

Editor's Note:

The Art (and Duty) of Disrupting Dominant Discourses

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As educators and scholars in the field of Language and Literacy Education, we are aware of the power of discourse. Being part of such a broad field allows the possibility of escaping from dominant constraints. This latitude provides us with the tools to reflect and make visible the patterns of our lives as ever-evolving scholars in and out of our teaching and research spaces. Languages and literacies are not mere social and educational acts. They can also become political instruments that, when enacted, possess the power to perpetuate or disrupt dominant discourses.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, JoLLE's Scholars Speak Out (SSO) feature published essays that aimed at challenging the status quo and the common sense paradox, which can lead to self-validating hegemonic discourses. As a result, JoLLE's SSO essays provided emerging opportunities to ask multiple questions and to engage scholarship with advocacy. Issues of representation and intersectionality have become a significant part of this monthly feature. In previous SSO essays, the authors addressed concerns such as teacher self-care, linguistic diversity in the U.S., historic literacy, innovative and emerging frameworks for teaching emergent bilingual learners, community building as a mentorship stance, language rights for minoritized youth, and the implications of political correctness for the future of society.

In times of breakthrough, both at the national and international level, silence implies passive acceptance. That is why SSO essays are intended to engage writers and readers to rethink and reconceptualize what we value as scholars and what scholarship means. At the end of the day, we need to reflect on what is gained or lost when we decide to write an essay or a story, or to represent our ideas multimodally. As we make sense of our world through languages and literacies, what we decide to omit can be forever

lost. When we decide not to speak up, we are doing a disservice to our community and to ourselves. And we might involuntarily be contributing to reproducing endless cycles of discrimination and injustice. Discourses are not neutral. Discourses are powerful tools to communicate, shape, challenge and change our lived worlds and our communities.

I hope that as you read the SSO essays published during the 2016-2017 academic year, you feel encouraged to rethink about issues of underrepresentation in regards to education, identities, ethnicities, minoritized languages, and academic disciplines. I am confident that those essays can contribute to changes in both discourses and practices in and out of our communities, and that they can invite us to think “*out of the box, and into the margins.*”

Sincerely,

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Scholars Speak Out Editor
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