



Łukasz Pakuła (ed.). (2021) *Linguistic Perspectives on Sexuality in Education: Representations, Constructions and Negotiations*. Palgrave Studies in Language, Gender and Sexuality (e-book). Pp. 444.

Linguistic Perspectives on Sexuality in Education: Representations, Constructions and Negotiations edited by Łukasz Pakuła is a timely publication that provides a linguistic perspective on the current debates surrounding global struggles over gender equality and sexual minority rights. In the light of a new political configuration (Graff & Korolczuk, 2022) that puts the anti-gender rhetoric at the core of contemporary far-right populisms reigning across the globe, from Eastern Europe to Brazil, the book aims to disrupt the status quo by presenting evidence from socially engaged research in educational settings. By critically recognising causes of oppression of LGBTQ+ communities in education, the book reminds us about the importance of forging pedagogies 'with not for the oppressed' (Freire, 1970) and constitutes an important step in the struggle to transform the current situation in language teaching settings.

The publication is an edited volume that brings together scholars working on sexuality topics in education in Anglocentric contexts such as the UK, USA or Canada, other 'Western' European states such as Spain or Germany and (semi-)peripheral Poland, Brazil and China. In the introduction, Pakuła situates the book within discussions on necropolitics (Mbembe, 2019) that regulate who has the right to live and who does not in the light of the resurgent homophobic attacks in Poland and other parts of the world. He reminds us that uncontested educational practices serve as tools of biopolitics that control sexuality and through their institutional power, normalize particular—dominant and heteronormative—practices. At the same time, educational discourses erase nonheterosexuality at both global and local scales. The introduction thus sets the tone for the whole book in a powerful manner reminding the reader about the significance of pre- and in-service teacher education and a necessity of a close analysis of teaching materials and educational policies. It also underlines educational sites' ability not only to raise awareness, but also to interrogate one's own beliefs and values, which in turn may lead to reflexive action, more inclusive politics of change and transformation.

The volume is divided into five sections: *Heteronormativity in Learning Materials*, *Welcoming Marginalised Voices in the Classroom*, *Beyond the Binary*, *Exploring Interventions: Theory vis-à-vis Practice* and *Beyond academia: Recommendations for practitioners*. The first section opens with Sunderland's chapter that provides a useful overview of debates on gender representation and flags up the concept of

degrees of heteronormativity that will help a reader new to the topic understand key debates and problems surrounding LGBTQ+ visibility and queer resistance discussed in later chapters. The chapter also urges us to confront 'extreme heterosexuality of the textbooks' and to start examining reception and use to better understand how implicit assumptions about the family, sexuality and gender are (re)produced, taken up and contested.

The whole book highlights the role of silences in a powerful manner. After Foucault, many authors present various types of evidence in which presences are shown to legitimize heteronormativity and absences exclude sexual minorities in various language teaching materials. The qualitative analysis of interview data, digital ethnographic observations or EFL textbooks allows the authors to present complex ways in which the status quo favouring heteronormativity is maintained. For example, highlighting the power of multimodal analysis, Motschenbacher warns us that the visual may shape exclusionary practices even if the verbal seems inclusive. He points out that in the German series of EFL textbooks that he analysed, all texts about love and friendship are to some degree heterosexual in the visual domain, which does not allow students to fully develop sociocultural literacy, including sexual literacy. As a result, a fundamental part of knowledge production is missing.

A variety of educational resources are analysed: from EFL textbooks through dictionaries to observations made in TESOL programmes in Britain or China. Various alternative routes for inclusion are also discussed in most chapters, with Section V even giving explicit recommendations, an aspect of the book which will be highly appreciated by practitioners and scholars alike. For example, Pakuła examines how dictionaries silence queer voices and offers avenues to confront this through active citizenship, petition writing or joint research projects. DePalma critically analyses educational policies in Spain and urges us to not only uncover hegemonic dynamics and exemplify counterhegemonic routes, but also to seek 'stretches of meaning' in educational policies; echoing Anzaldúa's (1987) famous assertion that 'spaces between contradictions' constitute places of 'the untethered possibility.'

An important point is also raised by Baynham, who touches upon a 'culture of silence' in TESOL pointing to both invisibility and inaudibility of queer students and suggesting that queering the classroom should not be confined to LGBTQ+ educators and students, but should also be taken upon by the so-called allies. By bringing evidence from his own research in the context of migrations and asylum seekers in the UK, Baynham breaks with state-level observations reported in many chapters, and stresses that in order to create more welcoming spaces, language teachers need to pay close attention to what people on the move bring with them and how issues of race or ethnicity intersect with sexuality. A similar point is also echoed in O'Mochain's chapter which reports sociocultural differences in accounts of male-directed sexual violence. It is Power's chapter however that shows us how such encounters at intersections of positionalities lead to relationship building.

Drawing on her work in Canada, Power demonstrates that transgenerating the academic writing led to a student-led antiracist trans project. Her observations hence allow us to see that teaching initiatives may in fact result in what in a different publication, Dabiri calls not just allyship, but a coalition that may potentially change attitudes and enable the emergence of communities of care.

One of the strongest contributions of the volume, Fabricio and Moita's chapter on queering timespace, is also a rare piece to explicitly employ a decolonial lens. The authors focus on the ways in which social fascism in contemporary Brazil is confronted by young bloggers in micro school encounters reminding us of the colonial history of erasure of queer bodies. Building on Mignolo's call to 'think otherwise' and discussing colonial chronotopes' ability to freeze people in time and space, Fabricio and Moita turn to online spaces in which young people engage and position themselves in relation to colonial discourses of difference. Providing qualitative analysis of non-participant observations of interactions between a history teacher and a group of young people online, the authors remind us that time, space and interactants are always on the move, and when difference is not erased from educational settings, students may actively engage in reflexive thinking to creatively contest dominant personal and sociohistorical chronotopes, and themselves cause rupture and resist exclusionary discourses.

Fabricio and Moita's chapter underlines a further need for creating space for contributions from the Global South, and inclusion of voices of scholars working in postcolonial contexts in academic publications on the topic of language and sexuality. It also points to the urgency of interrogating and challenging the internalized white gaze, which could be further analysed in all contributions. Weaving larger stories together and critically reflecting upon 'which stories tell stories' (Haraway, 2016) could help us better understand third cultures emerging in the interconnected world. It must be remembered that the new political configuration is deeply invested not only in anti-gender rhetoric, but also in the active erasure of whiteness as a racialised perspective and lack of proper attention to economic advantage and penalty. It is argued here that a coalition between linguists, language teachers and other practitioners may only bring us closer to dismantling existing power structures, if we focus on interconnections between systems of oppression in more explicit ways.

It is thus hoped that Pakuła's book will open up space for a further close analysis of the unearned privilege and perspective, and its capacity to transform silence into language and action in its full complexity. Future publications may hence further challenge the nation-state logic also by paying close attention to the poetics of resistance that does not conform to Eurocentric monolingual norms. It might perhaps be of value to employ long-term ethnographic methods to unpack how actors in intercommunication engage in unruly visions through mixing or translanguaging practices in the classroom itself, and by doing so, build communities of care that allow to fully see 'difference as a crucial strength' (Lorde, 2017) and go beyond the hierarchy of oppression in all its forms.

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