



Introduction

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This special issue of *The Reading Matrix* focuses on literacy learning in campus- and community-based service-learning programs. That niche focus is a testament to how far service-learning scholarship has come. Previous publishers and journals have balked at the prospect of finding enough authors and readers interested in such a specialty topic. Now, service-learning is not only known to most academics worldwide, but is well-represented in curricula at all levels of education, from Pre-Kindergarten to Graduate Studies, in many parts of the world. Instead of worrying about definitions of service-learning, the scholars in this issue attempt to resolve discrepancies in the findings of key studies, measure language learning outcomes in natural settings reliably, or harness new technologies to engage communities and students in service and learning. The range of voices – from established to emerging scholars – bodes well for continued growth in the field.

The first four articles involve pre-service teachers in literacy education efforts in the community. Two of these studies, “Examining Performance and Attitudes of TESOL Preservice Teachers and their English Learners in a Service-Learning Project” by Cynthia Macknish, Zuzana Tomaš, and Margita Vojtkuľáková and “I Believe I Can: Service-Learning to Raise Preservice Teacher’s Efficacy with English Learners” by Randall Garver, Zohreh R. Eslami, and Fuhui Tong received funding from the US Department of Education and TESOL International, respectively, showing a significant level of interest in service-learning by government agencies and professional organizations. Anthony Kofi Mensah, Tiece Ruffin, and Florence Akua Mensah’s “Provision of out of School Reading Services in the Community: The Case of University of Education Winneba Reading Resource Center” was also made possible with support of National Service personnel in Ghana and the Fulbright Program, providing further evidence of the international reach of service-learning with governments, schools, and communities around the world.

The next five articles showcase the integration of service-learning into different courses and programs serving culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Andrea Enikő Lypka’s article, “Infusing Participatory Digital Service-Learning to Deepen Community-engaged Professional Excellence: Triumphs and Challenges,” provides the first example of the use of Photovoice as a research and teaching technique that I am aware of to give ELLs voice in community outreach initiatives. Joyce Meier’s article, “Multimodal, Embodied Learning and Listening: ELLs and Intercultural Dialogue in Two Community Projects” provides another example of multimodal communication as ELLs in one of the largest writing programs in the US engaged campus and community audiences in translanguaging to make meaning across languages and cultures. Margaret Aker, Luis Javier Pentón Herrera, and Lynn Daniel also

describe a novel twist on service-learning pedagogy by introducing the concept of problem-based service-learning in Elementary through College settings.

Four authors whose work I have not mentioned yet deserve special recognition here. In every manuscript I have ever written and all those I have edited, I have never once received or issued an “accept without revision” response, yet these authors all submitted such strong manuscript drafts that reviewers and I were at a loss to suggest ways to improve them. Please read Catherine Crosby’s “Empowering English Language Learners and Immigrant Students with Digital Literacies and Service-Learning,” C. Cecilia Tocaimaza-Hatch’s “Affordances for Learning and Maintenance of Bilingual Children’s Home-Language through Service-Learning,” and Lucy Bunning and Ilka Kostka’s “I Dare to Communicate with Strangers: Examining International Students’ Communication Goals and Strategy Use during Service-Learning” not only for the valuable professional insights to be gained from their work, but also for the sheer pleasure of reading a well-written research article. My hat is off to these and all the authors in this special issue for making the complex simple with style and grace.