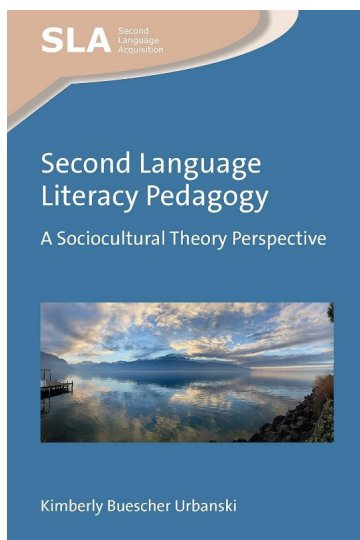


## BOOK REVIEW



<b>Title:</b>	Second Language Literacy Pedagogy: A Sociocultural Theory Perspective
<b>Author:</b>	Kimberly Buescher Urbanski
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Second language (L2) literacy plays a central role in second language acquisition and learning as it provides learners key access to not only the language itself but also content knowledge. Due to its significance, many language scholars have focused their works on designing L2 literacy pedagogies in a mission to develop learners' L2 literacy. Kimberly Buescher Urbanski, whose studies focus on L2 literacy pedagogy, recently published a research-heavy volume entitled *Second Language Literacy Pedagogy: A Sociocultural Theory Perspective*. This book offers a new design of L2 literacy pedagogy drawing on perspectives from Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (VST) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

Methodically arranged in chapters to facilitate the audience, this book is intended for teachers, researchers and graduate students who wish to enhance their understanding of literacy instruction. Chapter 1 introduces the main objectives of the study and provides an overview of current practices and concerns in L2 reading pedagogy and its implementation in different contexts. Although relatively short, this chapter did briefly highlight the research gap and novelties that the study can fill.

Chapter 2, which contains the theoretical framework of the study, comprehensively describes the nature of L2 reading and literacy. First, the author explains reading from a cognitivist perspective, including approaches to reading such as bottom-up, top-down or an interactive approach. Afterwards, this perspective is contrasted with the L2 literacy perspective, specifically the VST approach. This latter explanation clearly establishes that literacy is not only limited to the process of extracting meaning from text, decoding and comprehension as in the reading view, but goes further as a tool for thinking which involves interpretation and analysis.

Chapter 3 discusses the Vygotskian approach in more depth, particularly with regards to the design of L2 narrative literacy pedagogy and research, which includes two primary schools of thought: Concept-Based Language Instruction (C-BLI) and Division-of-Labor Pedagogy (DOLP).

In C-BLI, learners are equipped with scientific concepts, directed through meaningful activities, and encouraged to communicate their thinking which leads to internalization. Meanwhile, in DOLP, the learning responsibility is shifted towards the learners for a particular portion of reading activities where it becomes a framework for mastering the concepts promoted in C-BLI. Essentially, to accomplish collective work in DOLP, each learner is assigned different tasks in various arrangements. The later section of the chapter includes a detailed description of the research design, including the subject and object of the study, research questions, research instruments, data collection and data analysis. Unfortunately, this section was not systematically arranged and explained, which may possibly result in readers' difficulties in understanding the finer details of the study.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 consecutively focus on presenting the main findings of the study. Chapter 4 provides a quantitative analysis of the learners' L2 narrative literacy growth, showing a positive development. Learners' written summaries of mid- and high-level texts on the pre- and post-tests were examined, and the ratings revealed that their L2 narrative literacy had significantly developed through the C-BLI and DOLP pedagogies. Chapter 5 presents a deep qualitative analysis of the students' awareness development of scientific literacy concepts. Remarkable changes to the quality of their verbalizations about their understanding and use of the scientific concepts indicated that their L2 narrative literacy improved significantly. Chapter 6 focuses on a qualitative analysis of the appropriation and internalization of roles and changes in mediation over time of a particular learner, showing a substantial development. The analysis illustrates her ability in appropriating and internalizing the concepts and roles, resulting in less mediation over time and making her more self-regulated in reading. The overall findings indicate that this new design of literacy pedagogy has offered significant development in learners' L2 narrative literacy. Though a brief analysis of the findings was provided in each chapter, a supposedly more thorough discussion of them in the final chapter (Chapter 7) was unfortunately found lacking both in depth and breadth, and more of it will be discussed in later paragraphs.

To sum up, this book's main strength lies in how it has successfully achieved its goals. It has clearly revealed that this new Vygotskian-based L2 narrative literacy pedagogy has successfully developed learners' L2 narrative literacy; thus, it is suitable for implementation in different L2 classrooms contexts, including those in the expanding circles (Kachru, 2005) such as Indonesia and Thailand. The integration of C-BLI and DOLP into this design has also offered comprehensive ways of conceptualizing literacy and its development for L2 learners. As a research-heavy volume, the systematic and methodical chapter arrangements presenting the research background, theoretical framework, research method, findings, and conclusion also directly facilitate readers' understanding of the research process and product. With teachers as the main target audience of this book, they will definitely find the comprehensive overviews of the theoretical concepts in each chapter useful and teacher-friendly to read. In terms of its contribution to L2 literacy research, the study was described with enough detail that it could be fairly replicated in different settings by interested scholars. Experienced researchers may also expand the research to other areas such as the argumentation genre and even lower education settings such as elementary or high schools.

Despite its strengths, this book also comes with some drawbacks. Despite indicating clearly that teachers were the main target audience of the book in Chapter 1, no practical guideline on how to implement this new design was provided in this book, particularly in incorporating C-BLI and DOLP for L2 literacy. Moreover, although empirical findings of the research were presented comprehensively in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, they lacked mini discussions in each chapter. Besides that, the discussion placed in Chapter 7 was also too brief. Not only was the methodology section not well highlighted and systematically presented, but if this section was presented in a more organized way, future researchers could have more easily replicated the work for its generalizability.

Overall, this book has offered valuable insights into L2 literacy pedagogy and research as the contents have significant conceptual and practical implications on developing student L2 literacy. This new design of literacy pedagogy has also expanded our knowledge in that it is not necessary for students to first acquire their L2 on a mature level before reading authentic text, as opposed to the cognitivist perspective. They can be prepared for real world literacy through relevant pedagogy incorporating C-BLI and DOLP. Though the book is targeted at teachers and offers extensive insight into L2 literacy pedagogy, it is probably better suited for researchers and graduate students. This is due to the drawbacks mentioned previously, especially the unavailability of practical guidelines for implementing this new design, which make it less suitable for teachers.

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