

vol  
11 | 20  
13

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research in education at the National Institute of Education, Singapore

# learning literacies

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# Editorial



Assoc Professor Rita E. Silver  
Deputy Head (Research),  
English Language and Literature  
Academic Group  
National Institute of Education

**AN ISSUE** on literacy and learning is a rather obvious choice for an institute of education, especially one with a strong research agenda on language and literacies encompassing English and Mother Tongues, literacies in different academic disciplines, and literacy needs for the 21st century.

It would be impossible, therefore, to highlight all on-going literacy-related projects at NIE. Instead, this issue introduces a few projects to showcase the broad spectrum of current research on “learning literacies”.

Looking at what might be considered a fairly traditional area, Dr Zhang Dongbo’s team has investigated word learning and biliteracy. They examined how learning morphology (which is how words are formed from the small meaningful bits of language such as “bit” and “s”) might influence vocabulary development for bilingual learners in either or both languages.

Considering literacy in academic subjects, Dr Seah Lay Hoon is especially interested in Science disciplinary literacy. She wants to know how struggles with language might impede Science learning and how Science teachers’ awareness of language might enhance their effectiveness.

Dr Tang Kok Sing is also investigating Science literacy. His project, however, looks specifically at improving the strategies Science teachers use to help secondary Physics and Chemistry students. He is particularly interested in the explicit and implicit ways in which teachers address the language and literacy demands of these subjects.

From a different perspective, Assistant Professors Csilla Weninger and Suzanne Choo consider the difference between being media literate and tech-savvy. They are hoping to make this difference more explicit so teachers and students can be effective and critical users of media, users who also consider the aesthetics of their meaning-making.

Thinking critically and aesthetically about media also means thinking beyond the classroom and into areas of identity and presentation of self. With this in mind, Assistant Professor David Caldwell examines how youths use T-shirts to express their varying identities explicitly, implicitly, iconically and ironically. Without actually speaking, youths are communicating ideas via their T-shirt selections which they might not express otherwise.

Two other projects look more closely at literacy-speaking links. Associate Professor Peter Teo addresses the process of learning through dialogue. Investigating General Paper classes—which are typically focused on writing—he is examining how classroom talk can enhance communication skills and student thinking.

Associate Professor Mark Baildon and Assistant Professor Ho Li-Ching explore talk (or “chat”) in online spaces. They are particularly interested in how participation in online discussion can open up classroom space, especially for building civic participation and civic literacy.

From these articles, we think you will be able to see the multiple perspectives on “learning literacies” that are being studied in our research, in and out of Singapore schools, with teachers and students. ■

## EDITORIAL TEAM

Lee Wing On  
June Teng Poh Hoon  
Vinothini Muneaswara  
Nur Haryanti Sazali  
Jarrod Tam Chun Peng

**ReEd** (*Research in Education*) is a research bulletin aimed at sharing our research contributions with the global community. This is an initiative of the Office of Education Research at the National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore.

For enquiries, email [chunpeng.tam@nie.edu.sg](mailto:chunpeng.tam@nie.edu.sg)

# Re Talking to Learn

## PROJECT TEAM

**Principal Investigator** Peter Teo, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*

**Collaborators** Choe Kee Cheng, Evelyn Woels, *Ministry of Education, Singapore*



*Peter believes a talking class is a learning class.*

**STUDENTS' WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS** and exam scripts give us a good glimpse into their learning progress. But these represent the product of learning, says Associate Professor Peter Teo. What he's interested in is the process of learning.

He believes that teachers can gauge how our students learn in and through the talk that takes place in class.

**Talking Helps Learning** Most educational research conducted in Singapore is focused on primary and secondary schools. But Peter is investigating an area he feels is overlooked: pre-university education.

Working with two Integrated Programme schools and five junior colleges, the team is observing the way teachers communicate and interact with their students in General Paper (GP) classes.

Peter notes that talking effectively in class is not only about having good oral communication skills, it's also the critical thinking that goes on behind the talk. The team is exploring how these can be promoted through classroom talk.

"Learning actually takes place through social interaction and dialogue," says Peter. "So by talking, you actually think and learn."

Analysing the dialogue in GP classes allows them to see some evidence of how knowledge and learning are co-constructed by teachers and students. In this way, Peter hopes to challenge the general assumption that learning is only seen through the assignments and exam results.

**Being Thinking-Literate** "Generally speaking, Singaporean students tend to be reserved," says Peter. "It depends on the students' language proficiency, opportunity and courage to take up the teacher's invitation to participate in and contribute to class discussions."

One aim of the project is to find out why some teachers are more successful in getting their students to talk more freely in class.

"For instance, some teachers may be very skilful at encouraging different students to offer different opinions and perspectives, while others are good at creating a 'safe' environment in which students feel free to question and even challenge one another's viewpoints, including the teacher's!"

But talking effectively is more than just the mechanics of speaking, such as pronunciation or fluency. It's also about adding value to the information being constructed in communication.

To do so, students have to develop "literacy" in thinking. It's the ability to interpret and evaluate the thoughts of others through what is said and to articulate their own thoughts clearly and coherently.

If students are willing to question others and become thinking-literate, that's when the real learning starts.

**Dynamic Participation** "Teachers are sometimes seen to feed students with information, rather than encourage students to co-construct knowledge which is dialogic and dynamic," says Peter.

However, an interactive class doesn't necessarily mean the students are learning either. They could simply be giving answers that the teacher wants to hear or speaking about trivial things.

A truly dialogic class, on the other hand, is one where the evidence of student learning can be seen, where students are able to build on and add value to the discussion by offering their opinions and questioning the opinions of others.

Peter is, however, mindful that having a dialogic classroom may not be possible for every class or even be desirable due to the different learning styles of our students. But one thing is for sure, getting students to talk effectively is the best way for them think critically and learn fruitfully. ■

# Transferring Literacy Skills **Re**

## PROJECT TEAM

**Principal Investigator** Zhang Dongbo, *Michigan State University, USA*

**Co-Principal Investigators** Zhao Shouhui, *Nie Youyan, National Institute of Education, Singapore;*  
Elizabeth Pang, *Ministry of Education, Singapore*

**Collaborator** Paitoon Chaiyanara, *Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*

**Researchers** Li Li, *Singapore Centre for Chinese Language, Singapore;*  
Chin Chern Far, *Mohammed Khalid Bin Bari, National Institute of Education, Singapore*

**DOES BEING ABLE** to read and write in one language mean a person can easily learn another? Some scholars are shouting “Yes”, while others are saying “No”. Research done at NIE explains why this is so.

**Language Literacies** “Studying biliteracy is no easy task,” says Dr Zhang Dongbo, a former NIE Research Scientist. “Biliteracy involves languages that often differ in linguistic features (such as sounds and word formations) and sometimes in writing system as well.”

Dongbo and team looked at the literacy acquisition of bilingual children in Singapore primary schools. Specifically, they wanted to see if reading skills in one language (like English) can help in the reading development of another (like Malay or Chinese).

But how are these skills shared? Dongbo explains that we need to first see them not as separate entities, as most biliteracy research does, but as related.

This perspective suggests that there are common underlying skills involved in learning literacy. He refers to them as metalinguistic skills.

**Metalinguistic Skills** “Metalinguistic skills are universally important to literacy acquisition,” says Dongbo, “and there are different types and levels of these skills.”

“However, there are variations across languages as to how these skills contribute to literacy acquisition.” This explains why some scholars differ in opinion.

The metalinguistic skill that the team focused on was morphology, which refers to the ways which complex words are formed. For example, one

way is derivation, where a new word is derived by modifying an existing one, like *drinkable* from *drink*.

In their intervention, however, teaching English morphology did not appear to significantly enhance children’s reading development in mother tongue languages.

“A reason for the unexpected lack of a significant intervention effect may be that the intervention was too short and not intensive enough.” But Dongbo is certain that there’s still hope yet.

Because English and Malay both use derivation to form words, the team could predict that Malay language learners would benefit from focused instruction on English derivation. This was, of course, not so for Chinese language learners as there is comparatively little use of derivational words in the Chinese language.

Nonetheless, both ethnic groups enhanced their English literacy through the intervention. This was something the team had expected.

**Crossing Languages** Dongbo doesn’t see the results as a failure. “Given the small amount of time on the morphological instruction, I see this as encouraging.”

The breakthrough from their study was that various aspects of metalinguistic skills were indeed related and were predictors of children’s reading abilities both within and across languages.

So while there are variations across languages, researchers should not be discouraged from finding common skills that are readily transferrable between languages in biliteracy acquisition.

Nor should it stop teachers from incorporating these skills in their instruction. “I believe morphological teaching should be an integral component of literacy pedagogy,” says Dongbo. He’s confident that longer and more intensive instruction on English morphology in classrooms will produce more desired results.

We may yet see the day where teachers can teach a skill that allows people to use one language to quickly learn others. When that day comes, perhaps there will be more scholars saying “Yes, it is possible to!” ■

*Dongbo is trying to find out how learners can use their literacy skills of one language to learn another.*



# Ed Understanding the Language of Science

## PROJECT TEAM

**Principal Investigator** Seah Lay Hoon, National Institute of Education, Singapore

**Co-Principal Investigator** Tang Kok Sing, National Institute of Education, Singapore

**Collaborator** Rita E. Silver, National Institute of Education, Singapore

**IN OUR SINGAPORE SCHOOLS**, we consider English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil as language subjects. But even the Science subject has its own unique language. Most people aren't aware of this and thus don't see how Science language can be rather difficult to understand.

Once a student who struggled with languages herself, Dr Seah Lay Hoon, who is a Research Scientist at NIE, wants to make a difference for today's learners.

"I really empathize with how children struggle with language," she says. "I am motivated to find out what kind of challenges they now face and the ways to help them overcome these challenges."

**Expressing Scientific Concepts** There are times when pupils receive unexpected scores for their Science tests even though they understand the scientific concepts. And the reason is simple.

"These pupils might understand the scientific content," explains Lay Hoon, who was also a secondary school Science teacher. "But they have difficulty representing it in ways that are considered scientific to the teachers."

"They tend to give incomplete answers or use inappropriate words, and get penalized for that," she says. "So my team is trying to help them know what is expected of them when they answer a question."

With that in mind, Lay Hoon and her team are working to come up with a set of guided worksheets, which combine both language and content to help these pupils understand Science better.

**Merging Language and Content** The team is developing tasks and strategies through these worksheets that show pupils how to present Science concepts in a scientifically appropriate way.

The worksheets first aim to foreground certain linguistic features that help pupils to understand and approach the questions better. "For example, we try to get them to compare the word 'heat' in everyday use with the scientific way of using it."

Pupils then see words in different contexts. The team hopes that pupils will understand, interpret and approach the questions more appropriately.



*Lay Hoon is passionate about helping pupils understand the language of Science.*

But first, she plans to raise awareness among Science teachers of the relationship between linguistic choices and the functions these choices perform in realizing scientific ideas.

Through these worksheets, Lay Hoon believes teachers' efficacy to teach pupils the Science language can be enhanced.

**Developing Effective Teachers** To further help teachers deliver more enriching Science lessons, Lay Hoon provides resources to guide them. The teachers' resources also include pointers that they can raise in class to better their pupils' understanding as they go along.

"This helps to prompt teachers to provide greater scaffolds for their pupils," she says. "Because when it comes to Science, there are very different ways of using the language."

Lay Hoon has conducted several workshops for Science teachers; and with the endless possibilities of this project, she hopes to better design professional development programmes for them.

While understanding the Science language is critical, she also stresses that the content of Science is equally important. "Focusing on one does not necessarily means doing it at the expense of another," says Lay Hoon.

And with teachers that are ready and equipped to make a difference in these pupils' learning, she can be sure that her past struggle will not be repeated. ■

# Disciplinary Literacy in Science **Re**

## PROJECT TEAM

**Principal Investigator** Tang Kok Sing, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*  
**Co-Principal Investigators** Seah Lay Hoon, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*;  
Caroline Ho, *English Language Institute of Singapore, Singapore*

**Collaborators** Charles Chew, *Academy of Singapore Teachers, Singapore*; Natasha Anne Rappa,  
*National Institute of Education, Singapore*

**STUDENTS WHO** do well in Science tend to pick up the language of Science with natural ease. But for other students, getting used to this unique disciplinary language can be difficult. A little more help from teachers can go a long way.

**Scientific Literacy** “Each different discipline has its own unique language,” explains Dr Tang Kok Sing. “When we talk about literacy in Science, it’s the ability to speak, write, argue or explain like a scientist.”

Being Science literate entails more than just being able to read and write.

“Scientific language is never just the English language,” Kok Sing elaborates. “If you think about it, diagrams, graphs and equations are also languages.”

It’s hard work for some students to make sense of all these modes of communication and piece together what was taught. Or they may have difficulty expressing scientific facts that they already know in a coherent fashion.

These are signs that students need more help in scientific literacy.

**Disciplinary Literacy Strategies** For his project on disciplinary literacy in the sciences, Kok Sing and his team are working with four Physics and Chemistry teachers in secondary schools.

“It’s not just to highlight the problems but we’re actually trying to find solutions as well,” he says. The researchers will develop teaching strategies with the teachers to teach scientific literacy in a more explicit manner.

“We’re going to develop these strategies that are catered to the way the teacher is teaching,” he explains. “We don’t just come up with a one-size-fits-all strategy and then tell the teacher, ‘Try this.’”

In the traditional Science classroom, Kok Sing tells us, content mastery tends to be the main focus. This is the case not just in Singapore, but also around the world.

“But it’s not that teachers don’t teach disciplinary literacy,” he notes. “It’s just that it’s very implicit.”

So their literacy strategies seek to explicitly teach students how to write a scientific explanation using



*Kok Sing believes that disciplinary literacy is just like any other—it can be taught.*

specialized terms, how to construct a scientific argument, or how to combine text, diagrams, graphs and equations, in order to become Science literate.

**Exploring More Literacies** Literacy is something that Kok Sing is exploring in a big way.

In another research project which looks at how everyday media can be used to teach Physics, he asked students to critically assess media content. In this way, they can become more media literate.

And he’s not stopping there. A natural progression would be to look at disciplinary literacy in Biology next, so he can compare the three sciences. But he’s also thinking about looking into Math and even the Humanities.

By unpacking the “unique language” of each discipline and ensuring that these are explicitly taught in the Singapore classroom, he is on his way to helping countless students learn better.

(Kok Sing’s other project is featured in the article “Popular Media in the Physics Classroom” in *SingTeach*, Issue 43. To find out more, visit <http://singteach.nie.edu.sg>.) ■

# Expressing Your True Self through T-shirts

## PROJECT TEAM

**Principal Investigator** David Caldwell, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*

**WHAT DO** people actually “say” through the prints on their T-shirts? And how do these prints relate to their identity?

Assistant Professor David Caldwell has found intriguing insights into the T-shirts we wear and the meanings they express. It’s a clear case of how clothes can really make the man.

**Communicative Identity** Working on over 200 printed T-shirts from a popular international brand, David found that young people in Singapore were wearing T-shirts strongly influenced by popular music culture and iconic place names.

And they’re choosing to wear these printed T-shirts to express themselves to others in their society.

“Certain T-shirts explicitly signal a person’s identity like ‘I’m awesome’ or ‘dork’, while others are more iconic, such as song lyrics or simply a city’s name like New York City,” says David.

“And then there is the projection category, or slogans. For example, one T-shirt in the data read ‘there is no point’, and this is especially cynical. Whether it is worn ironically or not, it tells us something about the identity of the wearer.”

But whatever the category, young people in Singapore are clearly using the linguistic and aesthetic features to communicate with others.

**Aesthetic Identity** One of the project’s aims was to build up a taxonomy of English words found on printed T-shirts.

But rather than just collecting the words used, David also acknowledges the aesthetic power of the images and the typography presented.

“Having recently travelled to China and spoken with people wearing English-worded T-shirts, it is clear that many were motivated by the visual meaning potential of the Western typography and not necessarily the actual meaning of the text,” he says.

This is also true of youths in Singapore. “There is nothing neutral about this,” says David. “It’s all about creating a perception about your identity through aesthetics.”

The extent to which people are motivated by the literal meaning of the text has also led David into issues of authenticity.

**Authentic Identity** In the past, people wore T-shirts of rock bands or cities because they had attended the concerts or visited the city. T-shirts were souvenir items, and still are in many cases. But now, they have become more than that.

As communicative tools, present-day use of T-shirts have piqued David’s interest in looking at how people relate to each other.

“I am interested to know what is at stake between individuals if you wear an ‘I love New York City’ T-shirt, even though you have never been to New York,” says David.

David argues that the function seems to have shifted from one of experience to being associated with the icon.

“You wear a New York City T-shirt because of what it stands for—parties, money, music, culture,” he says, “not necessarily because you have experienced that lifestyle.”

Perhaps more importantly, these prints give individuals the opportunity to express things they might not otherwise say through speech.

“And this can have an immensely liberating effect on the wearer,” David notes. “Sometimes, it can be more powerful.” ■



*David found that young Singaporeans choose T-shirts as a way to express themselves.*

# Are You Media Literate? **Re**

## PROJECT TEAM

**Principal Investigator** Csilla Weninger, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*  
**Co-Principal Investigators** Suzanne Choo, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*  
 Patrick Williams, *Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*  
**Researcher** Katy Kan, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*

**MOST KIDS** are adept at using a tablet, surfing the Web, making a virtual phone call. But are they engaging with the new media, or are they just engaging with the technology?

NIE researchers want to make the difference more explicit so that teachers and students understand what it means to be media literate.

**Systematizing Learning** Assistant Professor Csilla Weninger and her team are looking into how teachers can help our kids be more media literate, with a focus on new media.

The communicative, critical and creative aspects of the 2010 English Syllabus, set out by the Ministry of Education, are aligned with what the team is working with. However, media literacy isn't made explicit in the student outcomes and goals of the syllabus.

"Teachers are trying to incorporate more media texts in their lessons and definitely there is interest," Csilla observes. "But I feel that it could be more systematic and integrated with the syllabus."

The team is first looking into what teachers are really doing in classrooms. From there, they hope to identify pedagogical principles relating specifically to media literacy.

"Teachers do a lot of things through their own initiative," says Csilla. "But it's also good for teachers if they have more guidance in the syllabus." And one guide is to have a common understanding of what media literacy really is.



**New Media and Technology** "But the new generation is technology literate. It's a big difference between technological skills and new media literacy," says Csilla.

To be literate in new media is more than just being able to scroll with a mouse, or knowing how to access and search for information—that's really technological skills.

"We've gone beyond that," explains Csilla. "It is the ability to critically access, analyse, and create texts in various media."

This ability allows them to engage with old and new media as critical and ethical readers and writers.

"Can people critically understand how information about their identity is gathered, or how their social conversations are tracked?" Users of new media need to be aware of this.

**New Media Users** It is important, says Csilla, to see teachers and students as media users. "We need to understand that youths today are producers of media as much as they are receivers. So, online media offers a participatory culture."

And being producers of media, these users are not satisfied to communicate just with words.

In this new environment, they can present their ideas in many aesthetic ways, like changing the font, adding an emoticon or attaching a song.

"It's a multimodal environment. So you have all the other resources to make meaning to present your voice, to really perform," explains Csilla. "In all meaning-making, aesthetics should play a role."

Some scholars and many parents, however, are concerned that teaching children this literacy will make them use new media more, and this will expose them to malicious intentions of other media users.

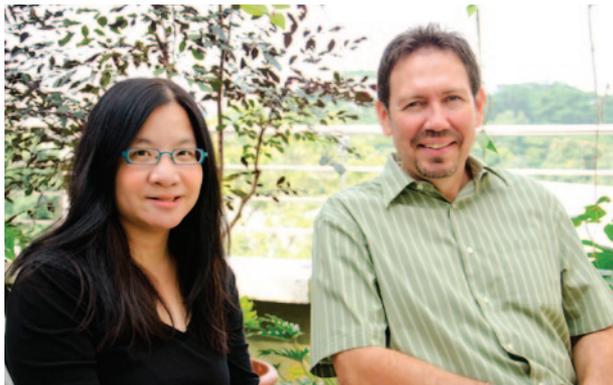
"In this age, you can't protect them anymore," says Csilla. "Rather, give them the literacy skills they'll need to navigate this terrain—ethically, critically and aesthetically." Being media literate is the best way children can protect themselves. ■

*Csilla and Suzanne are helping teachers and students to understand media literacy.*

# Ed Civic Literacy in Online Spaces

## PROJECT TEAM

**Presenters** Ho Li-Ching, Mark Baildon, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*



*Li-Ching and Mark believe that youths' participation in websites can be beneficial to education.*

**EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHERS** can be an inquisitive lot. No longer are they content with just looking at what students are physically doing in the classroom.

Take Assistant Professor Ho Li-Ching and Associate Professor Mark Baildon for example. They were curious about the civic participation of youths and decided to look to where youths gather to chatter most nowadays: the Internet.

**Beneficial Sharing** At The Body and the Web: Tools for Intercultural Learning International Conference held in Florence, Italy earlier this year, the duo shared how young Singaporeans are participating in four websites designed with youths in mind.

Mark and Li-Ching provided a framework for the delegates to critically look at the different aspects of the websites and how they try to engage youths.

"We let the participants be conscious of who the website producers are, what's the nature of the youth engagement, and what assumptions the websites make about youths," Li-Ching says.

What Mark and Li-Ching found was that the virtual world does allow different forms of participation. And this can be beneficial to education.

**Online Citizens** One of the most interesting insights from the conference delegates was how it's impossible for any one site to meet the needs of diverse youths.

"It's really important to have this range of venues for young people to be able to participate in very different ways," Mark notes.

With that in mind, Mark and Li-Ching urge teachers to help students see their online participation as a form of civic literacy. The learning of such an important literacy, as Li-Ching notes, ought not to be left to chance.

"What does it mean to really participate in these online spaces? In some ways, it parallels getting them to think about what it means to live with each other offline, and what it means to live in a society," says Mark.

The discussions that students have in these online spaces about issues such as immigration then become educational.

"To me, that's the best way to build literacy," he explains. "It's having real issues that matter to people that they're going to want to read and find out more about, and hopefully be more informed and be able to participate in more informed ways."

**Diverse Spaces** At the workshop, Mark and Li-Ching asked the delegates to think of how online spaces might be more inclusive, in order to invite different kinds of participation.

Those who want to engage with issues in a rational, deliberative manner will gravitate towards websites with clear ground rules about participation and discussion. "And then, you have others where anything goes!" says Mark of websites that invite more emotionally charged engagement.

In the same vein, educators may even want to take the same approach with their classrooms.

"How do you open up your classroom space in a way that allows for more artistic expression, rational and intellectual discussion, and a chance for young people to vent their frustrations?" asks Mark.

Essentially, participating in virtual spaces is pretty much the same as socializing in the real world. Youths need to be literate enough to know how to act appropriately, especially since the members of these sites are still real people with real feelings. ■

# Annotated Bibliography **Re**

Fang, Z., Lamme, L. L., & Pringle, R. M. (2010). *Language and literacy in inquiry-based science classrooms, grades 3–8*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

This book is a helpful and timely resource which offers Science educators effective strategies for integrating literacy practices into the Science curriculum. Teachers will find innovative ideas for incorporating language analysis and Science literature into inquiry-based Science classrooms.

Fulwiler, B. (2011). *Writing in science in action: Strategies, tools and classroom video*. London, UK: Heinemann.

This volume is a follow-up to Fulwiler's landmark book *Writing in Science* (2007). It offers new materials which show teachers explicit approaches of how to get students talking and writing in Science. It also talks about diverse learners and how to assist them. With the accompanying DVD, Fulwiler shows real-life examples of how to support students.

Hobbs, R. (2011). *Digital and media literacy: Connecting culture and classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

In her book, Hobbs shows how digital media can be used in the classroom to entertain students and make lessons livelier, and how students' development of print literacy skills can be supported. She makes relevant traditional skills, such as authentic inquiry and critical questions, to the lives of today's students.

Nunes, T., & Bryant, P. (2006). *Improving literacy by teaching morphemes*. London, UK: Routledge.

Nunes and Bryant's book is essential reading for anyone concerned with helping children to read and write. It is a volume that should be of much interest to anyone who wants to know about why morphology is important to literacy acquisition, and why teachers should teach morphology.

Painter, C., Martin, J. R., & Unsworth, L. (2013). *Reading visual narratives: Image analysis of children's picture books*. Sheffield, UK: Equinox Publishing.

The authors offer new descriptions of visual meaning in picture book narratives. Along with the descriptions are examples from highly regarded children's picture books. It hopes to further the research on multimodal discourse analysis, as well as to extend current understandings on how picture books work.

Rogers, R., & Wetzel, M. M. (2013). *Designing critical literacy education through critical discourse analysis: Pedagogical and research tools for teacher researchers*. London, UK: Routledge.

This book invites its readers to consider how discourse analysis can be used to foster critical literacy education. Each chapter provides step-by-step procedures to conduct discourse analysis (in terms of narrative, critically oriented, multimodal), which can help inform readers on how to use it to inquire into, critique and design critical literacy practices.

# Ed Research Highlights

## New Publication

### Routledge Critical Studies in Asian Education

A third volume of the *Routledge Critical Studies in Asian Education* book series has recently been published. Edited by Mark Baildon, Kah Seng Loh, Ivy Maria Lim, Gül İnanç and Junaidah Jaffarin, this new volume examines history textbook controversies and teaching historical controversy in Asian contexts. The authors provide varied perspectives, numerous insights, examples, and approaches for understanding historical controversy for scholars and practitioners. Case studies of history textbook controversies ranging from treatments of the Nanjing Massacre to a comparative treatment of Japanese occupation in Vietnamese and Singaporean textbooks are given. Strategies presented in this book include Structured Academic Controversy, the use of Japanese manga, student-facilitated discussion processes, and discipline-based approaches that can be used in history classrooms. The book's chapters will help educational researchers and curricularists consider new approaches for curriculum design, curriculum study and classroom research.



More information about the series and forthcoming volumes is available at: <http://www.routledge.com/books/series/RCSAE>

## In the News

### Redesigning Pedagogy International Conference 2013

NIE recently organized its fifth biennial conference for teachers, educational researchers and teacher educators. The Redesigning Pedagogy International Conference 2013, which lasted 3 days from 3–5 June, focused on the theme, “Thinking: Time for a Rethink?”. It had 1,700 local and international participants and delegates to revisit and re-evaluate established education theories and practices. This conference saw five keynote speakers which include well-known scholars Professors Deanne Kuhn, Neil Mercer, Bonnie Crammond and Linda Darling-Hammond. Starting off the keynotes at the conference's opening ceremony was 15-year-old Ms Adora Svitak, a child prodigy and internationally published author.

More information about the conference is available at: <http://conference.nie.edu.sg/2013>

## Distinguished Visitors

### CJ Koh Professorship 2013



During NIE's Redesigning Pedagogy International Conference 2013, Professor Linda Darling-Hammond was also the 9th CJ Koh Professor. She spoke about the importance of supporting teachers in a collaborative and supportive system. She praised Singapore's *Thinking Schools, Learning Nation* initiative and how well its education system has been doing. She further emphasized thinking critically in order to solve complex problems, communicating effectively, working collaboratively, and learning how to learn.

In 2012, NIE welcomed two other CJ Koh Professors, Professor Ruth Hayhoe and Professor John Seely Brown. From their lectures, two more *CJ Koh Professorial Lecture Series* publications have been published, respectively entitled “Portraits of Top-Performing Education Systems” and “Learning in and for the 21st Century”.

The *CJ Koh Professorial Lecture Series* is edited by Associate Professor Low Ee Ling. They are available for download from the NIE website: <http://www.nie.edu.sg/research-nie/research-publications/CJ-Koh-Professorial-Lecture-Series>



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A publication of the  
Office of Education Research,  
NIE/NTU, Singapore © 2013

ISSN 2335-6537



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