



*[Book Review]*

**Book review of “Intersectional perspectives on LGBTQ+ issues in modern language teaching and learning,” edited by J.M. Paiz and J.E. Coda, published 2021 by Palgrave Macmillan**

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*Intersectional Perspectives on LGBTQ+ Issues in Modern Language Teaching and Learning* is part of the Language, Gender and Sexuality series of Palgrave Macmillan, which focuses on the role of language in understanding issues about identity, gender, and sexuality. The goal of the book is to contribute to a nuanced understanding of identity-based studies, which is perceived as an area that needs further exploration in applied linguistics. Specifically, it addresses intersectional perspectives on issues in language teaching and learning affecting the LGBTQ+ community. In this book, Paiz and Coda offer a rich collection of studies, divided into nine chapters. In line with this, this book review tackles three common themes in the volume, namely, intersectionality as a critical conversation that needs more participation, LGBTQ+ learners’ experiences of oppression and resistance in the language classroom, and teacher strategies for more inclusive instruction.

In the first chapter, intersectionality is discussed as a critical conversation that needs more participation in the field of applied linguistics. As elaborated by Paiz, LGBTQ+ studies have become a “growing blind spot” because of intersectional forces that contribute to increased privilege or marginalization. These intersectional forces are ways where bands of marginalization overlap, rendering someone more silent or powerless because of multiple identity positionings (Crenshaw, 2017). It is highlighted that a conversation about intersectionality may provide a better understanding of LGBTQ+ issues in applied linguistics and that this could contribute to developing inclusive pedagogical approaches in education.

Increased oppression and privilege of the LGBTQ+ community because of their positionings are re-emphasized in the final chapter. The closing chapter also expounded on how the intersections in the positionings of LGBTQ+ members present research opportunities that scholars may investigate to fill the growing blind spot in the field.

Another common theme in the volume is LGBTQ+ learners' experiences of oppression and resistance in the language classroom. In Chapter 2, Moore revisits his previous study on queer Japanese learners of English as a second and foreign language through the intersectional and research-as-a-social-practice lenses, an approach that is suggested as an important consideration with theoretical and ethical implications in LGBTQ+ studies in applied linguistics. The study suggests that these learners have a notion of an English classroom that still reproduces a predominantly heteronormative environment, leading to the learners' tolerance of discrimination within it and creativity in using communicative nuances, such as incorporating the word 'diversity' in communication. Tensions linked to student identity and ideologies in language learning contexts are also problematized in Chapter 5.

In Chapter 5, Cao discusses an ethnographic study of a bisexual Asian immigrant in Canada. This study sheds light on the constrained language learning settings that led to the conflicted sense of identity of the learner. The language classroom becomes a more contentious space when sexuality intersects with culture and religion. This is the focus of Chapter 3, which highlights the experiences of Muslim students from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and their language teachers in discussing LGBTQ+ topics. The beliefs and culture in the home countries of the students posed challenges in discussing such topics within the classroom. These societal factors, enforced by religion, emerged as contributing factors behind the challenges for the sexual minorities in their home countries.

Finally, teacher strategies for more inclusive instruction are likewise covered in the collection. Chapters 4 and 7, contributed by Coda and Longoria, respectively, illustrate this by examining LGBQ Spanish teachers of English in the Southeastern United States (US) and the strategies used by these teachers for addressing LGBTQ+ issues in an English language classroom. Coda's study reveals the effects of locality on the efforts of LGBQ teachers in establishing an inclusive classroom in the conservative culture of the Southern US, which appears to compel teachers to hide their non-binary sexual identities. Meanwhile, Longoria's work shows that LGBTQ+ issues can be discussed in the language classroom, albeit evident gendering of educators. Additionally, it is indicated that support from the school administration is a factor in producing an inclusive classroom for sexual minorities.

Besides exploring the three central themes of intersectionality, oppression and resistance, and inclusive classroom practices, another scholarly merit of this collection is the variety of methods demonstrated in the featured articles, particularly research-as-a-social-practice and ethnography. Research-as-a-social-practice provides a view on how researchers can also be caught in intersectional forces, which enriches the interpretation of the findings. Meanwhile, the ethnographic approach offers more vivid descriptions of the actual language learning experiences of minorities. In the application of these methods, it is equally noteworthy that the contributing authors examined specific variables such as religion, race, and culture in investigating intersectional forces, thereby yielding novel findings. Perhaps, what could have made this book more global in its coverage of LGBTQ+ issues is the inclusion of studies set in other less explored regions in Asia and Africa.

Nevertheless, the collection succeeds in offering fresh perspective in applied linguistics and English language education. The depth of the nuances discussed about sexuality and its intersection with race, religion, and any other social categories could interest language researchers to explore this under-researched area. While identity positionings (e.g., sexuality, culture) are commonly explored separately, this volume demonstrated how examining the intersections among these identity categories can help in recognizing the experiences of minoritized groups in language education. The findings of the studies featured in the book reveal unique experiences that were formerly obscured in literature, which examined identity positionings independent from other factors.

This collection can be valuable for scholars who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community since it tackles sensitive topics such as discrimination of the members in the language classroom. It can also be insightful for researchers with interest in intersectional forces such as race, identity, religion, and the like that contribute to increased discrimination through language resources. While current studies on gender and sexuality issues in language education are focused on instructional materials and language teaching, such as textbook representation (Koster, 2020), sexist stereotypes in language textbooks (Gouvias & Alexopoulos, 2016), incorporation of LGBTQ+ content in English classes (Lawrence & Nagashima, 2021), and insights of teachers on queering English language teaching (Tarrayo & Salonga, 2022), the varied methods in the collection provide research ideas in uncovering forms of oppression including gendering among educators, hiding of sexual identities, and tolerance of discrimination that appear to be underexplored in the language classroom. Moreover, this collection can be relevant for language educators, for it unveils discrimination that affects the LGBTQ+ community within the classroom. It may give ideas on how to foster a classroom setting that is safe for the LGBTQ+ community, thereby shedding light on an issue that is rapidly becoming significant not only in society but also for a generation of learners and teachers who seek more inclusive practices in the environments where they coexist.

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