

From the editors

The search for solutions has no end.

— Marie Clay —

In keeping with the word *international* in the title of our journal, we are pleased to again offer in this volume-year's second edition of *Literacy Teaching and Learning* work from two separate continents and a cluster of very distant islands—namely North America, Europe, and New Zealand.

The first article has its origins in an address given by the author, Stuart McNaughton, at the 6th International Reading Recovery Institute held in Baltimore, Maryland, in July last year. For all those working in the New Zealand-developed early literacy intervention of Reading Recovery, the event had special significance following so very closely the death of the intervention's founder, Dr. Marie Clay, earlier in the year on April 13. Reading Recovery has been nationally implemented in the country of its origin for 25 years.

Professor McNaughton was himself one of Clay's early doctoral students and has gone on to become one of his country's leading literacy experts. He reflects upon the salience of three key concepts central to Reading Recovery — Acceleration, Roaming Around the Known, and *treatment integrity* — for a large-scale intervention initiative he has been heavily involved in; namely the schooling improvement project. It is an interesting exercise, quite different from the many commentaries and discussions of early literacy interventions readers will have ready access to in academic journals. McNaughton both admires and challenges the concepts; the extent to which they can be generalized, exploited, or may limit both Reading Recovery and schooling improvement research. He lifts the concepts out of the bedrock of traditional Reading Recovery practice and views them under a new light, rekindling the interest of Reading Recovery professionals and offering something potentially useful to researchers in other fields.

The second article is from Missouri State University, United States, and tackles the easy-to-believe but hard-to-research relationship between early achievement in literacy and the quality of preschool childhood environments. Cunningham, well known for her work in this area, is equal to the difficult methodological demands of this kind of study. The careful sampling, well-described assessments, and consistent use of established statistical tests keep the reach of the claims within the reported results. The link is made from classroom environment to student attitude to literacy ability; the author makes the case that the influence of literacy environment quality on the development of emergent literacy behaviors is substantial. As pointed out in the article's conclusion, the implications for educationalists are huge, and the study itself is an important part of a wider set of connections that need to be firmly spelled out between poverty, policymakers, and children's achievement.

Researchers Both-de Vries and Bus, from Leiden University in the Netherlands, investigate the impact of a child learning to write his or her name might have on nascent alphabetic awareness. In a tradition that includes such luminaries as Ferreiro, Clay, Dyson, Liberman, Harste, Bissex, and Bloodgood, to name but a few, the authors build upon the work on children's names and letter knowledge of Treiman and try to uncover early phonological awareness that may be triggered by the name-writing process.

Using Dutch children writing in Dutch, the study contributes to our deepening understanding of literacy awareness across languages. Dutch falls into the category of languages with transparent orthography, meaning that spelling and pronunciation predict each other very well. But because the effect the researchers are trying to trace is both transitory and very early, they have had to employ a very sophisticated technique to ascertain what processes the children are using as they attempt to write their very first words. It makes for a very interesting and thought-provoking investigation, and we leave it to the reader to draw his or her own conclusions from this clever experimental study.

Sharan A. Gibson, lead editor

Marva Cappello

Angela Hobsbaum

Blair Koefoed

Pamela Ross