

Education Review

Reseñas Educativas



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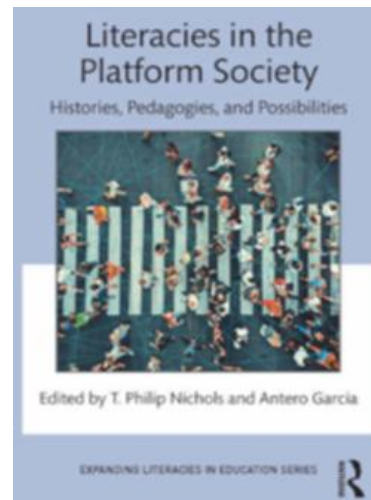
Nichols, T. P., & Garcia, A. (Eds.). (2025). *Literacies in the platform society: Histories, pedagogies, and possibilities*. Routledge.

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Reviewed by Md Mamunur Rashid Zaber
Illinois State University
United States

As editors of *Literacies in the Platform Society*, **T. Philip Nichols** and **Antero Garcia** attempt to connect practices and trends where digital platforms are used in educational settings. All the chapters in combination present an overall scenario of how literacy looks in this era where platforms are taking over anything and everything we do. Digital platforms have already become an unavoidable force in education while human society is almost entirely dependent on technological tools for everyday stuff. A booming ed-tech industry and tech savvy students seem to be a perfect match for the growth of digital educational platforms.



The book is focused on two major questions. How are platforms changing the ways educators research, teach, practice, and talk about literacy? What are the available avenues for educators to resist, refuse, or redirect those changes that undermine the commitments to equitable literacy education for all? The authors intend to make sense of the connections and disconnections that platformization brings up with respect to literacy education. In doing so, they do not turn away from what has come before, but they scrutinize resources from the past that might or might not be of use to confront the present challenges of platformization to shape a just future for all. The chapters specifically focus on these themes and explore platform society through a range of empirical and conceptual projects. Together, the chapters create a rich resource that clarifies, navigates, and contests platformization and its connection to literacy education.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I, Histories, consists of five chapters that consider the field's past and how platformization complicates significant literacy related theories, methods, and even beliefs. Lynch and Sulzer, in "New Towers of Babel: A Conceptual Argument for Digital

Platforms as Unstable Linguistic Constructs,” examine how “code” animates digital software as a linguistic construct, which is considered to be serious in language and literacy education. In “Literacy as a Framework for Computing Education: Affordances, Constraints, and New Directions,” Higgs, Vakil, and Logan attempt a mapping of literacies from decoding and encoding to situated meaning making. They also prioritize an ecological lens for viewing the varied computational practices required for civic and political engagement. Burnett and Merchant, in “Waiting on the Platform: The Journey to and from Manuscript Central,” reflect on their experience as journal editors as to how publishing platforms shape academic literacies and production of new knowledge. They adopted a socio-material sensibility to look at how digital publication environments play an unacknowledged part in structuring academic work. In “Racialized Labor and Digital Sites of Struggle on Asian American College YouTube,” Kim focuses on Asian American student literacy practices to explore the acceptance of platforms as a space for youth participatory production. In “Rethinking Affordances and Constraints in the Platform Era,” Robinson examines how to understand the concept of “affordances,” and how to respond to technological developments in the evolving relationship between literacy and platformization.

This collection of chapters connects directly to the interests of educators as they need to know what has changed in the field and how significant these changes are for shaping literacy environments. The same applies to society in a broader sense. Digital platforms have become so integrated into everyday life that people often take them for granted. So, it becomes important to think critically about how digital platforms affect literacy practices as well as everyday social life.

Part II, Pedagogies, includes five chapters that examine how platformization reshapes literacy teaching and pedagogical labor, while also exploring possibilities for agency and intentional practice. Several chapters foreground how platforms quietly exert influence over classroom practices and teacher work. Pandya and Shaffer, in “Teachers’ Use of Technological Applications and Platforms,” demonstrate how literacy platforms increasingly structure classroom management, data practices, and accountability, often adding unexpected and invisible labor for teachers. Similarly, Poyiadji and Kontovourki, in “Human and Non-human Agency in Elementary Literacy Classrooms,” analyze ClassDojo to show how platforms operate as active pedagogical agents rather than neutral tools. Aguilera and Chen’s chapter, “Proceduralized Ideologies in Teacher Education,” further extends this critique by illustrating how student-teaching simulation software embeds ideological assumptions and reproduces social and cultural biases within teacher education.

By contrast, other chapters in this section focus on how educators and students can intentionally engage with platforms to reclaim agency and support identity work. Stornaiuolo and Thomas, in “Platforms as Texts,” propose “restorying” as a pedagogical framework that allows teachers and

learners to critically reinterpret platforms and resist dominant narratives. Lizárraga, Cortez, and Baca, in “Transforming Pedagogies Across Digital Platforms,” illustrate how platforms such as LMSs, Instagram, TikTok, and gaming environments, can be used deliberately to foster preservice teachers’ identities, collaboration, and pedagogical imagination.

Taken together, the chapters in this section move beyond seeing platforms as either purely harmful or beneficial, instead highlighting how pedagogical outcomes depend on how platforms are designed, taken up, and contested within educational spaces.

Part III, Possibilities, includes the final four chapters, each of which focuses on reimagining literacy practices and contesting platformization through agency, care, and justice-oriented approaches. Several chapters center on youth participation and meaning making as forms of resistance. Kalir, in “As We May Mark,” examines annotation practices such as #SharpieActivism to challenge boundaries between digital and analog literacies and between in- and out-of-school spaces. Southerton’s chapter, “Reimagining Digital Social Platforms and Youth Agency in Schools,” uses a psychosocial framework to conceptualize youth agency as simultaneously dispositional, motivational, and positional, emphasizing participatory design as a curricular approach.

Other chapters in this section foreground collective care and racial justice in platformed environments. Rose, Buckley-Marudas, and O’Brien, in “Between Structure and Collective Care,” analyze the Cleveland Teaching Collaborative’s resource “referatory” to explore how platforms can be reimagined to support teachers and students during times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Tanksley’s chapter, “Toward a Critical Race Algorithmic Literacy,” introduces Critical Race Algorithmic Literacy (CRAL) to help Black youth identify and challenge algorithmic bias and platformed racism embedded in digital systems.

Collectively, these chapters demonstrate that platformization is not inevitable, and that alternative, more humanizing literacy futures remain possible when educators and learners critically engage with platforms rather than passively accepting them. This emphasis on resistance and reimagination also resonates beyond educational contexts, as digital platforms increasingly shape social norms and everyday practices across the globe.

This book is particularly relevant for teachers, students, and researchers who are working within increasingly platform-mediated literacy environments. The collection provides a critical lens for understanding how digital platforms shape literacy practices, assessment, and pedagogical decision-making, often in ways that remain invisible to those using them daily. As a classroom teacher, I frequently encountered moments when platform-based practices felt unusual or misaligned with my pedagogical intentions, yet difficult to question. Engaging with the chapters helped me recognize these experiences as part of broader structural and ideological patterns associated with platformization.

At the same time, the book's emphasis on reflection and resistance makes it especially useful for educators seeking ways to respond to rather than simply adapt to technological change. A notable strength of the collection is that readers can connect their own experiences to many of the contexts discussed and reflect on what they did, or could have done, within platformed literacy spaces. One limitation, however, is the relatively narrow range of global literacy contexts represented. Given the widespread adoption of digital platforms during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, examples from more diverse geopolitical and economic settings could further strengthen the book's relevance for an international readership.

As a reader, as an educator, and as a person connected to literacy teaching and learning, I found the contents of the book to be something I did not know but clearly needed to engage with. I believe many readers will experience a similar sense of recognition and urgency as they engage with the book.

About the Reviewer

Md Mamunur Rashid Zaber is a doctoral student in the School of Teaching and Learning, Illinois State University. His research focuses on curriculum studies, multilingual education, and teacher resilience. With more than five years of university teaching experience in Bangladesh, he is committed to culturally responsive pedagogy and advancing equity for linguistically and culturally diverse learners. Zaber's scholarly interests include exploring how educational policies and teaching practices shape teacher identity and student engagement in multilingual contexts. His work bridges research and practice, reflecting a deep interest in global perspectives on education and social justice.



About the Authors

T. Philip Nichols is an Associate Professor of English Education in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction, Baylor University. His research explores how science and technology condition the ways we practice, teach, and talk about literacy and the implications of this conditioning for equitable public education. This was the focus of his book, *Building the Innovation School: Infrastructures for Equity in Today's Classrooms* (Teachers College Press, 2022). He was the recipient of an NAEd/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship (2017) and Postdoctoral Fellowship (2022), and he was also awarded the 2022 Early Career Achievement Award from the Literacy Research Association and the 2024 Media Literacy Award from the National Council of Teachers of English. His work appears in leading journals, including *Harvard Educational Review*, *Review of Research in Education*, and *Learning, Media & Technology*. Dr. Nichols



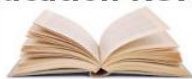
holds a PhD in Literacy, Culture, and International Education from the University of Pennsylvania.



Antero Garcia is Professor in the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University and President of the National Council of Teachers of English. His research explores the possibilities of speculative imagination and healing in educational research. Prior to completing his Ph.D., Garcia was an English teacher at a public high school in South Central Los Angeles. He has authored or edited more than two dozen books about the possibilities of literacies, play, and civics in transforming schooling in America. His recent books include *All Around the Town: The School Bus as Educational Technology* and *Civics for the World to Come: Committing to Democracy in Every Classroom*. Antero currently co-edits *La Cuenta* (lacuenta.substack.com), an online publication centering the voices and perspectives of individuals labeled undocumented in the US. Antero received his Ph.D. in the Urban Schooling division of the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles.

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