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RaPAL



Journal

The Research and Practice in Adult Literacies Network

Welcome

Research and Practice in Adult Literacies (RaPAL) is the only UK-wide organisation that focusses on the role of literacies in adult life. We promote effective and innovative practices in adult literacies teaching, learning and research; and support adult literacies practitioners and researchers. We enjoy engaging in debates that touch on English language and literacy, numeracy and digital skills across homes, communities and workplaces. Through our members, digital journals, conferences and fora, policy and advocacy work, we are active in Europe and have international links.

What we do

- Encourage collaborative and reflective research
- Publish a journal three times a year
- Create networks by organising events (including an annual conference) to contribute to national debate
- Believe in democratic practices in adult literacies
- Emphasise the importance of social context in literacies
- Critique current policy and practice where it is based on simplistic notions of literacy as skill
- Campaign for the rights of adults to have access to the full range of literacies in their lives

RaPAL Officers 2016 /2017

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Editorial Information

The editorial group for 2017-2018 includes the following researchers, practitioners and practitioner-researchers: Gwyneth Allatt, Claire Collins, Samantha Duncan, Sarah Freeman, Tara Furlong, Julie Furnivall, Sue Lownsbrough, Anne Reardon-James, Irene Schwab, Yvonne Spare, Brian Street and Rachel Stubbley.

RaPAL members are involved in the compilation of the journal as editors, reviewers and referees.

We are a friendly group – open to new members and new ideas. Please contact us with any contributions (views, comments, reports and articles) and do not be put off if you are new to the field or if you have not written for a publication before. The journal is written by and for all learners, tutors/teachers and researchers who want to ask questions about this field of work. It does not matter if the questions have been asked before. We want to reflect the many voices within adult literacies work and to encourage debate.

Why not join us?

Further information can be found at our website: www.rapal.org.uk

The RaPAL Journal is also available from various subscription services: EBSCO, LMInfo and Prenax. The RaPAL journal expresses a variety of views which do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial group. The RaPAL journal was designed by Image Printing Company, Lumsdale, Matlock, Derbyshire



RaPAL Membership form

Help us to double RaPAL's membership in 2017/2018!

We are always keen to attract new individual and institutional members. Please join us and consider passing this to friends, colleagues and libraries / resource centres and encouraging them to join RaPAL now!

Members' benefits

Membership brings:

- three RaPAL journals per year
- discounted attendance at RaPAL events
- participation in the RaPAL JISCLIST

We are happy for our members to participate in the journals and conferences and the organisation and administration of RaPAL.

How to join

To join, please complete the form on our website (rapal.org.uk/join-us). You can also use the form below and email it to membership@rapal.org.uk or post to: RaPAL Membership, c/o Jo Byrne, 8 Phillip Drive, Glen Parva, Leicester, LE2 9US, UK. By joining, you confirm you sympathise with RaPAL's aims as stated in the Constitution.

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Our membership year runs from August to July. Please tick the appropriate subscription rate:

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£25 Low waged, unwaged or student

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£90 per institution for up to 5 sites and up to 10,000 FTE people (staff and students)
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Institutional membership allocates two votes at our AGM; and two member participation free or discount at events

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Editorial

Tara Furlong, Sarah Freeman and Gwyneth Allatt

Global Literacies: UK Literacies in a Global Context was hosted in Liverpool in June 2017. Our keynotes presented national literacies campaigns: 'Transforming Lives' with Vicky Duckworth and Rob Smith, and 'Reading for Pleasure' with Genevieve Clarke. We experimented with a 'carousel' where presenters had ten-minute slots with participants before the cow mooed and everyone 'carouseled' around to the next table: great for exchanging of ideas both academic and workplace. Workshops originated from as nearby as local Merseytravel to as far away as Australia's indigenous learning provision and Eire's numeracy ones. A UNESCO project 'Learning Across the Generations' was presented by the British Association for Literacy in Development (BALID).

In the articles in this edition, two of our conference keynotes, Vicky Duckworth and Rob Smith, identify how critical literacies are in the 'Transforming Lives' project and take a *social practices* approach to social justice. They outline a research methodology of co-construction with participants. Often by explicitly generating 'an ethos of egalitarianism', 'learners' accounts revealed further education courses as pathways to overcoming problematic and painful domestic issues... their narrative was a capital for resistance against the barriers they have faced.' Schooling is frequently identified as problematic. Intertwined with identity, Duckworth and Smith argue that literacies enable learners to interact with a wider environment, economic or democratic. Family, learners' own children, are a constant motivator to improve.

Susie O'Hagan, Alex Kendall and Thomas Hopkins introduce the 'Turning Pages' project. Initiated in an offender learning context at pre- and entry level, they describe the process involved in creating carefully staged learner appropriate materials used in peer-led mentoring. O'Hagan *et al* describe how they drew on both *ideological* and *autonomous* models to maximise evaluation of the materials.

Graham Hall discusses five practical and interesting approaches to integrate students' numeracy development into vocational courses at a range of levels, with a view to increasing young people's motivation. The approaches he explains make use of naturally occurring opportunities for integrating numeracy within certain subject areas and Graham suggests how they could be adapted to other subjects and for students with different levels of ability.

Next, Sarah Telfer's article considers the use of storytelling in the literacy classroom. Sarah explores a number of theoretical perspectives on storytelling and explains its role as a literacy genre with which all literacy learners will be familiar. She suggests ways in which collaborative storytelling may be used in literacy lessons and outlines its many benefits for learners.

Following on from a keynote at the conference, Genevieve Clarke from The Reading Agency writes about the extensive use of *Reading Ahead*, originally known as *Six Book Challenge*. The programme is now accompanied by a framework which explains the surprising scope of beneficial effects of developing reading for pleasure as a skill – e.g. health, well-being, critical thinking, creativity, empathy and being more included in social and cultural participation.

Merseylearn outlines projects increasing reading for pleasure in the workplace and how this has disseminated out and increased reading involvement across the Liverpool area.

Gwyneth Allatt's work in a peer-reviewed article, 'What does it mean to be literate?' complements the other articles and all are based on the premise that what it means to be literate in the UK is perceived in different ways by students, teachers and providers. Her study of government literature on literacy provision, alongside the perceptions of the teachers and students themselves emphasises the contrast between official speak and the reality of lived experience.

We have a pair of reflections on the conference. One from a conference delegate, Amanda Derry, and one from Gwyneth Allatt as a carousel presenter.

We are delighted to be able to include four diverse articles which have originated from BALID researchers and field workers. BALID is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) promoting adult and family literacy and numeracy as a basic human right, in the context of development. BALID brings together organisations and individuals who believe that sharing experience about learning and literacy can help enrich workers and citizens in both the industrial and the developing world. It is exactly because of their broad view of literacy in all parts of the world that their presence at our Global Literacies conference was particularly poignant. Katy Newell Jones and Juliet McCaffery brought the fresh approach of intergenerational learning to their workshop as they helped emphasise the relevance of family learning in every part of the world. Their article introduces this UNESCO resource, recently published which has extensive relevance to family learning worldwide.

The next two BALID articles are further studies of literacy from a literacy in development viewpoint. Katy and Juliet, and a colleague, Ian Cheffy answer a highly relevant question from the UK's Department for International Development, 'What is the best way to make adult education effective for teaching literacy and numeracy?'

The last BALID article is an in-depth account of a BALID seminar, *Weaving Literacy Through Lifelong Learning* by Tara Furlong and Mary Anderson. Ulrike Hanemann from UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning) presents a keynote on 'lifelong, lifewide, lifedeeep' learning provision. Video clips from the day are included. Speakers from many countries discuss a range of programmes and their advantages and disadvantages – a fascinating insight for RaPAL readers who want to know more about how literacy is delivered in other parts of the world.

In our reviews section, Andrew Morris reviews *Developing Numeracy in Further Education* by Graham Hall and Suzanne Slaney, providing theoretical underpinnings but 80% devoted to practical examples of integrating numeracy and maths into specific vocational contexts. Liz Parkin reviews *Fostering a culture of reading and writing: Examples of dynamic literate environments* by UNESCO. Fifteen international studies identify core competencies and local innovation to illuminate global literacies learning. Finally, Tara Furlong reviews *Post Compulsory Teacher Educators* by Jim Crawley in a series edited by Ian Menter. The compact volume is a study guide and provides an entry point

for new post-compulsory teacher educators (PCE TEds) into a vibrant and committed network of peers.

This edition is a tribute to Professor Brian Street. Brian set the theme for the conference and was on the original editorial team. Brian was President of BALID. He passed away shortly before the conference. For those not familiar with his work, he developed Literacy as Social Practice, in parallel to the New Literacy Studies. His work on *ideological* versus *autonomous* models of literacy is seminal in literacies studies internationally. These theoretical frameworks underpin the constitution and philosophical perspectives of RaPAL. We are grateful to Brian. Many of the diverse articles in this edition reference his work.