

## An Annotated Bibliography for Elizabeth Birr Moje

This short annotated list contains some of Elizabeth Birr Moje's publications that speak to many of the areas of "productive tension" in the study of content area teaching and learning, such as the tension between generalizable literacy strategies and a disciplinary understanding of reading; the tensions and connections between out-of-school literacies and content area literacies; and the role of identity and agency in content area learning.

Moje is a professor of Literacy, Language and Culture in the Educational Studies Department at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor,

Moje, Elizabeth Birr. 2008. "Foregrounding the Disciplines in Secondary Literacy Teaching and Learning: A Call for Change." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 52 (2): 96–107.

This piece summarizes much of Moje's thinking about content area literacy and learning over the last decade. She argues for nothing less than reconceptualizing secondary literacy instruction. Moje asks that we begin to think about how to build disciplinary literacy programs rather than ask all teachers to be teachers of reading. Her project requires that we consider what it means to write and read in the subject areas; what constitutes knowledge in the subject areas; and how identity plays into student learning. Moje discusses these issues in the subject areas of math, history, and science. She argues that students' understanding of how knowledge is produced in the subject areas is more important than the knowledge itself.

Moje, Elizabeth Birr, Melanie Overby, Nicole Tysvaer, and Karen Morris. 2008. "The Complex World of Adolescent Literacy: Myths, Motivations, and Mysteries." *Harvard Educational Review* Spring 2008: 107–154.

The authors studied why youth read and write outside of school. They looked at the relationship between out-of-school literacy practices and in-school achievement. They concluded that students *do* read outside of school but they don't necessarily read widely enough to affect their school achievement outside of English language arts. They read texts that are situated in their "social networks": novels about struggling with identity, about people like themselves; in addition, they read for information—self-improvement texts or informational texts about activities in which they and their peers

engage. The mystery to which Moje and coauthors refer is how to connect students to a wider variety of reading outside of school and to bridge content area learning with students' social networks outside of school.

Sutherland, LeeAnn M., S. Botzakis, Elizabeth Birr Moje, and Donna E. Alvermann. 2008. "Drawing on Youth Cultures in Content Learning and Literacy." In *Content Area Reading and Learning: Instructional Strategies*, 3rd ed., edited by Diane Lapp, James Flood, and Nancy Farnan, 133–156. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

The authors advocate knowledge of and respect for students' cultural texts and practices (dress, lyrics, uses of technology, out-of-school reading and writing). They suggest that making links from youth practices and texts to those that adults value is necessary in order for youth to learn in the content areas. The authors provide examples from science, math, ELA, and social studies classes.

McCarthy, Sarah J., and Elizabeth Birr Moje. 2002. "Identity Matters." *Reading Research Quarterly* 37 (2): 228–238.

This article, written as a conversation between McCarthy and Moje, takes up an important question: What is the relationship between identity, learning, and literacy? The authors explore theories of identity that relate to this question—from the work of Vygotsky and Mead to Gloria Anzaldúa's claim that identities are made of the stories we tell about ourselves and that are told about us. Moje and McCarthy name some tensions in thinking about identity: how are identities "a core or a mass of unresolved tensions"; "coherent, yet hybrid and stabilizing, yet dynamic"? How do we have agency over our identities and yet recognize power dynamics that shape our identities?

The authors end by suggesting that literacy educators talk with students explicitly about identity and promote student investigation of how literacy practices in and out of school help or hinder them in constructing identity. And in conclusion, Moje eloquently states that "classroom pedagogy should revolve around the notion of hybrid identity as positive construction rather than a source of crisis."

Moje, Elizabeth Birr, and Deborah R. Dillon. 2006. "Adolescent Identities as Demanded by Science Classroom Discourse Communities." In *Reconceptualizing the Literacies in Adolescents' Lives*, edited by Donna E. Alvermann, Kathleen A. Hinchman, David W. Moore, Stephen F. Phelps, and Diane R. Waff, 85–106. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

The authors question how the identities students bring to class are like or different from those brought to science as a profession, as a discipline, or as a class subject; how identities are recognized by teachers and students; and how these identities make possible or constrain the learning of science. The authors focus on two girls, noting how the participant structures and the spatial arrangements of the classroom enable a

variety of identities to be enacted and recognized in biology and chemistry classes. Some of these subjectivities empower them as learners and others do not. The article concludes with a powerful tool: a list of questions to guide content area teaching and considerations of teacher and student subjectivities.

Moje, Elizabeth Birr, Kathryn McIntosh Ciechanowski, Katherine Kramer, Lindsay Ellis, Rosario Carrillo, and Tehani Collazo. 2004. "Working Toward Third Space in Content Area Literacy: An Examination of Everyday Funds of Knowledge and Discourse." *Reading Research Quarterly* 39 (1): 38–70.

A "third space" allows students to bring their home/community funds of knowledge and their experiences with their peers into the talk and learning activities of content area classrooms. Third spaces "provide opportunities for success in traditional school learning while also making a space for typically [but not only] marginalized voices." The authors study the ways in which students struggle to create a third space, and they make recommendations for teachers about how to work with curriculum and literacy activities to construct third spaces in classroom settings.

Moje, Elizabeth Birr, Deborah Peek-Brown, LeeAnn M. Sutherland, Ronald W. Marx, Phyllis Blumenfeld, and Joseph Krajcik. 2004. "Explaining Explanations: Developing Scientific Literacy in Middle School Project-Based Science Reforms." In *Bridging the Literacy Achievement Gap Grades 4–12*, edited by Dorothy S. Stickland and Donna E. Alvermann, 45–67. New York: Teachers College Press.

The authors report on their work in an urban school setting with project-based science in which students investigate "real-world" questions. Realizing how project-based science presents challenges for students in reading, the authors constructed a curriculum focused on helping students to understand scientific explanations and to collect, represent, and analyze data. Students were asked to analyze and write scientific explanations and to recognize the differences between scientific and everyday explanations. The article includes examples of lessons and student work.