students write in Chinese mixed with English as they were developing English writing. Manyak (2001, 2002), working in a primary grade English immersion class in California postproposition 227, examined the blending of not only Spanish and English but also home and school registers in an elementary classroom, although he warned that hybrid literacy pedagogy did not benefit all students equally. Gutiérrez et al. (1999a, 1999b, 2001) suggested that the "commingling of and contradictions among different linguistic codes and registers" offered significant resources for learning (1999b: 289).

In the United States, the growth and development of dual language bilingual education programs also nurture and develop plurilingual literacy practices, despite the fact that teachers try to keep the two languages separate (see, for example, García 2006). Because in these classrooms children of different linguistic profiles are together, plurilingual literacy practices evolve informally, as children communicate around writing in two languages trying to make sense of who they all are, what they understand and know, and what they're doing.

Working on the design of learning environments for a new economy (Early, Cummins and Willinsky 2002), Cummins describes the use of "identity texts" as a way of highlighting the important role of negotiation of identities in students' learning (Cummins 2001, 2006). He builds on the four components of the multiliteracies pedagogy proposed by The New London Group (1996) – situated practices, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practices – but proposes an "academic expertise framework," which argues that *maximum identity investment* on the part of students is key to optimal academic development. In a school setting described by Cummins (2006), young students of diverse linguistic background create stories in English that are then translated with the help of older students, parents and teachers into their home languages. These multilingual stories are then published on the web, accompanied by images; spoken, musical, and dramatic renderings; or combinations of these in multimodal form.

Pedagogical work that incorporates pluriliteracies is especially evident in multilingual European contexts. In Wales *translanguaging and transliteracy* techniques are increasingly used to develop both English and Welsh, with students hearing or reading a lesson in one language, and developing their work in the other. Cen Williams, who coined the Welsh term *trawysieithu* [translanguaging] to refer to this pedagogy, sees four advantages to translanguaging and transliteracy: deeper understanding of the subject matter, development of competence in the weaker language, home-school cooperation, and integration of fluent speakers with early-level learners (as discussed by Baker, 2001: 280–284). Baker (2003) clarifies that translanguaging is not about code-switching, but rather about an arrangement that normalizes bilingualism without diglossic functional separation.

A pluriliteracies approach better describes the ways in which the practices of literacies are being supported pedagogically in the European Union. We have already referred to the European Language Portfolio (ELP) as an attempt to record and recognize plurilingual literacy practices, beyond those learned in schools. *CLIL/EMILE (Content and Language Integrated Learning)* is different from Traditional bilingual education or immersion pedagogy in that it allows for uneven but integrated competencies in different languages[3]. In addition, *language awareness* pedagogy, which is used in many European school contexts today to familiarize students with many different languages and to teach students to value them (see Hélot and Young 2006), does not in itself promote plurilingualism or plurilingual literacy practices, but it does build a social context in which such practices would be valued and recognized.

4.   Conclusion

Despite the potential to build on the integrated plurilingual literacy practices that are prevalent among peoples in the 21st century and facilitated through new media, schools reflect a national ideology that is at best multilingual in the sense of separate languages, but that is rarely multimodal or truly plurilingual. There are issues of resources for schools, but the core of the resistance lies in the lack of will to change the status quo of situations in which dominant languages and literacies hold power and privilege. The pedagogies that we have described in this chapter are most often accepted as "bridges" and "stepping stones" to monolingual literacy, or at best multilingual literacy. But we are still far removed from a stable use of pedagogies in schools, which would build on the plurilingual literacy practices that are prevalent among plurilingual individuals in informal settings, and which are today widespread in their personal use of technology. And yet, educators have the potential to transform values, as well as literacy practices, by giving room to these plurilingual literacy practices in a context other than the informal ones.

An important question is whether schools, regarded as the most influential educational domain, will continue to protect literacy in standard national languages and in traditional media, or will begin to build on the flexible and multimodal plurilingual literacy practices that characterize the world today.

Notes

1. Although this trend characterizes most of the world, it is absent in the United States where even bilingualism has been silenced in the 21st century (see García 2006; Hornberger, 2006.)
2. In the afterword to the Martin-Jones and Jones volume, Hornberger (2000) clarifies that her concept of biliteracy encompasses multilingual literacies, as well as the practices of multiple literacies, vernacular literacies, indigenous literacies, everyday literacies, and multiliteracies.
3. For more on CLIL/EMILE visit www.clilcompendium.com

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