



UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

**TRANSLATION OF THE CHAPTER:
"Cultural Perspectives in Reading"**

**TRABAJO MONOGRÁFICO
En la modalidad de traducción**

**Para obtener el grado de
Licenciada en Lengua Inglesa**

Presenta

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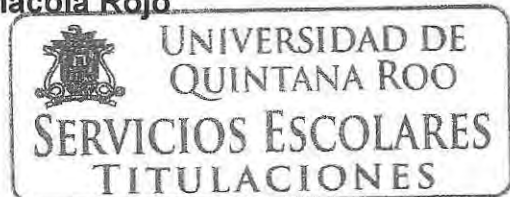


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Página
I. - INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 Justification.....	2
1.3 Objectives	3
II. - METHODOLOGY.....	4
III. - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	7
IV.- TRANSLATION.....	12
V.- ANALYSIS	38
VI.- CONCLUSIONS	53
VII.- REFERENCES	56
VIII.- APPENDIX (Original text)	57

▪ I. - Introduction

Over the course of history, language has played an important role in society because it helps people to communicate with each other in a spoken or a written way with the purpose of sharing ideas and desires. Also, language is an important aspect for all cultures because it demonstrates how they are different from one another. Moreover, differences among languages have made communication hard for all those people from different nationalities, and here is where translation plays a remarkable role with language. For that reason, translation is considered as a valuable bridge in which two languages work together, one of them being the source language and the other the target language.

It is essential to clarify the previous concepts such as language itself, source language and target language. According to Edward Sapir (1884-1939), language is a purely human and noninstinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. Moreover, the source and target language are defined by Dooley (2008) who states that the original language of the text to be translated is called source language (SL), and the language to which it will be translated is called target language (TL).

Translators have a challenging job because they have the responsibility to transmit the same idea as the original author and cause the same effect in their readers. Furthermore, a translator has to be aware of cultural aspects and make the text easy to understand in the target language. Translators also have to keep a balance between being literal or suggestive. Translators have accomplished their goal when the texts are read into the target language with the same interest and understanding as the original text.

This translation project comes up due to the necessity to help Spanish teachers, students and people in general who are interested in learning more about reading but do not command the English language well enough. Specifically, the chapter that is the focus of this project, “Cultural Perspectives in Reading” by

Robert Rueda, provides information about the relationship between culture and reading.

▪ 1.1 Justification

Nowadays, translation has become a need as a result of the globalized world and multicultural societies. Around the world, people become specialized in areas such as technology, education, commerce, science and medicine, just to mention some of them. People constantly have to be connected with other cultures in order to enrich their knowledge. However, most of those people do not command a foreign language, which, for some of them, is English. Due to this necessity, translation plays a determining role in global communication.

This translation project is carried out in order to facilitate the transmission of relevant information contained in the paper called "*Cultural Perspectives in Reading: Theory and Research*" for all those teachers, students and people in general interested in this particular topic and who are not able to read in English.

In the United States and other English speaking countries, there is a longstanding tradition of research in reading comprehension. In Mexico, this area of research is much newer and there is less material. One specific research strand in Anglophone reading research has to do with the connections between reading and culture. This strand of research, while somewhat developed in Mexico, is still fairly new. Specifically, it is unknown at UQRoo and its inclusion in the curriculum of the MA in Spanish could be very beneficial to advance its students' knowledge of this important cultural aspect of reading.

Moreover, this project emerges because there is not enough information in Spanish related to reading research. For that reason one chapter of the "Handbook of Reading Research, volume IV" was taken since its content provides information related to literacy and other aspects.

▪ 1.2 Objectives

The main objective of this monographic study is to translate faithfully and clearly into Spanish a chapter called "Cultural Perspectives in Reading: Theory and Research" by Robert Rueda. An underlying objective is to make the important theoretical information in this chapter available to Spanish speaking readers.

This translation project is focused on making a contribution to people who are interested in the subject of reading from a cultural perspective and could help for future research studies. Translation is also a beneficial activity that helps authors and researchers from different nationalities to share their studies with many people around the world into their target language.

Finally, the last objective is to analyze the translation process and the relevant theories and techniques. Moreover, the difficulties found in this text are analyzed, and also the appropriate methods to solve these problems are described.

▪ II. - Methodology

The chapter called “*Cultural Perspectives in Reading*” from the *Handbook of Reading Research* has an informative nature, but it also has an academic purpose. The reason is that this text matches the characteristics established among the three fundamental and basic functions of language made by Bühler (1934). These three functions of language are the following: “expressive” that refers to the writer of the text, “informative” that alludes to objects in the real world and their external situations showed in textbooks, agendas, technical reports and scientific papers which convey information. Finally “vocative” that refers to the reader of the text. Also, the type of this text is technical due to the kind of content and terminology applied in a specific area.

Thorough the process of working with this translation, it was necessary to consult a variety of helpful tools. A pivotal instrument to carry out this translation project was the use of dictionaries, which were fundamental because they helped to get the appropriate meaning of certain words that came from the source language. It is important to mention that dictionaries such as monolingual and bilingual are the most common to be used in translations. The reason is because sometimes translators face unknown words and the best way to understand and get a faithful definition of them is by consulting recognized dictionaries from the source language and the target language.

These dictionaries can be consulted through their printed or digital presentation. One printed dictionary commonly used was the Oxford dictionary, which provides the meaning of words and even sentences in different contexts in order to get a better understanding of the word or expression. Moreover, we could find on the web several dictionaries available; for example, Linguee, Merriam-Webster, WordReference.com, Cambridge Free English Dictionary and Thesaurus. These dictionaries are free, easy to use, and available whenever you need them.

The use of online dictionaries and other kind of software is possible only by using computers or any sophisticated devices such as Ipads or tablets. Especially in this

translation project computers were fundamental to find the meaning of words and also for the specialized terminology.

The use of monolingual dictionaries was an essential tool, despite the fact that most of the time translators work in their own language. It is always advisable for them to look for the meaning in order to get or confirm the definition of a word. Another important characteristic of the dictionaries is that they provide synonyms and antonyms and those terms were applied in our translation. Similarly, technology played an important role to achieve the purpose of this project because it enabled us to access an important source called discussion forums in which professors and experts in the field share their knowledge giving definitions and examples of the most difficult terms. One example of these forums is the Word Reference Online Dictionary which was an essential tool.

Books, texts and articles are also vital in the field of translation because translators have to be well informed about the topic in which they are working on. There are several sources in which translators can find information about their topic. Also, it is necessary that they are familiarized as much they can about the topic as well as understand concepts. Furthermore, working together with people specialized in the area was advantageous for us because they could help us to understand the topic, certain words and also they could give us advice about the appropriate vocabulary required to be used according to the area.

Besides all the tools previously mentioned, there is an essential key for people who are working on a translation project and it is the person who provides the text. In this case, the professor Moises Perales is the person who is interested in this topic and has read the drafts and provided feedback on this translator's performance.

Working on this translation project involved the use of the methods of translation from the Canadian school of translation by Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet because they are the most systematic and comprehensive methods (Vinay & Dalbernet, 1976). According to the methods and techniques suggested by the Canadian school, the work of a translator and the possible difficulties found are

solved in an easier way. For that reason, it is important that translators be familiar with them because, in that way, they can get effective results on their performance of their text.

The methods and techniques are fundamental in the process of working in a translation and translators can make use of them from the first paragraphs of their text. For that reason, it was necessary to take notes about all the difficulties found and how they were solved because they were useful in the same translation or could be in future translations. A journal was kept where all the translation difficulties and the process used to resolve them was recorded. At the end of the translation process, the records in this journal were reviewed in order to write down the analysis of how the translation was conducted.

▪ III. - Theoretical Framework

In order to carry out this translation project, the use of certain techniques is essential. Those techniques have already been established by scholars of the different schools such as the Canadian School of translation with Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Dalbernet, the Spanish School of translation with Amparo Hurtado Albir and Vazquez Ayora, the U.S school of translation with J.L. Melone, the Russian school with Jacob Retsker and Solange Shveitse, and some others theorists such as Tolnai. Specifically, this translation will use the methods and techniques suggested by the Canadian School and only if it is necessary some other schools will be consulted. Also, those techniques are the ones that help translators in the process of writing into the target language. Moreover, those techniques are very helpful because they make the translator's task easier and they are a key to deal with some translation problems.

It is important to explain more about those techniques as well as the concepts that describe them and their variants. According to the Canadian school, translators have two options for translating, which are divided into direct translation and indirect/oblique translation. There are three types of direct translation which are literal translation, linguistic borrowing and calque. There are five types of oblique or indirect translation, which are transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation, addition or amplification and reduction or omission. These translations techniques will be explained in order to make them clearer and because they are vital to accomplish this project.

This project is based on the techniques suggested by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) and each one of them will be described. Also, some examples are given for a better understanding.

a) Borrowing: it is used when a word in the source language cannot be translated into the target language because it does not exist. In order to make a good and understandable translation, that word has to be borrowed. There are several examples for this technique and some of them are café or pizza.

b) Calque: it is a kind of literal translation since the words are borrowed from the source language and the elements are translated literally into the target language. For example: skyscraper/rascal cielos or science fiction / ciencia ficción.

c) Literal translation:

Literal translation is divided into word-for-word translation and free translation.

Word-for-word translation is used when the structure from the original text is kept, in this way the target message will be closely connected to the source message (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958).

Literal translation follows closely the form of the source language. Also, in this kind of translation some adjustments in word order are allowed according to the target language (Larson, 1984).

Free translation is the one which is flexible and the form and organization of the source language message can be different into the target language (Pei and Gaynor, 1954).

For example: An example of word-for-word translation is The boy is sad / El muchacho está triste. An example of free translation is How are you? / ¿Cómo te va?

d) Transposition: It is based on the changes made in a grammatical category of a part of the sentence but always keeping the meaning of the original message. The grammatical changes can occur from adverb to verb, verb/noun, verb/preposition, phrase/noun, relative clause/ partial form, gerund/ relative clause, gerund/preposition, saxon genitive/ prepositional phrase. For example: in English Hand knitted (noun+participle) becomes Spanish Tejido a mano (participle + adverbial phrase).

e) Modulation: it consists of using a phrase that is different in the source and target language but with the purpose of conveying the same idea. Through

modulation, the translator generates a change in the point of view of the message without altering meaning so that the reader can understand the idea into the target text. For example: in Spanish is said “te lo dejo” which means literally in English “I leave it to you” but it is better translated as “you can have it”.

f) Equivalence: it consists of expressing something in a completely different way, for example it is used when translating idioms, advertising slogans, proverbs, clichés or onomatopoeia. Vinay and Darbelnet established that “the notion of equivalence is one of the most problematic and controversial area in the field of translation theory”. For instance: in English “United Nations” and in Spanish “Organización de Naciones Unidas”.

g) Adaptation: it is applied when something specific to one language culture is expressed in an entirely different way that is common or appropriate to another language culture. It means that when a situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture. For example: Bon appétit! / Buen provecho = Enjoy your meal.

There are two more methods which are addition and omission. Both are employed in the process of translation and the theorist Vazquez Ayora (1977) of the Spanish school of translation describes them with the following concepts:

h) Addition: it is commonly used by translators when they add more words into the target message in order to make it clearer. It is important to mention that in this technique a translator has to be aware of not adding more words by giving unnecessary information. An example for this technique is as follows: footnote/endnote = nota al pié /nota al final del texto.

i) Omission: it is employed when a translator considers that it is necessary to omit redundancy or repetition with the purpose to make the target text clearer for the reader. For example: carta geográfica / map.

All the techniques previously explained are very important during the process of translation because all of them are involved when a text is translated

into the target language. Sometimes it is a little bit difficult to use the appropriate technique when translating because; most of the time, more than one could be used in a sentence. For that reason, it is advisable for translators to choose their techniques carefully.

On the other hand, Tolnai (2011) points out different situations that a translator has to face while translating into the target language. He mentions a translation theory with four types of translation problems such as: linguistic, cultural, pragmatic and text specific problems; he also, gives some solutions. Linguistics problems emerge from the difference between the source and the target language because they have different grammatical structures, use different idiomatic expressions, employ different terms, vocabulary, syntax etc. The second category is referred to cultural problems due to the different beliefs and ideas from one country to another, translators have to identify in a text the terms in which people from another country might get confused. For that reason, in order to make the text more understandable, translators use familiar words according to the cultural beliefs, habits and conventions and sometimes they change the name of people, places etc. Pragmatic problems are referred to any issue regarding time, place and context from one culture to another. Tolnai (2001) takes national institutions as examples because the names and organization vary from one culture to another which is the case of “American State Department vs. British Ministries”. Finally, text specific problems refer to specific situations of communication that are found in a particular text also they are unique and depend on a certain context. This category can suffer various innovations made by the text author.

After knowing the type of problems faced by translators the following question comes to our mind: how can translation problems be solved? And this author says that all translation problems can be solved. For example, in the case of linguistic problems, they can be solved by consulting dictionaries, terminology databases and other linguistic sources. Cultural problems can be solved by consulting parallel texts. For example: if you have to translate a leasing contract,

you should first seek a leasing contract model in your target language. Pragmatic problems can be solved by referring to the translation brief which is a set of instructions prepared by a requester that accompanies a translation assignment or by directly asking the client (if is the case) or experts in the field of the subject-matter to be translated. In the case of text specific problems, it is suggested that they can be solved by employing translators' creativity.

Finally, a translator has to be aware of the important details while he/she is working on a translation and also to be conscious about the points previously explained in order to be professional in his job and to achieve that readers understand the target message clearly.

▪ IV.- Translation

5 Perspectivas culturales en torno a la lectura

Teoría e investigación

Robert Rueda

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La cultura es un rasgo omnipresente de la vida cotidiana y es una característica de la actividad humana. Se considera dentro del concepto de “actividad humana” la lectura y la literacidad. En efecto, la lectura y la literacidad son invenciones culturales construidas a lo largo de la historia con el fin de brindar soluciones más eficaces a necesidades cotidianas, tales como registrar eventos importantes, facilitar el comercio, y expandir los medios de comunicación (Cole, 1996; Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000). Por lo tanto, las conexiones entre la literacidad y la cultura son amplias. En este capítulo, analizaremos estas conexiones. Por lo tanto, el capítulo incluye un análisis de la cultura como constructo, un resumen histórico de la cultura enfocado en la investigación de la lectura, y un resumen y crítica de la investigación relacionada con factores culturales en la adquisición y enseñanza de la literacidad, así como también una propuesta para un programa de investigación en el área. Por último, el capítulo proporciona un modelo para analizar los factores culturales en la investigación de la literacidad como un medio de guía sobre la lectura.

NOTA SOBRE LA LITERACIDAD Y LA LECTURA

Antes de analizar el significado de cultura, vale la pena señalar la diferencia entre literacidad y lectura, principalmente a causa de la posible confusión tanto en la teoría y la investigación como en las implicaciones para la comprensión de factores culturales. Los términos “literacidad” y “lectura” son usados frecuentemente de manera indistinta a pesar del hecho que varios autores pueden tener conceptos muy diferentes. Aquí los diferenciamos debido a las implicaciones que tiene esta divergencia conceptual para la comprensión de los trabajos relacionados con la cultura. Un informe reciente del Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones¹ (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) define la lectura como “...el uso de los productos y procedimientos del sistema de escritura para llegar a la representación mental de un texto escrito” (p.42). En esencia, esta definición se centra en los procesos

¹ National Research Council en el original, un organismo del gobierno de los E.U.A. equivalente al Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología de México, N. del T.

psicológicos individuales involucrados en la codificación, decodificación y comprensión del texto. Por otro lado, mientras que la literacidad incluye la lectura, su alcance es más amplio al no limitarse sólo al acto de la lectura; también toma en cuenta las creencias, actitudes y prácticas sociales que las personas y grupos sociales alfabetizados siguen en una variedad de entornos y situaciones (Pearson & Raphael, 2000). Por ejemplo, la literacidad implica el conocimiento de los discursos subyacentes en un grupo (Gee, 1992), es decir, los valores, puntos de vista, “fondos de conocimiento” (González, Moll y Amanti, 2005), y patrones de lenguaje establecidos por los miembros de ese grupo, los cuales son patrones internos resistentes a la crítica.

Aunque se ha considerado que los procesos psicológicos involucrados en la lectura son universales (punto éste que se retomará a detalle más adelante), la literacidad es vista con frecuencia como más específica culturalmente, abriendo la posibilidad de que existan múltiples literacidades. Por ejemplo, los patrones del lenguaje, tipos y usos de texto, vocabulario, sintaxis, significados y valores compartidos mediante la literacidad que son propios de la escuela pueden ser muy diferentes a los que se encuentran en algunos hogares y comunidades (Bloome, Katz, Solsken, Willett, & Wilson-Keenan, 2000). Mientras que las prácticas culturales en el hogar y en la comunidad normalmente se adquieren de manera inconsciente, las prácticas culturales asociadas a la literacidad en la escuela están diseñadas para ser aprendidas deliberadamente (Gee, 1992). En ambos casos, los discursos en torno a la literacidad en contextos culturales diferentes tienen que ver con patrones de lenguaje, significados aceptados internamente y formas de comportamiento.

Una característica de la investigación en comprensión de lectura en términos de lectura y literacidad es que la investigación cultural frecuentemente ha sido parte importante del segundo tipo de investigación (en literacidad), pero no del primero (en lectura). Además, a veces se usa la investigación en un área para hacer sugerencias pedagógicas y normativas en la otra, lo cual ayuda a explicar algunos de los desacuerdos dentro del mismo campo. Para evitar más confusiones, la siguiente sección comienza con un resumen de la cultura como constructo, cuyo enfoque se centra en diferenciar la cultura de otras variables socioculturales. A continuación se presenta un panorama histórico, en el cual se examinan conexiones con trabajos anteriores en volúmenes pasados del *Handbook of Reading Research*. Por último, se diserta sobre algunos cambios en el contexto de la educación que podrían tener implicaciones para este tema, y se proporciona un resumen de la investigación en esta área, describiendo las implicaciones para la teoría, práctica, normas, y futuras investigaciones.

La cultura como constructo

Aunque el término “cultura” se usa en la vida diaria y en la literatura relativa a lo social y a lo conductual, su significado es muy variado. Desde un cierto punto de vista se considera que la cultura y el progreso cultural son universales y representan el legado general de la humanidad, reflejado en logros colectivos tales como refinamientos artísticos, ciencia, conocimiento, instituciones culturales, etc. Desde este punto de vista, las sociedades no tienen culturas separadas; más bien, adoptan y muestran mayores y menores grados de la cultura general creada por la humanidad hasta el día de hoy. Tal punto de vista permite la clasificación de varios grupos sociales de acuerdo con su grado de cultura y con la medida en la que se incorporan y/o contribuyen al progreso de la cultura general (véase Gallego & Cole, 1998 y Erikson, 2004 para un tratamiento más extenso del tema).

El punto de vista contrario, que es el adoptado en este trabajo, es más relativista y relacionado con las circunstancias históricas particulares de grupos específicos (Goodenough, 1994). Desde esta posición, el acento se pone en las pautas de la vida cotidiana (prácticas culturales) que permiten a los individuos relacionarse con el orden social que les rodea. Es decir, “cada cultura...es una configuración históricamente única del residuo de la resolución colectiva de problemas de actividades de un grupo social en sus esfuerzos para sobrevivir y prosperar dentro de su(s) medio(s)” (Gallego & Cole, 1998, p. 367). Desde este punto de vista, no hay una única cultura, sino muchas culturas diferentes. Además, la cultura es aprendida, y se desarrolla debido a la necesidad de evolucionar en respuesta a desafíos y tareas que enfrenta un grupo determinado (Weisner, 1994). Mientras el término “cultura” se menciona frecuentemente en la literatura educativa en relación con estudiantes de orígenes culturales y lingüísticos minoritarios, la cultura es, de hecho, una característica universal de la vida diaria de todos los humanos (Rogoff, 2003). En el nivel más básico, la cultura ayuda a determinar lo que es costumbre y “normal”. Sin embargo, ese conocimiento no es invariable. La cultura y los procesos culturales son dinámicos y se expresan a través de prácticas culturales (comportamiento, artefactos, reglas, etc.) que caracterizan la vida diaria (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001). Dentro de un nicho ecológico dado, éstas representan formas compartidas de percibir, pensar, y almacenar posibles respuestas para procesos adaptativos y condiciones cambiantes, sujetas a procesos históricos evolutivos (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001).

Por lo tanto, el término “cultura”, utilizado aquí en su sentido más general se refiere al cuerpo de logros humanos del pasado, socialmente heredado, que sirven como recursos para la vida actual de un grupo social específico (D’Andrade, 1996). Kroeber y Kluckhohn presentan una definición más específica:

La cultura consiste en patrones, explícitos e implícitos, de comportamiento adquirido y transformado mediante símbolos, constituyendo los logros distintivos de los grupos humanos, incluyendo su incorporación en los artefactos; el núcleo esencial de la cultura consiste de ideas tradicionales (i.e., históricamente derivado y seleccionado) y especialmente de sus valores adjuntos; los sistemas culturales pueden por un lado ser considerados como productos de acción, y por otro como elementos condicionantes de la acción futura (1963, p. 181).

D'Andrade y Strauss (1992) y otros autores (Gee, 2000; Strauss & Quinn, 1998) sugieren que las creencias culturales y las prácticas culturales se organizan como *modelos culturales*, los cuales son construcciones sociales localizadas del mundo, que dan forma a nuestra comprensión del mismo y a la conducta de uno mismo dentro de él. Se cree que estos modelos culturales son muy comunes y con frecuencia poco visibles, por lo que pasan desapercibidos por aquellos que los poseen (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001). Partiendo desde una perspectiva de investigación, la cultura y los procesos culturales son sumamente difíciles de definir y operacionalizar en la práctica porque: (a) la mayor parte de lo que consideramos conocimiento cultural está automatizado, y por lo tanto no siempre es transparente o fácilmente accesible a los observadores individuales o externos, y (b) implican valores, ideas, creencias, y prácticas que son relativas.

Aunque la cultura ha estado presente en la investigación de la literacidad desde hace algún tiempo, desafortunadamente ha habido una tendencia a enfocarse en las diferencias superficiales y a tratar la cultura como si fuera un conjunto de reglas homogéneas, estáticas e internamente consistentes para establecer reglas de comportamiento que continuamente forman parte de las actividades cotidianas de los individuos en formas predecibles. En contraste con lo anterior, es más frecuente que los modelos culturales ejerzan una influencia sobre el comportamiento de formas variables e inconsistentes (D'Andrade & Strauss, 1992; Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001; Levine & Whine, 1986; Strauss, 1992). Resumiendo estos puntos, Gallimore y Goldenberg señalaron que:

Los valores y prácticas codificadas en los modelos culturales no son necesariamente soluciones consistentes relacionadas con el comportamiento. Esta aparente "irracionalidad" puede ser entendida como preparación para desafíos cambiantes, por lo que pueden ser necesarios diferentes modelos culturales... Esta variabilidad en la puesta en práctica de los modelos significa que la cultura no es una variable nominal que se adjunta por igual a cada individuo como una dirección "social", como lo son la edad, el peso, o el género. El tratar

a la cultura de esta manera asume que todos los que dicen pertenecer a, o son asignados dentro de un grupo, tienen características de origen común y actúan sobre los modelos culturales disponibles de manera semejante e invariable. Sin embargo, en muchos casos no es así. La presunción de *que la homogeneidad de la experiencia y el comportamiento de los individuos dentro de las culturas son homogéneos, sin evidencia empírica, no se justifica* [cursiva en el original]. Un error paralelo es tratar a lo nacional o condición étnica como equivalente a una experiencia cultural común para los individuos (2001, pp.xii-xiii).

En lugar de asumir que los modelos culturales se desarrollan de forma automática basándose en aspectos como la raza, la identidad étnica, el género, etc., es importante darse cuenta de que, en realidad, son las experiencias específicas de un individuo las que influyen en los modelos culturales en que se desarrollan. Por lo tanto, como algunos autores han manifestado, es fundamental examinar lo que las personas realmente hacen como prácticas culturales en lugar de hacer supuestos injustificados acerca de estos factores con base en inferencias infundadas sobre supuestas creencias y valores y cómo éstos podrían mediar el comportamiento (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003). Como señalan estos autores, las influencias culturales varían tanto en los individuos como en los contextos en que un mismo individuo se desenvuelve.

INVESTIGACIÓN Y TEORÍA SOBRE LAS PERSPECTIVAS CULTURALES

Cambios en el contexto educativo

Antes de examinar algunas de las investigaciones y teorías, vale la pena señalar el amplio contexto educativo que ha tenido un impacto en la investigación sobre la cultura y el tratamiento de factores culturales en la investigación sobre lectura en los Estados Unidos. Estos factores incluyen cambios demográficos nacionales, iniciativas nacionales de políticas educativas como NCLB (*No Child Left Behind* o *Que Ningún Niño Se Quede Atrás*), y el énfasis en los enfoques basados en la evidencia.

Cambios demográficos. Entre 1966 y el 2006 la población estadounidense creció en alrededor de 100 millones de personas. Al día de hoy, la población hispana aumentó de 8.5 millones en 1966-67 a 44.7 millones. Por tanto, los latinos representaron un 36% de los 100 millones de personas sumadas a la población en las últimas cuatro décadas, más que cualquier otro grupo racial o étnico. La población blanca creció de 167.2 millones en 1966-67 a 201.0 millones hasta hoy,

lo que representó el 34% de los 100 millones de agregados desde 1966 hasta 1967. La población afroamericana aumentó de 22.3 millones a 38.7 millones y representó alrededor del 16% del crecimiento de la población. La población de Asia y las islas del Pacífico aumentó de 1.5 millones a 14.3 millones, lo que representa alrededor del 13% del incremento (Centro Pew Hispánico, 2006). Un número significativo de estos estudiantes provienen de hogares donde el inglés no es el idioma principal. Por ejemplo, entre 1979 y 2005, el número de niños en edad escolar (edades de 5-17) que hablaban un idioma que no es inglés en la casa aumentó de 3.8 a 10.6 millones (del 9 a 20% de la población en edad escolar). Entre los niños en edad escolar con un idioma que no es inglés en casa, el número total de quienes hablaron inglés con dificultad aumentó de 1.3 millones (3% del total de 5 a 17 años de edad) a 2.9 millones (6%) entre 1979 y 2000 (Livingston, 2007). Es difícil hacer caso omiso de los factores culturales en el aula teniendo en cuenta estos cambios masivos en la conformación de la población en edad escolar.

Rendición de cuentas. La ley NCLB (por sus siglas en inglés) marcó un punto de inflexión en el movimiento hacia la rendición de cuentas de las escuelas. El resultado de esta legislación y las otras iniciativas conexas ha aumentado la presión sobre las escuelas para ver que todos los niños alcancen altos niveles. Como parte de las medidas establecidas por esta ley para la rendición de cuentas, las escuelas no pueden cumplir con sus metas anuales de progreso a menos que todos los principales subgrupos en la escuela cumplan con sus objetivos. Tanto los profesores como los administradores están, por consiguiente, bajo una enorme presión para demostrar resultados tangibles. El instrumento elegido en la búsqueda de la rendición de cuentas ha sido la evaluación masiva, lo cual a veces ha llevado a enfocar el plan de estudios en el material relacionado con la evaluación y a la consecuente exclusión de otros materiales. En este contexto, con frecuencia las consideraciones culturales han estado ausentes de la discusión sobre los enfoques curriculares y de enseñanza.

Los enfoques basados en la evidencia. Los factores culturales en las escuelas, salones de clase, y localidades se investigan desde hace mucho tiempo (Goldenberg, Rueda, & August, 2006^a; Rogoff, 2003). Gran parte de este trabajo ha sido de observación y de naturaleza cualitativa, normalmente enfocándose en un solo contexto cultural específico o en un número reducido de ellos (Au, 2000; Wikinson & Silliman, 2000). Sin embargo, en los últimos años, a nivel federal y dentro de algunas áreas del ámbito de la investigación, se han impulsado los así llamados métodos de enseñanza basados en la evidencia (Mayer, 2001; Feuer, Towne, & Shavelson, 2002; Slavin, 2002; Whitehurst, 2002). Algunas interpretaciones de esta línea de investigación se han centrado en una visión

relativamente limitada de lo que constituye un enfoque metodológico aceptable, considerando que sólo son aceptables los experimentos aleatorios con grupos de control. Este énfasis en la causa y efecto se ha llegado a considerar como el sello distintivo de la investigación aceptable para determinar un enfoque de enseñanza y decidir las cuestiones de políticas. Esta es una consideración importante porque ha hecho que las líneas de investigación se alejen de preguntas y metodologías que no se ajustan al enfoque cuantitativo y controlado que busca la generalización de resultados.

De manera conjunta, no cabe duda que estos cambios en el panorama educativo han influenciado el rol que juegan (y continuarán jugando) los factores culturales en la investigación y la práctica educativas. Se deben tener presentes estos aspectos a medida que esta discusión examine la teoría y la investigación en esta área.

CONSIDERACIONES TEÓRICAS

Como se mencionó anteriormente, el trabajo en lo que podría denominarse factores socioculturales en el lenguaje y la literacidad tiene una larga historia en la literatura. Algunos de los trabajos anteriores se enfocaron en estudios sociolingüísticos del uso del lenguaje en un salón de clases y patrones comunicativos (Cazden, John, & Hymes, 1972). Wilkinson y Silliman (2000) señalaron que a principios de 1970, esta investigación se desarrolló a partir de una variedad de perspectivas disciplinarias, incluyendo psicólogos que buscaban diferencias individuales en el uso del idioma, lingüistas que examinaban las funciones comunicativas, sociólogos que estudiaban la organización social y los procesos de comunicación, educadores que examinaban la organización de clases, investigadores del habla y lenguaje que observaban discapacidades del lenguaje, y antropólogos educativos que observaban la comunicación verbal y no verbal dentro y entre los grupos culturales.

El trabajo etnográfico, especialmente el que está basado en antropología educativa, ha sido muy importante en los estudios enfocados específicamente en la cultura y en estudios comparativos entre las culturas en el salón de clase y en comunidades (Florio-Ruane & McVee, 200). Como Florio-Ruane y Mc Vee mencionaron, los antropólogos educativos se han interesado mucho en "... abordar comparaciones culturales, enfocados principalmente en diferencias del tratamiento y acceso al conocimiento dentro de la escuela, de una sociedad caracterizada por la diversidad de razas, de idiomas, de grupos étnicos, y de clases sociales". (p.156). Una característica común de este trabajo es que ha dependido totalmente de una perspectiva socioconstructivista (Florio-Ruane & McVee, 2000; Lave, 1998; Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000), en particular aquella que

refleja la teoría sociohistórica de los estudiosos neo-Vygotskianos (Cole, 1996; Lee, 2005^a, 2005^b; Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000; Guierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Alvarez, & Chiu, 1999; Moll, 1990; Moll & Gonzalez, 2004; Scribner & Cole, 1981) y por lo tanto poco a poco comenzó a unir la antropología tradicional, enfocada en grupos culturales, con el estudio del aprendizaje individual. El marco del socioconstructivismo ha contribuido mucho a conectar las preocupaciones cognitivas y sociales sobre el aprendizaje (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave, 1988; Wenger, 1999; Wells & Claxton, 2002; Wertsch, 1991).

Los teóricos del socio constructivismo argumentan que el aprendizaje, incluyendo la lectura y la literacidad, es una función de la actividad, el contexto y la cultura en el cual se desarrolla (es decir, es situado). La interacción social es un aspecto crítico del aprendizaje situado, a medida que los estudiantes avanzan de principiantes a expertos en una “comunidad de práctica” específica que incorpora ciertas creencias y comportamientos que se deben adquirir, tales como aquellos que se relacionan con la lectura y la literacidad en contextos escolares. Brown et al. (1989) hacen hincapié en el concepto de aprendizaje cognitivo dentro de este proceso, en el que la pericia avanza mediante la interacción social colaborativa y la construcción social del conocimiento entre un aprendiente principiante y un facilitador más competente (Rogoff y et al., 2001).

Esta tendencia hacia un énfasis en el aprendizaje del alumno y la enseñanza con un enfoque específico sobre la adquisición de la literacidad para los estudiantes de diversos orígenes culturales, quedó claramente ejemplificada en el trabajo basado en el proyecto Kamehameha de Educación Temprana (KEEP por sus siglas en inglés) en Hawai en la década de 1980 (Au, 2000) y en el trabajo posterior en otros ámbitos culturales (Lee, 2007,2008).

Aunque la teoría constructivista social ha jugado un papel destacado en la investigación de los factores culturales y socio-culturales de la lectura y la investigación de la literacidad (Gaffney & Anderson, 2000), no es la única perspectiva. Gee (2000) proporciona un panorama de las diversas perspectivas teóricas y disciplinarias que han guiado la investigación sobre los factores socioculturales de la lectura. Estos incluyen: (a) etnometodología y análisis conversacional, (b) sociolingüística interaccional, (c) etnografía del habla, (d) psicología sociohistórica, (e) cognición situada, (f) teoría de los modelos culturales, (g) lingüística cognitiva, (h) nuevos estudios de ciencia y tecnología, (i) teoría de la composición moderna, (j) estudios socioculturales de la literacidad, (k) conexionismo, (l) sociología moderna, y (m) trabajo posmodernista o postestructuralista. Gee sostiene que existe una creciente convergencia en estas áreas en cuanto a temas tradicionalmente controversiales en la investigación sobre la lectura: la cognición vs. el contexto, las habilidades vs. significado, las

estructuras formales del lenguaje vs. las funciones comunicativas, y el individuo vs. lo social.

LA INVESTIGACIÓN SOBRE LA ENSEÑANZA CULTURALMENTE CONGRUENTE Y LAS ADAPTACIONES CULTURALES

Desde mucho tiempo atrás la literatura se ha enfocado en la importancia de los factores culturales de la adquisición escolarizada de la literacidad. Los primeros trabajos en esta área indicaron que existían diferencias claras en el lenguaje, el discurso y los patrones de interacción entre estudiantes de los diferentes grupos raciales, étnicos, y culturales, especialmente en comparación con los estudiantes y maestros americanos aglosajones. (Au, 1980; Hale-Benson, 1986; Heath, 1983; Labov, 1972). Una hipótesis importante que ha guiado el trabajo posterior en esta área ha sido que los alumnos cuyos estilos discursivos son incongruentes con las normas de la escuela y las de la cultura dominante podrían encontrar más obstáculos para el rendimiento escolar en comparación con sus compañeros quienes utilizan estilos que se aproximan a este tipo de normas (Nieto, 1999; Gay, 2000). Se cree que la ausencia de un marco cultural común de referencia afecta la participación de los estudiantes en las actividades en el salón de clases, incluyendo la lectura y eventos de literacidad (Gay, 2000; Lue, Green, & Smalley, 2002; Wiley, 2005), y, en el peor de los casos, conduce a resultados negativos tales como la colocación de los alumnos en clases de educación especial (Klinger et al., 2005). Por lo tanto, como Florio- Ruane y Mc Vee (2000) señalaron, un foco importante durante las dos últimas décadas ha sido el esfuerzo de proporcionar una enseñanza congruente con la cultura de los alumnos.

Gay (2000) define la enseñanza culturalmente congruente como el uso de los conocimientos culturales, las experiencias anteriores, y los estilos de desempeño de los estudiantes para hacer el aprendizaje más adecuado y eficaz mediante una enseñanza enfocada a sus fortalezas. Gay describió esta forma de enseñanza como aquella que abarca los siguientes elementos:

- 1.- Reconoce la legitimidad de la herencia cultural de los diferentes grupos étnicos, tanto a manera de los legados que afectan las disposiciones, las actitudes de los estudiantes y sus acercamientos al aprendizaje, como a manera de contenido digno de ser enseñado en el currículo formal.
- 2.- Construye puentes de significatividad entre el hogar y las experiencias escolares, así como entre las abstracciones académicas y las realidades socioculturales vividas.
- 3.- Utiliza una amplia variedad de estrategias de enseñanza conectadas a los diferentes estilos de aprendizaje.

4.- Enseña a los estudiantes a conocer y sentirse orgullosos de los suyos y de la herencia cultural de cada uno.

5.- Incorpora información multicultural, recursos, y materiales en todas las materias y habilidades que se enseñan en las escuelas diariamente. (p.29)

Au (2000) discutió el tema de la enseñanza culturalmente congruente en términos de la enseñanza de la literacidad, y menciona algunas evidencias (ver Au y Kawakami, 1994) de "...resultados positivos cuando los profesores aceptaron y construyeron sobre la lengua materna de los estudiantes; estructuraron la interacción de una manera compatible con sus valores de origen; mantuvieron altas expectativas y se enfocaron en el sentido de decisiones, más que en las habilidades de nivel inferior; reconocieron que la narración y la búsqueda de respuestas puede tomar diferentes formas en las diversas culturas; y sacaron el máximo de la capacidad de los estudiantes para que aprendieran de sus compañeros" (p.839). Sobre la base de una perspectiva social, Au señaló que el desempeño en la literacidad es una función de la interacción de múltiples niveles, incluyendo las zonas escolares, las escuelas, las comunidades, los maestros, los estudiantes, y las familias. Curiosamente, Au (1998,2000) planteó la posibilidad de que otros factores, además de la compatibilidad cultural, pudieran ser igualmente importantes para explicar los resultados de los estudiantes, específicamente factores de enseñanza. Au y Mason (1981) señalaron lo siguiente acerca del estado del arte en aquel momento:

Se ha dado a entender que la presencia de elementos culturalmente congruentes en las clases impartidas a niños pertenecientes a minorías puede ayudar a prevenir conflictos perjudiciales entre maestros y estudiantes. Esta idea es muy atractiva, pero tenemos muy poca evidencia para respaldar la idea de que la presencia de situaciones escolares semejantes a las del hogar conduce a un rendimiento académico mejor en los niños pertenecientes a minorías. (p. 150)

El punto de vista más amplio y actualizado acerca de este problema se encuentra en el informe del Comité Nacional sobre Literacidad (August y Shanahan, 2006), el cual llevó a cabo una amplia revisión basada en la evidencia presentada en la literatura de investigación sobre el desarrollo de la literacidad en niños y jóvenes nativos hablantes de lenguas distintas al inglés. El informe del comité abarcaba una variedad de temas relacionados con la adquisición de la literacidad por aprendientes del inglés como segunda lengua, incluyendo el desarrollo de la literacidad, las relaciones translingüísticas, métodos de enseñanza, desarrollo profesional, y de evaluación. Lo más relevante para la presente discusión es que el informe incluyó una revisión de factores socioculturales en el desarrollo de la

literacidad (Goldenberg, Rueda, y August, 2006^a, 2006^b; Rueda, August, y Goldenberg, 2006). Los factores socioculturales se definieron ampliamente, y se examinaron las siguientes preguntas

- 1.- ¿Cuál es la influencia de la inmigración (estatus generacional y de las circunstancias de inmigración) en el desarrollo de la literacidad definida en términos generales?
- 2.- ¿Cuál es la influencia de las diferencias de las características en el discurso y la interacción entre los hogares y los salones de los niños?
- 3.- ¿Cuál es la influencia de otras características socioculturales de los estudiantes y profesores?
- 4.- ¿Cuál es la influencia de los padres y las familias?
- 5.- ¿Cuál es la influencia de las políticas de nivel municipal, estatal y federal?
- 6.- ¿Cuál es la influencia de la condición o prestigio de la lengua?

Una sección del informe (Goldenberg y otros autores., 2006^b) examinó estas cuestiones a condición de que alguna medida de resultados académicos se incluyera en los estudios realizados. Esta medida fue específicamente definida de manera amplia para incluir cualquier indicador de observación, descripciones etnográficas, ejemplos o análisis de los resultados del alumno, las medidas de motivación, medidas de participación o compromiso, reportes personales del maestro, y medidas estandarizadas o cuantitativas. Un total de 50 estudios se ajustaron a este criterio. Una segunda sección del informe se centró en las mismas preguntas, pero sin requerir reportes de resultados de los estudiantes, lo que arrojó 25 estudios descriptivos adicionales muy relevantes

El aspecto más relevante del informe para la presente discusión se centra en la segunda pregunta, específicamente en el impacto de los esfuerzos para ajustar la enseñanza a las diferencias culturales. Las principales conclusiones del reporte en este ámbito sugirieron lo siguiente. En primer lugar, es evidente que hay diferencias entre las características de interacción y discurso, normas, y expectativas del hogar/comunidad y la escuela para muchos y diversos estudiantes de forma cultural y lingüística. Existe mucha literatura descriptiva que ilustra vivamente cómo se exhiben estas diferencias en el aula en una variedad de actividades. En segundo lugar, es sorprendente que pocos estudios hayan incluido mediciones de logro, y la mayoría de los estudios disponibles utilizan indicadores aproximados de logro (p.ej. la participación en clase) en lugar de medidas directas de la adquisición de lectura y literacidad. En tercer lugar, un gran

número de los estudios existentes presentan problemas metodológicos, incluyendo los siguientes:

- 1.- No se especifica de manera suficiente el tiempo invertido por el investigador en los estudios.
- 2.- No se especifican de manera suficiente las técnicas de recolección de datos, técnicas de análisis de datos, número de sujetos y número de observaciones.
- 3.- No se presentan datos que confirmen o refuten el punto de vista del autor explícitamente.
- 4.- No hay información sobre los procedimientos de selección de ejemplos representativos.
- 5.- Ninguna información sobre la frecuencia de los hechos claves reportados ni sobre qué tan típicos son.
- 6.- No se dice si se consideraron y evaluaron interpretaciones alternas.
- 7.- No se triangulan de manera suficiente varias fuentes de datos.
- 8.- Se llevan a cabo inferencias y conclusiones no justificadas por los datos reportados. (Goldenberg y otros autores., 2006^a, p.260)

El informe también indicó que existe algún sustento para la idea de que factores como un texto y/o lenguaje culturalmente familiar tienen un impacto en la comprensión de la lectura. Es decir, los estudiantes tienden a entender más cuando se trata de su propio idioma y cuando el texto que están leyendo les proporciona aspectos de contenido cultural con los que están familiarizados.

Mientras que el informe del Grupo Nacional de la Literacidad es el análisis más actual y detallado de los efectos de factores culturales en la adquisición de la literacidad, lo cierto es que se centró en aprendientes de inglés como segunda lengua, y por lo tanto, se excluyeron otras poblaciones (Gay, 2000; Hollins & Oliver, 1999; Ladson – Billings, 1994,1995; Lee, 2005b). Sin embargo, las conclusiones generales alcanzadas en el informe no cambian significativamente, incluso cuando se consideran otras poblaciones. El estado actual del conocimiento no ofrece una buena guía (aparte de principios generales e hipótesis plausibles junto con descripciones de proyectos específicos o sitios en los cuales se han usado y descripciones del impacto) al personal escolar para que éste pueda considerar los temas de cultura dentro de la enseñanza de la literacidad.

Es importante reconocer que la falta de evidencia extensa no significa que exista evidencia contraria. En realidad, muchas de las hipótesis con relación a la

adaptación cultural y las influencias de los procesos culturales en cuanto a los resultados de la lectura y literacidad son altamente plausibles y probables. Como se señaló anteriormente, es cierto que las diferencias entre muchas de las aulas, los hogares, y comunidades son reales y pueden documentarse para muchos estudiantes de diversos orígenes. Además, se debe tener en cuenta que el amplio trabajo de la antropología educativa y las áreas relacionadas con ella demuestran que los viejos puntos de vista que representaban estas diferencias como déficits son erróneos, y en realidad la riqueza cultural y los recursos lingüísticos de los mismos estudiantes pueden ser utilizados como una ventaja para involucrarlos en el trabajo académico de alto nivel (Gonzalez et al., 2005).

Una razón por la que no hay una amplia evidencia del impacto de la adaptación cultural y la enseñanza culturalmente congruente es que, como se mencionó anteriormente, la palabra cultura es difícil de definir, al menos en términos que permitan la medición cuantitativa y observable. Por definición, la cultura es dinámica, contextualmente variable, y se expresa erráticamente (Erickson, 2004; Gallego, Cole & LCHC, 2001). Además, debido a los fuertes vínculos con la antropología, la investigación se ha enfocado en la descripción detallada y precisa de los procesos sociales, culturales y lingüísticos en entornos y actividades concretos. La investigación se ha enfocado más en la pregunta “¿Qué es?” con respecto a los procesos y factores culturales, más que en la pregunta “¿Cuáles son los efectos?”

Sin embargo, hay otra posible razón de la falta de investigación sobre los efectos relacionados con los factores culturales. Esta es la falta de modelos teóricos o conceptuales que relacionen factores sociales y culturales con el aprendizaje del alumno y con otros resultados, sin trivializar y sin definir y medir los procesos culturales de manera estrecha y artificial. A pesar de que Gee (2000) observó cierta convergencia en torno a temas clave desde una multitud de diversas disciplinas y orientaciones teóricas que analizan factores socioculturales en la lectura, no existe un marco que pueda ayudar a atar el trabajo descriptivo sobre la literacidad con el trabajo basado experimentalmente más en la lectura. En la siguiente sección se analizan algunas posibilidades en este sentido.

¿Qué vincula los factores culturales con los resultados de la lectura y la literacidad?

Como lo indica la sección anterior, no parece haber una respuesta clara a esta pregunta, ya que faltan modelos conceptuales, especialmente aquellos con vínculos claros con la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del estudiante. Por lo tanto, esta sección plantea algunas posibilidades en este sentido, en particular en el área de la comprensión de lectura, lo cual podría ser útil para estimular el trabajo futuro.

Una nota sobre la comprensión de lectura. El grupo RAND (2002) (Research and Development, o Investigación y Desarrollo, una empresa dedicada a la investigación educativa en los Estados Unidos) ofreció la siguiente definición de la comprensión de lectura:

El proceso de extracción y construcción simultáneas de significado a través de la interacción y participación con el lenguaje escrito. La comprensión tiene estos elementos: el lector, el texto, y la actividad, o el propósito de la lectura. Estos elementos definen un fenómeno – comprensión de lectura - que ocurre dentro de un amplio contexto sociocultural que forma y es formado por el lector y que está presente en cada uno de los elementos. Todos están influenciados por el contexto más amplio. (p.xi)

Al discutir el rol del lector, el informe menciona que:

El lector aporta al acto de la lectura sus capacidades cognitivas (atención, memoria, habilidad de análisis crítico, inferencia, y visualización), motivación (un propósito para leer, interés en el contenido, autoeficacia como lector), conocimiento (vocabulario, conocimiento del área y del tema, conocimiento lingüístico y de discurso, conocimiento de las estrategias de comprensión), y experiencias. (p.xi-xii)

¿Cuáles elementos de esta lista podrían convertirse en obstáculos para la comprensión en estudiantes con orígenes culturales o lingüísticos distintos? Abajo se bosqueja una lista tentativa de los mismos:

1.-Atención – puede haber diferencias en las señales del discurso áulico a las cuales los estudiantes les prestan atención.

2.- Codificación – el lenguaje del texto, del maestro, o de la discusión entre pares podría ser poco comprensible a causa de las diferencias de lenguaje o por causa de las diferencias en género o vocabulario, o por el registro formal usado en contextos académicos o “Inglés académico” (Bailey, 2007) o por los patrones de discurso típicos del mismo (Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979).

3.- Procesamiento estratégico y autorregulación - a causa de la compleja interacción entre raza, identidad étnica, y el nivel socioeconómico, los estudiantes de algunos hogares podrían no haber sido expuestos a un elevado número de adultos escolarizados que pudieran modelar estrategias útiles para el procesamiento de texto.

4.- Conocimiento previo – el conocimiento y las habilidades que los estudiantes han adquirido podría no casar fácilmente con el conocimiento y las habilidades encontrados en las materias del plan de estudios, libros o actividades.

5.- Motivación – los estudiantes pueden venir a la escuela con diferentes metas de aprendizaje (Goldenberg, Galimore, Reese, & Ganier, 2001; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998), baja autoeficacia debida a experiencias académicas previa, o baja valoración de la tarea ocasionada por la falta de correspondencia entre la estructura o propósito de las actividades didácticas y las experiencias, habilidades e intereses de los alumnos.

Además de estos factores, el lenguaje y las diferencias culturales pueden influenciar las formas en que los maestros o compañeros, responden e interactúan con los estudiantes, ya sea que estas diferencias sean reales o percibidas. Estas diferencias pueden influenciar las expectativas del maestro, por ejemplo, y resultar en un tratamiento diferente, afectando así la participación del estudiante, su compromiso, y otras oportunidades para aprender. Dadas estas posibilidades, es posible plantear la hipótesis de que los factores culturales pueden tener tanto efectos interpersonales primarios en la lectura y la literacidad como también efectos interpersonales secundarios. Los primeros se reflejarían en el impacto sobre los procesos cognitivos individuales, estados afectivos y motivacionales, mientras los segundos operarían en una variedad de contextos interpersonales o actividades de la vida diaria, sirviendo para facilitar o limitar la participación y la interacción. Vamos a discutir cada uno a continuación, partiendo de Rueda (2006).

Efectos interpersonales primarios – procesos cognitivos. Mientras que la mayoría de los psicólogos cognitivos y los teóricos de procesamiento de información consideran los procesos cognitivos básicos de los humanos como universales, hay alguna evidencia de que hasta los procesos básicos pueden ser influenciados por factores culturales. Bransford, Brown y Cocking (1999) sugirieron que “el conocimiento previo además incluye el tipo de conocimiento que los estudiantes adquieren a causa de sus roles sociales, tales como aquellos conectados con raza, clase, genero, y sus afiliaciones étnicas y culturales”. (p.60). Como un ejemplo, con frecuencia se piensa que los efectos de primacía (recordar la primera cosa que escuchamos en una secuencia) y recencia (recordar lo último que escuchas) reflejan aspectos universales del rendimiento de la memoria humana. Sin embargo, son influenciados por los orígenes culturales y el tipo de escolaridad que los niños tienen (Valsier, 1988). La escolaridad puede influenciar incluso procesos cognitivos aparentemente universales y básicos como el procesamiento visual perceptivo, la atención, y la memoria verbal y visual (Cole & Scribner, 1977; Ostrovsky, Ramirez, & Ardilia, 2004; Rogoff, 1981).

En el dominio de la lectura, trabajos recientes sobre la teoría de la carga cognitiva parecen especialmente relevantes en el intento de vincular procesos culturales con resultados académicos y cognitivos. Un objeto de esta investigación es las limitaciones de la capacidad de la memoria de trabajo (Paas, Renkl, & Sweller, 2003; Sweller, 1988; Sweller, van Merriënboer, & Paas, 1998). Este trabajo se centra en cómo las limitaciones en la memoria de trabajo ayudan a determinar qué tipos de enseñanza son efectivas. Un principio básico de la teoría de carga cognitiva es que el aprendizaje es mediado por las limitaciones humanas en la capacidad de la memoria de trabajo, y que el procesamiento y/o almacenamiento no directamente relevante para el aprendizaje hace menos eficiente la memoria de trabajo. Cuando esto sucede, la capacidad de la memoria de trabajo está sobrecargada (v.gr., la carga cognitiva es alta) y así el aprendizaje se ve afectado negativamente. Estas limitaciones en la memoria de trabajo pueden reducirse, en parte, al permitir el uso de esquemas, es decir, estructuras de organización que incorporan múltiples elementos de información en un único elemento y con una única función almacenada en la memoria a largo plazo (MLP), lo que permite al aprendiente procesar información más eficientemente.

La MLP contiene una amplia cantidad de estructuras de conocimiento de áreas específicas (incluyendo conocimiento cultural específico) que se puede describir en términos de esquemas organizados jerárquicamente, los cuales permiten categorizar diferentes estados de problema y decidir cuál es la solución más apropiada para un problema dado. Los esquemas pueden hasta determinar lo que una persona considera que es un problema, así como las formas que tenga de representárselo mentalmente y de considerar cuáles soluciones son adecuadas.

Otra manera de reducir la carga cognitiva es a través de la automatización de los procesos cognitivos. El procesamiento automático de esquemas requiere un gasto mínimo de recursos de la memoria de trabajo y permite la solución de problemas con un mínimo esfuerzo. Como un ejemplo, en el campo de la lectura, las dificultades en la decodificación hacen el procesamiento del texto muy difícil para el lector, puesto que la carga cognitiva es alta. Sin embargo, la fluidez de la lectura ayuda a reducir la carga cognitiva y así hace la comprensión del texto más fácil para el lector.

Categorías de la carga cognitiva. La teoría de la carga cognitiva especifica diferentes tipos de carga cognitiva con características muy diferentes y relevantes para la didáctica. *La carga cognitiva intrínseca* se refiere a la demanda sobre la capacidad de memoria de trabajo intrínseca al material por aprender, p.ej. un texto específico. Los niveles de la carga cognitiva intrínseca son diferentes para cada material o actividad de aprendizaje y la modificación de la enseñanza no puede cambiar esto. Sin embargo, sí se puede reducir la carga cognitiva mediante la

modificación de una tarea, para que el aprendizaje de la misma sea más sencillo, omitiendo algunos elementos interactivos, lo cual puede llevar a un aprendizaje más eficaz. Una conclusión básica en lo que respecta al conocimiento humano es que la memoria de trabajo – donde se cree que ocurren todos los procesos cognitivos conscientes – no puede procesar más de dos o tres elementos interactivos nuevos. En cambio, la MLP está compuesta de esquemas. Dicha organización ayuda a aligerar la carga – trayendo el esquema de la MLP dentro de la memoria de trabajo, lo cual implica que se debe procesar un solo elemento, aún si el esquema incorpora muchos elementos interactivos. De este modo, los esquemas logran el mismo propósito que un factor de análisis en un contexto estadístico. Así, los esquemas simplifican muchas cosas en pocas para que sean más fáciles y gasten menos recursos cognitivos.

La *carga cognitiva extrínseca* se debe a la manera en la cual la información se presenta o a la naturaleza de las actividades de aprendizaje. La carga cognitiva extrínseca impone una carga innecesaria sobre el aprendizaje. La mayor parte del trabajo de diseño instruccional que ha incorporado la teoría de la carga cognitiva, se ha enfocado en intentar reducir la carga cognitiva extrínseca porque ésta es susceptible a características de la enseñanza. La carga cognitiva extrínseca es de gran importancia cuando la carga cognitiva intrínseca es alta (v.gr leer un texto complejo o difícil) porque las dos formas de carga cognitiva son aditivas. Si la carga cognitiva intrínseca es baja (como con el simple texto recreativo), los niveles de carga cognitiva extrínseca pueden ser menos importantes porque es menos probable que el total de la carga cognitiva exceda la capacidad de la memoria de trabajo.

El término *carga cognitiva pertinente* se refiere a la cantidad de esfuerzo de la capacidad de memoria de trabajo que requieren aquellas actividades mentales que contribuyen directamente al aprendizaje, definido en la teoría de la carga cognitiva como un esquema de adquisición y automatización. La carga cognitiva pertinente mejora el aprendizaje y es influenciada por el diseño instruccional. Además, aumenta el esfuerzo o motivación y puede aumentar los recursos cognitivos dedicados a una tarea. Si, estos recursos llevan a un esquema de adquisición y automatización, también contribuyen a un aumento en la carga cognitiva pertinente.

Aplicaciones a las adaptaciones culturales y la enseñanza de la comprensión de lectura. Un principio importante en este trabajo es que las cargas cognitivas intrínsecas, extrínsecas y pertinentes son acumulativas, y además, el total de la carga no puede exceder el total de los recursos disponibles de la memoria de trabajo para que el aprendizaje ocurra. La cultura se puede considerar (ciertamente de manera limitada pero útil para propósitos de la presente discusión)

como una serie de esquemas automatizados que ayudan a simplificar las demandas cognitivas de las tareas y actividades cotidianas. Si cada comportamiento o pensamiento u oración fuera nuevo para una persona, la demanda cognitiva sería muy alta. Sin embargo, el hecho de que la persona tiene esquemas familiares aligera esta carga, y cuando estos se han automatizado, la carga cognitiva se reduce aún más. Por consiguiente, el estar en un entorno culturalmente familiar es relativamente cómodo comparado con el estar en un entorno cultural desconocido. Un texto culturalmente desconocido (a causa del desconocimiento de la estructura del texto o del desconocimiento de los conceptos o ideas) puede imponer una carga cognitiva intrínseca incluso si la persona puede decodificar el texto. Además, los materiales, entornos y actividades culturalmente conocidos pueden ayudar a enfocar la atención y así aprender mejor. En esencia, focalizar la atención lleva a un uso más eficiente y relevante para la tarea de los escasos recursos en el almacén limitado de la memoria de trabajo.

Las aplicaciones de este trabajo para conceptualizar las adaptaciones culturales y, específicamente, la comprensión de la lectura son evidentes. En esencia, todos aquellos materiales de lectura, textos y hasta formas de conversar y hablar durante la enseñanza de la lectura que sean culturalmente desconocidos, pueden representar fuentes de carga cognitiva y así hacer el aprendizaje menos eficiente y más pesado. Recordemos que los diferentes tipos de carga cognitiva son acumulativos. Por lo tanto, si el total de la carga cognitiva superase la capacidad del sistema cognitivo del alumno, el aprendizaje y la comprensión se verían afectados. Básicamente, la carga cognitiva puede servir como un mediador entre a) la cultura externa, factores y entornos socioculturales, y b) procesos cognitivos internos que pueden facilitar u obstaculizar el aprendizaje. La falta de familiaridad cultural con tareas específicas, textos, discursos y procesos de interacción, y otras características importantes del salón de clases pueden por lo tanto conducir a los tipos de resultados negativos reportados en la literatura descriptiva. La situación inversa es igualmente posible, por lo cual los esquemas culturales que algunos estudiantes traen a las actividades de aprendizaje en el salón les dan ventaja, de manera que se reduce la carga cognitiva y así se hace el aprendizaje más eficiente. Por lo tanto, como muchos autores han sugerido, la introducción de la enseñanza culturalmente congruente lleva a que los estudiantes pueden acceder a sus esquemas relevantes o “fondos de conocimiento” (Moll & González, 2004) de tal forma que la carga cognitiva extrínseca se reduce.

Rueda (2006) denominó los procesos descritos arriba como “facilitación de la codificación”. Bajo circunstancias ideales, donde el conocimiento cultural de los estudiantes les ayuda a acceder al texto y a las actividades de clase, la carga

cognitiva extrínseca y, por lo tanto la carga cognitiva general, debería reducirse de manera que faciliten el aprendizaje y la comprensión. Así, la enseñanza culturalmente congruente y los ambientes del salón de clase pueden hacer a los estudiantes sentirse mejor, pero además estos enfoques pueden hacer las tareas más comprensibles y aptas para conectarlas con el conocimiento previo existente. Vale la pena mencionar aquí el concepto del input comprensible, que se ha planteado desde hace mucho tiempo como un principio importante de enseñanza para los aprendientes de una segunda lengua (Krashen, 1982). Si el argumento anterior es cierto, los maestros de los estudiantes de orígenes diversos necesitan estar bien informados sobre el conocimiento cultural que sus estudiantes traen a la escuela, y sobre las formas en las cuales los materiales de lectura, actividades de enseñanza, y otros aspectos de la enseñanza de la comprensión pueden aumentar excesivamente la carga cognitiva, trayendo consigo problemas de aprendizaje. Del mismo modo, se sugiere que los esquemas existentes de los niños pueden ser ampliados de tal manera que los materiales, actividades y entornos previamente desconocidos se integren bien dentro de la memoria a largo plazo.

Efectos interpersonales primarios – Procesos de motivación. Frecuentemente, se ha considerado la motivación como un rasgo inherente de los estudiantes. En cambio, la teoría motivacional contemporánea se ha enfocado en las creencias personales específicas del contexto con respecto a tareas y actividades concretas, y sobre la propia capacidad para participar en las mismas. Schunk, Pintrich, y Meece (2008) sugieren que la elección activa, persistente, y de esfuerzo mental es un indicador central de la motivación y que impacta el rendimiento. Mientras que hay un amplio acuerdo sobre estos índices de motivación, la teoría de motivación en general comprende una familia de teorías relacionadas más que una sola teoría. Por lo tanto, debido a que el objetivo de este capítulo es heurístico, no se abordarán todas las posibles variables motivacionales. Más bien, intentaremos demostrar como los procesos motivacionales pueden vincularse con los procesos culturales. Una teoría de motivación que ha sido muy influyente es conocida como la teoría del valor x de la expectativa, y debido a su relevancia para la discusión, será el tema central en este estudio.

Una perspectiva sociocognitiva sobre la motivación basada en el valor de expectativa. . Eccles y Wigfield y sus colegas (Eccles, 1983, 1987, 1993; Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Wigfield, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, 2000) describen el marco motivacional conocido como teoría del valor x expectativa, la cual se enfoca sobre dos componentes clave de la motivación. La expectativa es qué tan bien uno espera realizar una tarea asignada y el valor es cuánto valor se le da a una tarea o actividad. En este marco, extremadamente simplificado debido a las limitaciones

de espacio, los aspectos sociales del mundo (medio cultural, comportamientos socializadores y rendimientos pasados) influyen sobre la creencias motivacionales (valor de tarea y expectativa) y los procesos cognitivos de los individuos (percepciones del entorno social y atribuciones causales), (medio cultural, comportamientos socializadores, y desempeños anteriores), la influencia de creencias motivacionales (valor de la tarea y expectativa) y los procesos cognitivos de los individuos (percepciones del entorno social y atribuciones causales). Todo esto a su vez produce un comportamiento motivado (elección activa, persistencia, esfuerzo mental) (Shunk et al., 2008). A continuación se explican los aspectos clave del enfoque del valor x de la expectativa.

El componente de valor de esta teoría se enfoca en creencias relacionadas con la respuesta que los individuos dan a la pregunta, “¿Por qué debo realizar esta tarea?” Hay cuatro aspectos básicos del valor de la tarea: el interés, la importancia, la utilidad y el costo. La expectativa, por otro lado, se refiere a las creencias relacionadas con la pregunta, “¿Soy capaz de realizar esta tarea?” y los aspectos básicos son la auto eficacia, la dificultad percibida de la tarea, y la atribución causal. El supuesto aquí es que los factores culturales (por ejemplo el grado de familiaridad o desconocimiento del tema) pueden dar forma a una o más de estas variables motivacionales y por lo tanto influir en la elección de actividades, el esfuerzo y la persistencia. En casos donde los estudiantes tienen fuertes expectativas de éxito en una tarea o actividad y le atribuyen un alto valor e interés, el compromiso aumentará y viceversa. Por lo tanto, en situaciones culturalmente compatibles, los estudiantes pueden creer que es más probable que tengan éxito y que la tarea sea menos difícil, y pueden atribuir sus errores a la falta de esfuerzo en lugar de la falta de capacidad. También pueden estar más interesados y creer que la tarea o los materiales son más importantes, que el dominio de la tarea tiene utilidad en otras situaciones, y que la tarea no requerirá tanto esfuerzo. Así, los factores culturales tienen un impacto sobre los resultados de los estudiantes y su éxito, al menos en parte, a través de la mediación de los procesos motivacionales básicos. A semejanza de la codificación facilitadora, la cual se enfoca sobre factores cognitivos, el aspecto equivalente en el ámbito motivacional puede denominarse “involucramiento facilitador”.

En un análisis exhaustivo del trabajo actual y de los temas de motivación, Pintrich (2003) bosquejó algunas generalizaciones motivacionales clave basadas en la investigación y teoría actuales. Estas son: (a) autoeficacia adaptiva y capacidad de creencias de los estudiantes motivados, (b) atribuciones adaptables y control de creencias de estudiantes motivados, (c) niveles más altos de interés y la motivación intrínseca que motiva a los estudiantes, (d) niveles más altos de

valor que motivan a estudiantes, y (e) objetivos que motivan y dirigen a los estudiantes (p.672).

Puede suponerse que la enseñanza culturalmente congruente y los entornos y materiales de aprendizaje culturalmente receptivos pueden tener un impacto significativo sobre estas áreas motivacionales clave y, por lo tanto, influir sobre la participación del estudiante de formas que ayuden (o dificulten) su lectura, comprensión, y por último su nivel de logro. En consonancia con esta hipótesis, algunas investigaciones descriptivas sobre factores culturales describieron el aumento de la participación y el logro estudiantil como un producto de la enseñanza culturalmente compatible (Au, 1980). Aunque el rendimiento no es necesariamente lo mismo que el éxito, el fomentarlo no es una preocupación trivial. En efecto, muchos estudios sugieren que el esfuerzo mental se asocia con creencias motivacionales tales como el interés (Salomón, 1984), y que el compromiso académico y otras “conductas relacionadas con el logro” se asocian con el logro medido (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004) y la comprensión de lectura en particular (Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie et al., 2006)

Los procesos culturales no son los únicos que pueden tener un impacto sobre las formas interpersonales, motivacionales y cognitivas involucradas en la comprensión de lectura. La teoría sociocultural apunta que los procesos interpersonales también tienen que ver. Este aspecto se discute más adelante.

Efectos interpersonales secundarios – Procesos sociales. Estos efectos pueden ser considerados como influencias sobre el aprendizaje individual mediadas por los procesos y organización del contexto social. Es decir, la naturaleza de la participación de los estudiantes en las actividades del salón de clases tiene un impacto importante sobre el aprendizaje (Lave & Wenger, 1998; Rogoff, 1991, 1995; Rogoff, Baker – Senner, Lacasa, & Goldsmith, 1995; Wenger, 1999). Estos efectos mediadores podrían reflejarse a través de interacciones sociales con otros en lugares como los salones de clase, y fundamentalmente puede influenciar factores importantes tales como la oportunidad de aprender a través de la participación disminuida, interacciones negativas con maestros, etc. (Cazden, 1985). Hay evidencia que todo lo que un maestro hace tiene un impacto motivacional en los estudiantes (Stipek, 1996). Las creencias de los maestros sobre la capacidad para enseñar y sobre las capacidades de aprendizaje de los estudiantes y sus habilidades cognitivas influyen en su relación con los estudiantes (Davis, 2003). Esto se refleja en áreas tales como el tipo de retroalimentación dada, el uso de estructuras de recompensa, elogios, críticas y ayuda, y el ambiente general de la clase (Schunk et al., 2008). Una manera en que esto puede operar en ambientes áulicos es cuando los maestros o el personal escolar, como los psicólogos, interpretan el desempeño de estudiantes de

diversas culturas como reflejo de deficiencias cognitivas o lingüísticas debido a que usan un discurso y/o patrones interaccionales no predominantes (Labov, 1982; Lee, 2005b, 2007)

En esta sección se han definido algunos posibles mecanismos para comenzar a conectar los procesos culturales y las diferencias culturales, tales como los encontrados en muchos entornos del salón de clases, con factores motivacionales y cognitivos que finalmente se conectan al logro. Como lo sugiere la revisión de la literatura en esta área, por mucho tiempo se ha planteado la hipótesis de que estos factores juegan un papel en el logro de la lectura y la literacidad en estudiantes de color. Sin embargo, el trabajo ha sido de naturaleza marcadamente cualitativa por las razones definidas previamente, y no hay investigación causal fuerte que vincule tales factores a los resultados del estudiante. La naturaleza del constructo hace difícil la manipulación experimental. Sin embargo, igualmente importante es la falta de un marco teórico que sugiera posibles mecanismos que vinculen los procesos culturales con el aprendizaje. Dada la falta de modelos que pudieran guiar ese tipo de investigación, hicimos sugerencias de formas en que los factores culturales podrían impactar en el aprendizaje. Estas incluyeron efectos interpersonales primarios como la codificación de facilitación y el compromiso de facilitación, enfocados en factores cognitivos y de motivación respectivamente. Además, describimos los efectos interpersonales secundarios, enfocados en las formas en que los procesos sociales y de interacción pueden ser mediados por factores culturales y, por lo tanto, limitan o facilitan la participación del estudiante y la naturaleza de las interacciones del día a día.

IMPLICACIONES PARA LA PRÁCTICA, LAS POLÍTICAS Y LA (S) INVESTIGACIÓN (ES) FUTURA (S)

Preocupaciones teóricas y de investigación

Una observación interesante relacionada con el tratamiento de los procesos culturales en la literatura es que los factores culturales frecuentemente se discuten únicamente con referencia a estudiantes de orígenes lingüísticos y culturales diversos, en vez de considerarlos como una característica que permea toda actividad humana. Además, la cultura es frecuentemente tratada como una función de los estudiantes principalmente, más que como una característica que infiltra contextos sociales y procesos de aprendizaje en salones de clase y escuelas. Aunque la cultura ha sido una preocupación consistente de volúmenes anteriores del *Handbook of Reading Research*, hay todavía mucho que no conocemos. Como

se mencionó anteriormente, las investigaciones pasadas se enfocaron más sobre preguntas descriptivas de tipo “Qué es” a través de una descripción cuidadosa y contextualizada de entornos culturales y procesos específicos que involucran a la lectura y la literacidad. Ese tipo de investigación se complementa con trabajos que intentan modificar la enseñanza y entornos en el salón de clase para hacerlos más receptivos culturalmente para los estudiantes, frecuentemente a través de varias formas de adaptación cultural. Además, en el tiempo, ha habido una tendencia a alejarse de las opiniones negativas de las prácticas culturales de los estudiantes en el hogar y la comunidad, y transitar hacia el uso de estas prácticas culturales como un recurso de enseñanza.

La tarea pendiente es desarrollar una base de conocimiento que permita que prácticas de enseñanza así desarrolladas sean más estratégicas y fundamentadas en la teoría y la investigación empírica. Desde una perspectiva de investigación, una necesidad significativa en el campo es examinar mas sistemáticamente el impacto de factores culturales, para dar una mejor guía a los profesores y escuelas. Parte del desafío en este aspecto es reducir o eliminar la división entre lo cognitivo y lo cultural, y construir modelos que integren el trabajo hecho desde diferentes perspectivas. Esto implica desarrollar modelos que hablen específicamente de cómo los factores culturales debieran o pudieran tener un impacto sobre los procesos de literacidad y lectura. También implica conectar el trabajo sobre procesos y prácticas culturales con el trabajo sobre el aprendizaje. La consideración de un marco de aprendizaje permite el desarrollo de hipótesis comprobables específicas y brinda alguna guía sobre constructos relevantes a evaluar y/o manipular cuando se considere a la literacidad en general y en particular a la enseñanza de la comprensión de la lectura. Hay algunos ejemplos de intentos de abordar múltiples dimensiones interactuantes de los factores que determinan el logro del estudiante (e.g., Fredericks et al., 2004).

Desde una perspectiva de investigación, las preguntas de interés incluyen:

- 1.- Las prácticas de enseñanza culturalmente congruentes, ¿reducen la carga cognitiva en las actividades de aprendizaje? Si es así, ¿resulta esto en un mejor desempeño?
- 2.- ¿Qué tipos de entornos son los más efectivos al mediar la carga cognitiva?
- 3.- El uso sistemático de textos culturalmente relevantes, ¿produce un mayor involucramiento del estudiante y/o mejores resultados (más interés y valor de la tarea, que resulten en una decisión de leer más persistir en tareas de

lectura, esforzarse más con un texto difícil, y finalmente aumentar la comprensión)?

4.- La enseñanza culturalmente congruente, ¿lleva a una auto eficacia más alta, o facilita las conexiones con el conocimiento previo, disminuyendo de ese modo la carga cognitiva?

5.- Las características de las actividades o rutinas de enseñanza culturalmente congruentes, ¿aumentan el interés del estudiante y la importancia y utilidad que le da a las tareas? ¿Influyen en su elección, persistencia, o esfuerzo?

Estas y muchas otras preguntas relacionadas no se han explorado mucho hasta la fecha, con unas pocas excepciones notables (Au, 1980, 2000; Lee, 2005a). A los involucrados en el diseño curricular y la planeación didáctica sólo les queda basarse en la intuición o en conjeturas fundamentadas respecto de si deben implementar estos enfoques, cuándo hacerlo y cómo hacerlo. El trabajo sistemático basado en conocimientos actualizados sobre aprendizaje y la motivación es prometedor para ayudar a resolver estas preguntas. A medida que este trabajo sobre factores culturales se integre más a la investigación dominante sobre lectura y literacidad, será necesario que empiece a reflejarse en las políticas estatales y federales sobre lectura.

Consideraciones de enseñanza

Los teóricos socioculturales (Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000; Lee & Ball, 2005) nos recuerdan que el aprendizaje y el desempeño no son solamente una función del individuo y de características intrínsecas, sino que más bien residen en la interacción entre el estudiante y el entorno. Cuando los estudiantes vienen a la escuela con orígenes no tradicionales, aquellos educadores que intentan facilitar la literacidad y los procesos de la comprensión de la lectura necesitan considerar sistemáticamente el aprendizaje y las implicaciones de motivación de las actividades en el salón de clase y los materiales que ellos brindan. Actualmente, la base de investigación no permite ofrecer una guía (aparte de principios generales) para el personal escolar que esté intentando considerar temas culturales en la enseñanza de la literacidad. El trabajo de autores tales como Gallimore y Goldenberg (2001), Gutierrez y Stone (2000), Lee (2000), y Rogoff (2003) sobre modelos culturales sugiere que, como mínimo, sería importante considerar los siguientes tipos de preguntas para así formar el fundamento de la pedagogía culturalmente receptiva por la que muchos han abogado (Au, 2000; Gay, 2000):

1.- ¿Cuál es el alcance y naturaleza de los entornos culturales que un aprendiz ha experimentado?

2.- ¿Quiénes son o eran los participantes?

3.- ¿Cuál es el alcance y la naturaleza de las cosas que las personas hacen o hicieron en estos entornos? (Esto puede conllevar todas las influencias socioculturales tradicionales, tales como etnicidad, raza, género, nivel socio económico, etc., sin tener que hacer juicios monolíticos sobre características individuales basadas en etiquetas de grupo – las respuestas a estas preguntas proporcionan una perspectiva de cómo estos factores operan a un individuo en específico pero no para un grupo entero).

4.- Basado en la experiencia en estos entornos. ¿Qué tipo de modelos culturales han desarrollado los individuos?

En términos de entornos del salón de clase, algunas preocupaciones paralelas son:

1.- ¿Cuáles son los entornos de actividad típicos y característicos en esta escuela y salón de clases? ¿Cómo están estructurados?

2.- ¿Cómo y cuándo ocurren?

3.- ¿Quiénes participan?

4.- ¿Cuáles son los modelos culturales que caracterizan este salón de clases o escuela?

Los maestros bien informados de acuerdo a estas preguntas, tendrían como mínimo una serie de principios y una base empírica para modificar la enseñanza de manera que maximice los recursos culturales de los estudiantes.

Debemos tener en cuenta que, aunque el enfoque de los factores culturales en la lectura y literacidad es muy importante en la literatura, deben evitarse aspectos problemáticos de tratamientos previos de la cultura, incluyendo los siguientes:

1.- Hacer juicios monolíticos sobre grupos enteros (frecuentemente siguiendo parámetros raciales y/o étnicos) sin considerar diferencias intra-grupo e individuales.

2.- Centrarse en las características externas de la cultura.

3.- Centrarse en variables presuntamente relacionadas con la cultura que han demostrado no tener relación con el aprendizaje, como los estilos de aprendizaje.

4.- Tratar la cultura como un déficit más que como una fuente de aprendizaje.

5.- Equiparar etiquetas de grupo, especialmente las (etiquetas) de grupos étnicos y raciales, con características culturales.

6.- Asumir que las influencias culturales operan rígidamente en todos los entornos.

7.- Confiar en características supuestas sin tener en cuenta la validación empírica

Erickson (2004) señaló que la presencia de diferencias culturales en la sociedad no necesariamente conduce al conflicto o a problemas en la escuela u otros entornos organizacionales o sociales. Más bien, el conflicto depende del tratamiento de las diferencias culturales como un límite o como una frontera. Los límites, que son de esperar, son simplemente una reflexión de la presencia de las diferencias culturales. Por otro lado, las fronteras son constructos sociales, de origen político, que involucran el ejercicio arbitrario del poder o de la autoridad de un grupo sobre otro. Como menciona Erickson, los problemas surgen cuando los límites son tratados como fronteras, cuando el conocimiento cultural del individuo es “detenido y registrado”. Aunque hay descripciones de cómo operan estos procesos en el aula, conocemos poco sobre cómo superar sus efectos de forma provechosa para la educación.

▪ V. - Analysis

While working on the translation from English into Spanish of chapter 5 “Cultural Perspectives in Reading” Theory and Research by Robert Rueda, some difficulties to translate into the target language were found. The techniques proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet, of the Canadian school, were fundamental to solve these problems in which some words, phrases or sentences of the chapter previously mentioned were involved.

This chapter is an academic text and many unknown words and phrases were encountered in the process. It was necessary to consult many sources such as dictionaries, discussion forums, and academic papers to find the most suitable words or expressions, but the use of these techniques was necessary. Besides that, the hardest thing was to deal with words that we do not use commonly in our daily life. Most of these words or expressions were chosen to be in this analysis.

Throughout this analysis, each technique employed in the translation will be explained with examples from both the source language and the target language. Moreover, this analysis shows some similarities and differences between these two languages. It is important to mention that, for this translation work, the help of my advisor was very important because he helped me to understand most of the complex vocabulary and expressions, and also suggested important changes in order to have a correct version into the target language.

▪ Borrowing

Borrowing is a technique proposed by Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1958). This translation technique is the one that is required when the word or phrase of the source language is used without any modification into the target text. It means that the word or phrase is kept in their original language.

These are some examples found in this translation work.

Source	Target
An historical overview follows, examining connections to earlier work in past volumes of the <u>Handbook of Reading Research</u>.	A continuación se presenta un panorama histórico, en la que se examinan conexiones con trabajos anteriores en volúmenes pasados del <u>Handbook of Reading Research</u> .
Accountability. Passage of No Child Left Behind (<u>NCLB</u>) marked a turning point in the move toward accountability for schools.	<i>Rendición de cuentas.</i> La ley <u>NCLB</u> (por sus siglas en inglés) marcó un punto de inflexión en el movimiento hacia la rendición de cuentas de las escuelas.
was clearly exemplified in the work based on the Kamehameha Early Education Project (<u>KEEP</u>)	claramente ejemplificada en el trabajo basado en el proyecto Kamehameha de Educación Temprana (<u>KEEP</u> por sus siglas en inglés)

The decision to keep the title of the handbook and the acronyms in the source language was because they do not have Spanish language versions; therefore, if readers of the translated article want to look up those references, they must do so using the original English name as there is no Spanish version. Furthermore, they do not affect the understanding of the text. In other words, the text will be quite comprehensible despite the fact that there are words in English. Below is another example of borrowing.

Source	Target
<p>A somewhat related concept from the literature on second language acquisition, comprehensible <u>input</u>, has long been proposed as an important instructional principle for second language. (Krashen, 1982).</p>	<p>Un concepto de alguna manera relacionado con la literatura sobre la adquisición de una segunda lengua, el <u>input</u> comprensible, se ha propuesto desde hace mucho tiempo como un principio importante de enseñanza para los aprendientes de una segunda lengua (Krashen, 1982).</p>

As this translation work is academic, the meaning of *comprehensible input* has the following definition according to Stephen Krashen (1982, 1985); *Comprehensible input is that input which is slightly beyond the current level of competence of the language learner*. In other words, it means that students are able to understand what is taught and said by their teachers. This concept is also used by educators in Spanish as “input comprensible”. For that reason, the word “input” is kept as a borrowing. Another reason is because people in this field are familiar with this term and they will be able to understand it easily.

This term was also consulted in different sources, such as articles specialized in the area of education, which helped to confirm that the use of *input* in Spanish was common. Furthermore, the decision to use this concept was also a suggestion of my advisor, who told me that this was the correct term according to this academic text. Finally, even when the English word *input* is kept into the target text, it does not affect the author’s message.

▪ Calque

Calque is a technique also suggested by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), in which a kind of borrowing is used. This technique uses literal translation to transform the parts of a phrase into the target language.

These are some examples:

Target	Source
<u>University of Southern California</u>	<u>Universidad del Sur de California</u>

This phrase is a clear example of how calque is used. The phrase “University of Southern California” was transferred in the target language using the literal translation and also suffered a modification in its word order to make the phrase in the target language easy to understand and also with a more natural sense.

Calque is an easy technique that for its nature was not difficult to use to translate this phrase in the target language. On the other hand, this technique was not frequent in this translation since most of the phrases had their equivalent in the target language, but the phrase previously showed was the exception.

▪ Literal Translation

According to Larson (1984), literal translation follows closely the form of the source language. Also, in this kind of translation some adjustments in word order are allowed according to the target language.

The following are some examples encountered in the translation:

Source	Target
<p>Culture is a ubiquitous feature of daily life and is a characteristic of human activity, including reading and literacy.</p>	<p>La cultura es un rasgo omnipresente de la vida cotidiana y es característica de la actividad humana, incluyendo la lectura y la literacidad.</p>
<p>While social constructivist theory has been prominent in the research on cultural and socio-cultural factors in reading and literacy research (Gaffney & Anderson, 2000), it is not the only perspective.</p>	<p>Mientras que la teoría constructivista social ha sido destacada en la investigación de los factores culturales y socio-culturales de la lectura y la investigación de la literacidad (Gaffney & Anderson, 2000), no es la única perspectiva.</p>
<p>Motivation – students may come to school with different learning goals (Goldenberg, Galimore, Reese, & Ganier, 2001; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998), poor self- efficacy due to past academic experiences , or low task value because the structure or purpose of instructional activities do not map onto known experiences and abilities and interests.</p>	<p>Motivación – los estudiantes pueden venir a la escuela con diferentes metas de aprendizaje (Goldenberg, Galimore, Reese, & Ganier, 2001; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998), baja autoeficacia debido a experiencias académicas previas, o bajo valor de la tarea ocasionado por la falta de correspondencia entre la estructura o propósito de las actividades didácticas y las experiencias conocidas, habilidades e intereses de los alumnos.</p>

The previous examples clearly demonstrate a word-for-word translation because the structures of the sentences were kept in the same way in the target language. This technique works properly into the target language because it has coherence and it is well accepted in Spanish. It is important to mention that, for this kind of translation, we can see some variations in word order. This makes the sentence more understandable and compliant with the grammatical rules of the target language. We have to deal with these kinds of problems because English and Spanish have some differences in adjective placement; this means that adjectives must be collocated in different order. For that reason, it is very important to pay special attention when we have to use them in both languages.

Literal translation also helped this work to make it sounds more natural and changes were made with adjectives but also sometimes it was required to make some changes with other parts of the sentences. English and Spanish have some differences in word order. As a rule English uses the subject always at the beginning but Spanish is more flexible because the subject can be used at the beginning as in English, at the end, and even omitted. All the changes were made with the purpose to make the sentence clear and understandable also to make the proper use of the grammatical rules in the target language.

The following examples represent the previous explanation.

Source	Target
<p>Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the <u>distinctive achievements</u> of <u>human groups</u>, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected)</p>	<p>La cultura consiste de patrones, explícitos e implícitos, de y para el comportamiento adquirido y transformado por símbolos, constituyendo los <u>logros distintivos</u> de los <u>grupos humanos</u>, incluyendo su incorporación en los artefactos; el núcleo esencial de la cultura consiste de ideas tradicionales...</p>

ideas...	
The absence of a shared cultural frame of reference is thought to impact students' participation in classroom activities including reading and literacy events (Gay, 2000;Lue, Green, & Smalley, 2002; Wiley, 2005)	Se cree que <u>la ausencia de un marco cultural común de referencia impacta la participación de los estudiantes en las actividades en el salón de clases, incluyendo la lectura y eventos de literacidad</u> (Gay, 2000;Lue, Green, & Smalley, 2002; Wiley, 2005)

▪ Transposition

This technique is based on the changes made in a grammatical category of a part of the sentence but always keeping the meaning of the original message. The grammatical changes also occurred in different ways while this translation was done.

Examples of the transposition technique occurred when a gerund noun phrase is turned into an infinitive noun phrase as the following example.

Source	Target
<u>Changing a task so that it is a simpler learning task that omits some interacting elements, however, can reduce the cognitive load and thus the efficiency of the learning.</u>	Sin embargo, sí se puede reducir la carga cognitiva mediante <u>la modificación</u> de una tarea, para que el aprendizaje de la misma sea más sencillo, omitiendo algunos elementos interactivos, lo cual puede llevar a un aprendizaje más eficaz.

Transposition is applied in this example taking into account that there is a change in the word class. This occurred because the noun phrase used in the

Source Language is a gerund, but in the Target language, it was necessary to make the change in the word class as a noun. The reason is because in Spanish it is not correct to use gerund noun phrases. Moreover, this change does not affect the meaning of the message.

Another example of the transposition technique occurred when a participle modifying a noun phrase was rendered as a prepositional phrase:

Source	Target
<p>A basic tenet of cognitive load theory is that learning is mediated by human limitations on <u>working memory capacity</u>.</p>	<p>Un principio básico de la teoría de carga cognitiva es que el aprendizaje es mediado por las limitaciones humanas en <u>la capacidad de la memoria de trabajo</u></p>

The previous example is also one of the cases of transposition. The grammatical change occurred because the participle in the noun phrase “working memory” was translated as a prepositional phrase modifying “memoria”, that is “memoria de trabajo. This grammatical change in Spanish is because of the preposition “de”, which is necessary to add to make phrase grammatical in Spanish.

▪ Modulation

Modulation was the appropriate technique when translating was not easy to express the idea of the author from English into Spanish. Modulation helped to express the same idea but in different words. Modulation also helped to solve this problem in order to transmit the idea into the target language expressing the message in a different point of view, but never changing the author's idea.

Example:

Source	Target
Background knowledge- the knowledge and skills that students have acquired may not map easily onto that in curriculum materials or books or activities.	Conocimiento previo – el conocimiento y habilidades que los estudiantes han adquirido podría no casar fácilmente con el conocimiento y las habilidades encontrados en las materias del plan de estudios, libros o actividades

The word “*map*” according to the dictionaries only refers to topographical terms. These terms are in general about plans, schematic plans of streets or diagrams. These concepts into the target language are translated as the following: mapa, plano, cartografiar, mapear, esquema and others. Metaphorically, “map” has come to be used as a verb, with a meaning similar to “fit”. For that reason the definition of the word was changed by context as “casar” in order to transmit a clear idea about what the author wanted to say.

As part of the English Language the use of passive voice is very common, but Spanish does not work in the same way. Spanish uses more frequently the active form or the impersonal *se*. This latter structure was used in order to sound more natural and grammatically correct, according to the rules of translation. It is

important to mention that, in this text several cases of passive voice were found and changed to the impersonal form.

Example 1

Source	Target
While the cultural practices in home and community settings <u>are normally acquired</u>,	Mientras que las prácticas culturales en el hogar y de la comunidad normalmente <u>se</u> adquieren,

Example 2

Source	Target
D'Andrade and Strauss (1992) and others (Gee,2000; Strauss & Quinn, 1998) suggested that cultural beliefs and practices <u>are organized as cultural models</u>,	D'Andrade y Strauss (1992) y otros autores (Gee,2000; Strauss & Quinn, 1998) sugieren que las creencias culturales y las prácticas culturales <u>se</u> organizan como modelos culturales,

▪ Equivalence

Vinat and Darbelnet (1958), proposed the equivalence technique which mainly deals with proverbs, idioms, idioms clichés and onomatopoeia. The purpose of this technique is to convey the same message with a different style according to the target language.

The following are examples of this technique:

Source	Target
An especially rich descriptive literature <u>paints a picture</u> of how these differences are exhibited in classroom settings in a variety of activities.	Existe mucha literatura descriptiva que <u>ilustra vivamente</u> cómo se exhiben estas diferencias en el aula en una variedad de actividades.

The phrase “paints a picture” is an idiom that literally means “pinta un cuadro”, however this is not the meaning that the author of the chapter is trying to convey. For that reason to accomplish with the objective of transmitting the author’s message the task was to look for the equivalent phrase in Spanish that represents the same idea. The final version which fits properly is the following: “ilustra vivamente”.

The following are examples of this technique:

Source	Target
<u>Extraneous or ineffective load</u> is due to the manner in which information is presented or the nature of the learning activities.	La <u>carga cognitiva extrínseca</u> se debe a la manera en la cual la información se presenta o a la naturaleza de las actividades de aprendizaje.
<u>Germane or effective cognitive load</u> refers to demands placed on working memory capacity by mental activities that contribute directly to learning, defined in cognitive load theory as schema acquisition and automation.	El término <u>carga cognitiva pertinente</u> se refiere a la exigencia puesta sobre la capacidad de memoria de trabajo por las actividades mentales que contribuyen directamente al aprendizaje, definido en la teoría de la carga cognitiva como adquisición y automatización de esquemas.

The previous examples are psychological terms and one way to know the correct equivalents for them was to consult some sources on this field. The decision of looking for more information was to be completely sure about how these terms are used in Spanish. It was not difficult to find the equivalents and also my advisor helped me to confirm that these terms were correct.

▪ Adaptation

The adaptation technique is applied when something specific to one language culture is expressed in an entirely different way that is common or appropriate to another language culture. It occurs when a situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture. Moreover adaptation helps to use and find an equivalent word or phrase into the target language that contributes to transmit the same idea but with different words.

Source	Target
<p>5.- What is the influence of policies at the <u>district</u>, state, and federal levels?</p>	<p>5.- ¿Cuál es la influencia de las políticas en los niveles municipal, estatal y federal?</p>

In this translation adaption was required when the word “district” was found. This word is commonly used in places such as United States as part of its culture, what it means that it cannot be translated literally because it might be caused confusion with the readers. For that reason to solve this problem that word had to be adapted to a term known for Spanish speakers in which they can feel familiarized and the result was “municipal”.

“Municipal” was a word which fits better according to the author’s idea. Another important point is that was necessary to understand the context to know the proper term according to the culture and readers.

▪ Addition

Addition is a technique commonly used when words are added into the target message in order to make it clearer. It is important to mention that in this technique a translator has to be aware of not adding more words by giving unnecessary information. Also, this technique was used to clarify some details in the text to give the reader in the target language a better understanding.

Examples:

Source	Target
Such a view allows the ranking of various social groups according to their degree of culture and the extent to which they incorporate and/or contribute to the general cultural progress (<u>for a discussion, see Gallego & Cole, 1998, and Erikson, 2004</u>).	Tal punto de vista permite la clasificación de varios grupos sociales de acuerdo a su grado de cultura y de la medida en la que se incorporan y/o contribuyen al progreso de la cultura general (véase Gallego & Cole, 1998 y Erikson, 2004 <u>para un tratamiento más extenso del tema</u>).
Accountability. Passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) marked a turning point in the move toward accountability for schools.	<i>Rendición de cuentas.</i> La ley <u>NCLB</u> (por sus siglas en inglés) marcó un punto de inflexión en el movimiento hacia la rendición de cuentas de las escuelas.
Kamehameha Early Education Project (<u>KEEP</u>) in Hawaii during the 1980's (Au, 2000) and subsequent work in other cultural settings (Lee, 2007, 2008).	Kamehameha de Educación Temprana (<u>KEEP por sus siglas en inglés</u>) en Hawai en la década de 1980 (Au, 2000) y en el trabajo posterior en otros ámbitos culturales (Lee, 2007,2008).

This technique was useful to be clearer and specific with certain terms or to provide readers a more understandable message. In the first example was added “para un tratamiento más extenso del tema” with the purpose to clarify that readers can consult information to confirm or to learn more about the information previously explained. This additional information does not affect the original message just helps to avoid misunderstandings.

The second and third examples are acronyms that come from English language, and they were necessary to keep them in the target language. For that reason, the phrase “por sus siglas en inglés” was added to make readers know that “NCLB and

KEEP” form part of the source language. The addition was also necessary to be more precise on their origin.

It was not difficult find these examples and also to make the addition in the target language. Moreover, to make this translation more understandable the additions were completely necessary and to confirm this fact they were encountered in some other texts. These additions were also suggested by the advisor in order to accomplish the goal of conveying the proper message.

▪ Omission

Omission is a technique applied when a translator considers that it is necessary to omit redundancy or repetition with the purpose to make the target text clearer for the reader.

The following are examples of this technique:

Source	Target
Work on what might be termed sociocultural factors in language and literacy has a long history in the <u>research literature</u>, as noted previously.	Como se mencionó anteriormente, el trabajo en lo que podría denominarse factores socioculturales en el lenguaje y la literacidad tiene una larga historia <u>en la literatura.</u>
Accountability. <u>Passage of No Child left Behind (NCLB)</u> marked a turning point in the move toward accountability for schools.	<i>Rendición de cuentas. <u>La ley NCLB</u> marcó un punto de inflexión en el movimiento hacia la rendición de cuentas de las escuelas.</i>

Probably some people might think that omitting a word or phrase in the target language can affect the meaning of message of the author. However, this omission can be done while the translator considers this step necessary.

The first example “research literature” omits the word research in the target language. The reason is because by keeping “en la literatura”, it is understood that it refers to all the investigation done previously. In other words, this omission does not affect the meaning and it is more specific to terms of previous research of the topic.

The second example omitted the whole definition “Passage of No Child left Behind” of the acronyms NCLB. The decision to omit this meaning was because it had been explained previously in the text, and the use of the acronym in the source language had been preserved since there is no equivalent law in the Mexican context. The purpose of this omission was to avoid sounding repetitive and to make the text more understandable. Moreover, in the final translation in Spanish of this part of the chapter was the following “La ley NCLB”. The reason of keeping this was because previously was explained that NCLB was a law and also was mentioned the meaning of the acronym for readers and it makes that when readers find this acronym again they do not any trouble to understand what it does means.

▪ VI. - Conclusions

English has become a popular and important language around the world. This language is learned by a huge amount of people because of its importance in this modern world. Moreover, this language has an influence in our country in areas of education, and also for people who look for better job opportunities. However, there are some who do not command this language and need a text, book, article or official documents in their own language.

The work of a translator is not easy as I thought at the beginning of this translation. Translating a text into Spanish even when this language has been part of your life is not a guarantee to have a successful work. Translating a text in your own language is more than knowing how to communicate or write a message in your daily life or reading a book or academic texts. Translators really require essential tools of knowledge from both languages in different aspects.

Undoubtedly, a translator has a challenging task for transmitting a message of a source language into the target one keeping the same essence of the original author. The main purpose is that the reader in the target language can obtain the same message as readers in the source language. To achieve this goal, translators have to be careful in terms of style and convey the author's ideas in an accurate and faithful way.

In my experience, translating an academic text was a challenging task. The first thing that I faced was dealing with the complexity of some terms that scholars used specifically in areas of education. Also, during this translation, it was necessary to consult different sources in order to be entirely sure about the use of the terms in the text, in this way to avoid misunderstandings with the Spanish readers. When translating I faced some other problems such as applying the literal translation technique that most of the time made the text sound unnatural and not easy to understand. Something useful was to reread the text and I realized that I should have done some changes using another kind of technique. Also, a fundamental key was to consult an expert who is familiarized with terms and

language. After consulting I could notice that making some changes were completely necessary.

Another difficulty was to try finding a translation for all the terms in the target language. Even when Spanish is my mother tongue, I encountered some terms that I was not sure if they had an equivalent, but the toughest was to find a proper way to express them in the target language. The way to solve this problem to avoid a wrong translation was to ask my advisor about how to solve this problem.

During this translation I could notice how English and Spanish have some grammatical variations. The structure of the sentences in English referring of how they modify one another caused a lot of confusion because the way I expressed some ideas in Spanish were not adequate and the author's message was not being transmitted correctly.

Something that I considered extremely important is that a translator should know as much as she/he can about the topic to translate. I had the opportunity to read some specific texts that my advisor gave me in order to have an idea about this chapter to translate. Also, getting familiarized with the topic was essential for me to carry out this work. During the translation I found many linguistic terms in which I had to consult specialized books in education or psychology to understand concepts and adapt them according to what the author wanted to say.

In this translation work the techniques proposed by Viney and Dalbelnet explained in the theoretical framework were important. Other fundamental tools were books, dictionaries, articles and experts in the field of education and linguistics who helped to find a solution to make this translation possible.

Working on this translation made me realize the aspects that a translator has to consider while working. I strongly recommend to all who are interested in becoming translators that they have to be very patient while the translation is being carried out, because a translation requires time and days to have a final version after doing some drafts. It is important that future translators consider that there is not one way to translate a text; it can vary according to each person's style.

I really hope that this translation helps educators and all people interested in the field of education to increase their knowledge and to know more about this important topic.

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VIII.- Appendix

5 Cultural Perspectives in Reading

Theory and Research

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Culture is a ubiquitous feature of daily life and is characteristic of human activity, including reading and literacy. In fact, reading and literacy are cultural inventions constructed over the course of history to enable more effective solutions to everyday needs such as recording important events, facilitating commerce, and broadening means of communication (Cole, 1996; Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000). Thus, the connections between literacy and culture are deep. In this chapter, we will explore these connections. This will include a discussion of culture as a construct, an historical overview of culture in reading research, and a review and critique of research related to cultural factors in literacy acquisition and teaching, and a proposal for a research agenda for the field. Finally, the chapter will provide a model for examining cultural factors in literacy research as a means of guiding this agenda.

A NOTE ON LITERACY AND READING

Before exploring the meaning of culture, it is worth noting the distinction between literacy and reading, primarily because of the potential for confusion in both theory and research and the implications for understanding cultural factors. Literacy and reading are often used interchangeably in spite of the fact that various authors may have very different meanings. We draw the distinction here because of the implications for understanding work related to culture. A recent National Research Council report (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) defined reading as "... the use of the products and principles of the writing system to get at the meaning of a written text" (p. 42). In essence, it focuses on the individual psychological processes involved in decoding and comprehending text. In contrast, while literacy includes reading, it looks more broadly not only at the act of reading but at the beliefs, attitudes, and social practices that literate individuals and social groups follow in a variety of settings and situations (Pearson & Raphael, 2000). For example, literacy involves knowledge of the underlying discourses in a group (Gee, 1992); that is, the values, viewpoints, "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), and language patterns established by members of that discourse group, patterns internally resistant to criticism.

While the psychological processes involved in reading are most often seen as universal (we will discuss this point in more detail later), literacy is often seen as much more culturally specific, opening the possibility of multiple literacies. For example, the language patterns, types and uses of text, vocabulary, syntax, and shared meanings and values in school-based literacy may be

One characteristic of the reading research field in terms of reading and literacy is that cultural research has often been part of the latter but not the former. Moreover, research in one area is sometimes used to suggest pedagogy and policy in the other, a fact that may help explain some of the disagreements within the field. To avoid additional confusion, the next section begins with an overview of culture as a construct, taking care to differentiate culture specifically from a range of other sociocultural variables. An historical overview follows, examining connections to earlier work in past volumes of the *Handbook of Reading Research*. Finally, we will talk about what changes in the educational context might have implications for this topic, and provide an overview of research in this area, describing the implications for theory, practice, policy, and future research.

Culture as a Construct

While the term "culture" is commonly used in the everyday vernacular and in the social and behavioral literature as well, there is a great deal of variance in meaning. One view sees culture and cultural progress as universal, representing the general inheritance of humankind reflected in such collective achievements such as artistic refinements, science, knowledge, cultural institutions, etc. In this view, societies do not have discrete cultures; rather, they embrace and exhibit greater or lesser degrees of the general culture created by humankind up to the present time. Such a view allows the ranking of various social groups according to their degree of culture and the extent to which they incorporate and/or contribute to the general cultural progress (for a discussion, see Gallego & Cole, 1998, and Erikson, 2004).

The competing view, and the one adopted here, is more relativistic and related to the particular historical circumstances of specific groups (Goodenough, 1994). It refers to the daily patterns of living (cultural practices) that allow individuals to relate to the surrounding social order. That is, "Each culture... is an historically unique configuration of the residue of the collective problem solving activities of a social group in its efforts to survive and prosper within its environment(s)" (Gallego & Cole, 1998, p. 367). In this view, there is not one grand culture, but many different cultures. Furthermore, culture is learned, and develops because of the need to evolve in response to adaptive challenges and tasks faced by a given group (Weisner, 1994). While culture is most often referenced in the literature primarily with respect to students from nonmainstream cultural and linguistic backgrounds, culture is in fact a universal feature of daily life for all humans (Rogoff, 2003). At the most basic level, culture helps determine what is customary and "normal." But it is not static knowledge. Culture and cultural processes are dynamic and are expressed through cultural practices (behavior, artifacts, rules, etc.) that characterize daily life (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001). In a given ecological niche, these represent historically evolved and shared ways of perceiving, thinking, and storing possible responses to adaptive challenges and changing conditions (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001).

Thus, used here in its most general sense, culture refers to the socially inherited body of past human accomplishments that serves as the resources for the current life of a specific social group (D'Andrade, 1996). Early writing by Kroeber and Kluckhohn provided a more specific definition:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; cultural systems may on the one hand be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (1963, p. 181)

D'Andrade and Strauss (1992) and others (Gee, 2000; Strauss & Quinn, 1998) suggested that cultural beliefs and practices are organized as *cultural models*, which are situated, social constructions of the world that shapes one's understanding of the world and one's behavior in it. These cultural models are thought to be so familiar that they are often invisible and unnoticed by those who hold them (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001). From a research perspective, culture and cultural processes are notoriously difficult to define and operationalize because: (a) much of what we consider cultural knowledge is automated, and therefore not always transparent or easily accessible to the individual or external observers, and (b) they involve values, ideas, beliefs, and practices that are relative.

Although culture has been visible in literacy research for some time, an unfortunate tendency in the past has been to focus on surface differences and treat culture as if it were a homogenous, static, and internally consistent set of rules for behavior that continually shape an individual's everyday activities in predictable ways. Most often, however, these cultural models impact behavior in variable and inconsistent ways (D'Andrade & Strauss, 1992; Gallimore & Goldenberg, 2001; Levine & White, 1986; Strauss, 1992). Summing up these points, Gallimore and Goldenberg noted that:

Values and practices encoded in cultural models are not necessarily internally consistent or consistently related to behavior. This seeming "irrationality" can be understood as preparation for shifting challenges, for which different cultural models may be required... This variability in model enactment means that culture is not a nominal variable to be attached equally to every individual like a "social" address, in the same way that age, height, or gender might be. Treating culture in this way assumes that everyone who claims membership in or is assigned to a group has common natal experiences and acts on available cultural models in a uniform, unvarying fashion. In many cases they do not. *Assuming homogeneity of experience and behavior of individuals within cultures, without empirical evidence, is unwarranted* [italics in original]. A parallel error is to treat national or ethnic status as equivalent to a common cultural experience for individuals. (pp. xii-xiii)

Rather than assuming that cultural models develop automatically based on things like race, ethnicity, gender, etc., it is important to realize that it is really an individual's specific experiences that influence the cultural models that develop. Thus, as some have argued, it is critical to examine what people actually *do* in terms of cultural practices rather than making unwarranted assumptions about these factors based on unsubstantiated inferences about presumed beliefs and values and how these might mediate behavior (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003). As these authors note, cultural influences are variable both across individuals and across settings for the same individual.

RESEARCH AND THEORY ON CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Changes in the Educational Context

Before looking at some of the research and theory, it is worth taking note of the larger educational context that has had a bearing on research on culture and the treatment of cultural factors in reading research. These factors include national demographic changes, national educational policy initiatives such as NCLB, and the focus on evidence-based approaches.

Demographic Changes. Between 1966 and 2006 the U.S. population grew by 100 million. The Hispanic population increased from 8.5 million in 1966-67 to 44.7 million today. Latinos thus

accounted for 36% of the 100 million people added to the population in the last four decades, the most of any racial or ethnic group. The White population grew from 167.2 million in 1966–67 to 201.0 million today, which represented 34% of the 100 million added since 1966–67. The Black population increased from 22.3 million to 38.7 million and accounted for about 16% of the population growth. The Asian and Pacific Islander population increased from 1.5 million to about 14.3 million, representing about 13% of the increase (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006). A significant number of these students came from homes where English is not the primary language. For example, between 1979 and 2005, the number of school-age children (ages 5–17) who spoke a language other than English at home increased from 3.8 to 10.6 million (from 9 to 20% of the school-age population). Among school-age children who spoke a non-English language at home, the total number who spoke English with difficulty increased from 1.3 million (3% of all 5- to 17-year-olds) to 2.9 million (6%) between 1979 and 2000 (Livingston, 2007). It is difficult to ignore cultural factors in the classroom setting given these massive changes in the makeup of the school age population.

Accountability. Passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) marked a turning point in the move toward accountability for schools. The result of this legislation and other related initiatives has been increased pressure on schools to see that all children achieve at high levels. As part of NCLB's school accountability measures, schools cannot meet their Annual Yearly Progress goals unless all major subgroups at the school meet achievement targets. Teachers as well as administrators are thus under tremendous pressure to produce demonstrable results. The measure of choice in the quest for accountability has been large scale high stakes tests, sometimes leading to attempts to focus the curriculum on test-related material to the exclusion of other material. In this context, cultural considerations have often been absent from the discussion about curricular and instructional approaches.

Evidence-Based Approaches. A long history of research has focused on cultural factors in schools, classrooms, and communities (Goldenberg, Rueda, & August, 2006a; Rogoff, 2003). Much of this work has been observational and qualitative in nature, typically focusing on a single or small number of specific cultural contexts (Au, 2000; Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000). Over the past several years, however, a push has been made at the federal level and within some arenas of the research domain to embrace what have come to be known as evidence-based instructional approaches (Mayer, 2001; Feuer, Towne, & Shavelson, 2002; Slavin, 2002; Whitehurst, 2002). Some interpretations of this agenda have focused on a relatively narrow view of acceptable methodological approaches, specifically randomized, control group experiments. This cause-effect emphasis has come to be seen as the hallmark of acceptable research for determining instructional approaches and deciding policy matters. While the matter has been vigorously debated within the education community, given the qualitative nature of much research on cultural factors, this is an important consideration. It has shifted the research agenda in many cases away from questions and methodologies not amenable to quantitative and controlled approaches that emphasize generalization of results.

Taken together, these changes in the educational landscape have undoubtedly (and will continue to) influenced the role that cultural factors play in educational research and practice. They should be kept in mind as the discussion examines the theory and research in this area.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Work on what might be termed sociocultural factors in language and literacy has a long history in the research literature, as noted previously. Some of the earliest such work focused on

sociolinguistic studies of classroom language use and communicative patterns (Cazden, John, & Hymes, 1972). Wilkinson and Silliman (2000) noted that beginning in the 1970s, this research developed from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including psychologists looking at individual differences in language use, linguists examining communicative functions, sociologists studying social organization and communication processes, educators examining the organization of lessons, speech and language researchers looking at language disabilities, and educational anthropologists looking at verbal and nonverbal communication within and between cultural groups.

Ethnographic work, especially that based in educational anthropology, has been especially prominent in studies focusing specifically on culture and on comparative studies between cultures in classrooms and home settings (Florio-Ruane & McVee, 2000). As Florio-Ruane and McVee pointed out, the work in educational anthropology has maintained a particular interest in "...cross cultural comparisons, focusing primarily on differential treatment and access to knowledge within the school of a society characterized by diversity in race, language, ethnicity, and social class." (p. 156). One characteristic of much of this work is that it has relied heavily on a social constructivist perspective (Florio-Ruane & McVee, 2000; Lave, 1988; Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000), in particular that reflecting social historical theory of neo-Vygotskian scholars (Cole, 1996; Lee, 2005a, 2005b; Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000; Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Alvarez, & Chiu, 1999; Moll, 1990; Moll & Gonzalez, 2004; Scribner & Cole, 1981) and thus slowly began to merge the traditional anthropological focus on cultural groups with the study of individual learning. The social constructivist framework has been especially prominent in bridging the social and the learning-related cognitive concerns (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave, 1988; Lave & Wenger, 1991, 1998; Rogoff, Turkonis, & Bartlett, 2001; Rogoff, 2003; Sharp & Gallimore, 1988; Wenger, 1999; Wells & Claxton, 2002; Wertsch, 1991).

Social constructivist theorists argue that learning, including reading and literacy, is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs (i.e., it is situated). Social interaction is a critical aspect of situated learning, as learners move from novice to expert in a specific "community of practice" which embodies certain beliefs and behaviors to be acquired, such as those surrounding reading and literacy in school settings. Brown et al. (1989) emphasize the idea of cognitive apprenticeship within this process, in which expertise advances through collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge between a novice learner and a more competent facilitator (Rogoff et al., 2001).

This trend toward an emphasis on student learning and instruction, with a specific focus on the acquisition of literacy for students from culturally diverse backgrounds, was clearly exemplified in the work based on the Kamehameha Early Education Project (KEEP) in Hawaii during the 1980's (Au, 2000) and subsequent work in other cultural settings (Lee, 2007, 2008).

While social constructivist theory has been prominent in the research on cultural and socio-cultural factors in reading and literacy research (Gaffney & Anderson, 2000), it is not the only perspective. Gee (2000) provided an overview of the multitude of theoretical and disciplinary perspectives that have guided research on sociocultural factors in reading. These include: (a) ethnomethodology and conversational analysis, (b) interactional sociolinguistics, (c) ethnography of speaking, (d) sociohistorical psychology, (e) situated cognition, (f) cultural models theory, (g) cognitive linguistics, (h) the new science and technology studies, (i) modern composition theory, (j) sociocultural literacy studies, (k) connectionism, (l) modern sociology, and (m) poststructuralist or postmodernist work. Gee contended that there is mounting convergence in these areas along themes that have traditionally formed tensions in the reading research: cognition vs. context, skills vs. meaning, formal language structures vs. communicative functions, and the individual vs. the social.

RESEARCH ON CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTION AND CULTURAL ACCOMMODATIONS

A long-standing history focuses on the importance of cultural factors in the acquisition of school-based literacy. The earliest work in this area suggested that clear differences in language, discourse, and interactional patterns existed between students from different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups, especially compared to mainstream Anglo American students and teachers (Au, 1980; Hale-Benson, 1986; Heath, 1983; Labov, 1972). A major hypothesis of subsequent work in this area has been that students whose discursive styles are incongruent with school and mainstream cultural norms may encounter more obstacles to school achievement than peers who use styles that approximate such norms (Nieto, 1999; Gay, 2000). The absence of a shared cultural frame of reference is thought to impact students' participation in classroom activities including reading and literacy events (Gay, 2000; Lue, Green, & Smalley, 2002; Wiley, 2005), and, in the worst cases, lead to negative outcomes such as special education placement (Klinger et al., 2005). Thus, as Florio-Ruane & McVee (2000) noted, a major focus for the last two decades has been an effort to provide culturally responsive instruction and cultural accommodations.

Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them by teaching to their strengths. She described this form of instruction as embracing the following elements:

1. It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.
2. It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities.
3. It uses a wide variety of instructional strategies connected to different learning styles.
4. It teaches students to know and praise their own and each other's cultural heritages.
5. It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. (p. 29)

Au (2000) discussed the issue of cultural responsiveness in terms of literacy instruction, and noted some evidence (see Au & Kawakami, 1994) for "...positive results when teachers accepted and built on students' home language; structured interaction with students in a manner consistent with their home values; kept expectations high and focused on meaning-making rather than lower level skills; recognized that storytelling and question answering may take different forms in different cultures; and capitalized on students' ability to learn from peers" (p. 839). Drawing on a social constructivist perspective, Au noted that literacy achievement is a function of the interaction of multiple levels, including districts, schools, communities, teachers, students, and families. Interestingly, Au (1998, 2000) raised the possibility that factors in addition to cultural compatibility might be equally important to student outcomes, specifically instructional factors. Au and Mason (1981) noted the following about the research base at the time:

It has been implied that the presence of culturally congruent elements in lessons given to minority children may help to prevent damaging conflicts between teacher and students. This idea has much intuitive appeal, but we have very little evidence to support the notion that the presence of school situations resembling those in the home leads to improved academic achievement by minority children. (p. 150)

The most current comprehensive review of this issue is found in the report of the National Literacy Panel (August & Shanahan, 2006), which conducted a wide-ranging, evidence-based review of the research literature on the development of literacy among language minority children and youth. The Panel report covered a variety of topics related to the literacy acquisition of second language learners, including the development of literacy, cross-linguistic relationships, instructional approaches and professional development, and assessment. Of most concern to the present discussion, the report included a review of sociocultural factors in literacy development (Goldenberg, Rueda, & August, 2006a, 2006b; Rueda, August, & Goldenberg, 2006). Sociocultural factors were defined broadly, and the following questions examined:

1. What is the influence of immigration (generation status and immigration circumstances) on literacy development, defined broadly?
2. What is the influence of differences in discourse and interaction characteristics between children's homes and classrooms?
3. What is the influence of other sociocultural characteristics of students and teachers?
4. What is the influence of parents and families?
5. What is the influence of policies at the district, state, and federal levels?
6. What is the influence of language status or prestige?

One section of the report (Goldenberg et al., 2006b) examined these issues with the stipulation that some student outcome measure was included in the studies examined. This was purposely defined broadly to include any observational indicators, ethnographic descriptions, examples or analyses of student products, motivational measures, participation or engagement measures, self- or teacher reports, and standardized or quantitative measures. A total of 50 studies fit this criterion. A second section of the report focused on the same questions, but with no requirement for reported student outcomes, finding an additional 25 of the most relevant descriptive studies.

The aspect of the report with the most relevance to the present discussion focuses on the second question, specifically the impact of efforts to accommodate classroom instruction to cultural differences. The major conclusions from the report in this domain suggested the following. First, it is clear that there are differences between the interactional and discourse features, norms, and expectations of home/community and school for many culturally and linguistically diverse students. An especially rich descriptive literature paints a picture of how these differences are exhibited in classroom settings in a variety of activities. Second, surprisingly few studies have included student outcomes, and most of the available studies use proximal indicators of achievement (i.e., engagement) rather than direct measures of reading or literacy acquisition. Third, a large number of the existing studies are plagued by methodological issues, which include the following:

1. Insufficient specification about investigator time spent in the research setting.
2. Insufficient specification of data-collection techniques, data-analysis techniques, number of subjects, and number of observations.
3. Data not presented to confirm/disconfirm author's point of view explicitly.
4. No information about how representative examples were selected.
5. No information about the frequency or typicality of reported key occurrences.
6. No information about whether competing interpretations were considered and evaluated.
7. Insufficient triangulation across several data sources.
8. Making inferences and drawing conclusions not warranted by the data reported. (Goldenberg et al., 2006a, p. 260)

The report also indicated that some support exists for the impact of related factors such as culturally familiar text and/or language on reading comprehension. That is, students tend to understand more when it is in the language they know better and when the text they are reading deals with culturally recognizable content.

While the National Literacy Panel report is the most current and comprehensive review of the impact of cultural factors on literacy acquisition, admittedly it focused on second language learners and thus excluded other populations (Gay, 2000; Hollins & Oliver, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995; Lee, 2005b). The general conclusions reached in this report, however, do not change significantly even when other populations are considered. The current research base does not offer good guidance (other than general principles and plausible hypotheses along with descriptions of specific projects or sites where they have been used and accounts of the impact) for school personnel who are trying to consider cultural issues in literacy instruction.

It is important to recognize that lack of extensive evidence is not the same as negative evidence. In fact, many of the hypotheses regarding cultural accommodations and the influences of cultural processes on reading and literacy outcomes are highly plausible and likely. As noted above, it is certainly the case that differences between most classroom settings and the home and community settings are real and able to be documented for many students from diverse backgrounds. It should also be kept in mind that the extensive work in educational anthropology and related areas demonstrate that early views of these differences as deficits are misguided, and in fact the rich cultural and linguistic resources of students can be used advantageously to engage students in high level academic work (Gonzalez et al., 2005).

One reason there is not extensive evidence for the impact of cultural accommodations and culturally responsive instruction is that, as noted earlier, culture is difficult to define, at least in ways that allow for quantitative measurement and observation. By definition, culture is dynamic, contextually variable, and unevenly expressed (Erickson, 2004; Gallego, Cole, & LCHC, 2001). Moreover, because of strong ties to anthropology, a major focus has been on detailed and accurate description of social, cultural, and linguistic processes in specific settings and activities. The research has focused more on the "what is?" question regarding cultural processes and cultural factors rather than the "what are the effects of?" question.

However, there is another possible reason for the lack of research addressing the issue of impact related to cultural factors. This is the lack of theoretical or conceptual models relating social and cultural factors to student learning and other outcomes without trivializing or narrowly and artificially defining and measuring cultural processes. While Gee (2000) noted some convergence around key issues from a multitude of diverse disciplines and theoretical orientations that look at sociocultural factors in reading, there is no framework that can help tie the descriptive work on literacy with the more experimentally-based work on reading. The following section discusses some possibilities in this regard.

What Ties Cultural Factors To Reading and Literacy Outcomes?

As the previous section suggests, there does not appear to be a clear answer to this question, since conceptual models, especially those with clear instructional ties and connections to student learning, are missing. Thus this section offers some possibilities in this regard, in particular in the area of reading comprehension, which may be helpful in stimulating future work.

A Note on Reading Comprehension. The RAND Reading Study Group (2002) offered the following definition of reading comprehension:

The process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Comprehension has these elements: the reader,

the text, and the activity, or purpose for reading. These elements define a phenomenon—reading comprehension—that occurs within a larger sociocultural context that shapes and is shaped by the reader and that infuses each of the elements. All are influenced by the broader context. (p. xi)

In discussing the role of the reader, the report goes on to say:

The reader brings to the act of reading his or her cognitive capacities (attention, memory, critical analytic ability, inferencing, and visualization), motivation (a purpose for reading, interest in the content, self efficacy as a reader), knowledge (vocabulary, domain, and topic knowledge, linguistic and discourse knowledge, knowledge of comprehension strategies), and experiences. (p. xi–xii)

Where might comprehension break down for students from diverse language or cultural backgrounds? A preliminary list might include the following:

1. Attention—there may be differences in the cues students attend to in classroom instruction.
2. Encoding—the input from text, the teacher, or peer discussions may not be comprehensible because of language differences or because of differences in genre or vocabulary, or the formal register used in academic contexts or “academic English” (Bailey, 2007) or typical discourse patterns (Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979).
3. Strategic processing and self-regulation—because of the complex interplay among race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, students from some households may not have been exposed to large numbers of schooled adults who might model strategies useful in processing text.
4. Background knowledge—the knowledge and skills that students have acquired may not map easily onto that in curriculum materials or books or activities.
5. Motivation—students may come to school with different learning goals (Goldenberg, Galimore, Reese, & Garnier, 2001; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998), poor self-efficacy due to past academic experiences, or low task value because the structure or purpose of instructional activities do not map onto known experiences and abilities and interests.

In addition to these factors, language and cultural differences may influence how significant others such as teachers or peers respond to and interact with individual students, whether these differences are real or perceived. These differences may influence teacher expectations, for example, and result in differential treatment, thus mediating student participation, engagement, and other opportunities to learn. Given these possibilities, it is possible to hypothesize that cultural factors can have both primary intrapersonal effects on reading and literacy and secondary interpersonal effects. The former might be reflected by the impact on individual cognitive processes and motivational and affective states, while the latter might operate in a variety of interpersonal contexts or activity settings serving to facilitate or constrain participation and interaction. We will discuss each below, drawing on Rueda (2006).

Primary Intrapersonal Effects—Cognitive Processes. While most cognitive psychologists and information processing theorists consider basic human cognitive processes to be universal, there is some evidence that even basic processes may be influenced by cultural factors. Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (1999) suggested, “Prior knowledge also includes the kind of knowledge that learners acquire because of their social roles, such as those connected with race, class, gender, and their culture and ethnic affiliations” (p. 60). As one example, primacy (remembering

the first thing heard in a sequence) and recency (remembering the last thing heard) effects, often thought to reflect universal aspects of human memory performance, are influenced by cultural background and the type of schooling children have (Valsiner, 1988). Schooling may influence even basic, seemingly universal, cognitive processes such as visual-perceptual processing, attention, and visual and verbal memory (Cole & Scribner, 1977; Ostrovsky-Solis, Ramirez, & Ardilia, 2004; Rogoff, 1981).

In the domain of reading, recent work on cognitive load theory seems especially relevant in the attempt to link cultural processes with cognitive and academic outcomes. A major focus of this work is the capacity limitations of working memory (Paas, Renkl, & Sweller, 2003; Sweller, 1988; Sweller, van Merriënboer, & Paas, 1998). This work focuses on how constraints in working memory help determine what types of instruction are effective. A basic tenet of cognitive load theory is that learning is mediated by human limitations on working memory capacity, and processing and/or storage not directly relevant for learning makes it less efficient. When this occurs, working memory capacity is taxed (i.e., cognitive load is high) and thus learning is negatively affected. These limitations in working memory can be reduced, in part, by enabling the use of schemas, an organization that incorporates multiple elements of information into a single element with a single function stored in long term memory (LTM), enabling a learner to process information more efficiently.

LTM contains huge amounts of domain-specific knowledge structures (including culturally specific knowledge) that can be described as hierarchically organized schemas allowing one to categorize different problem states and decide the most appropriate solution to a given problem. This might include important issues as what is considered a problem to solve in the first place, how to frame or mentally represent the problem to be solved, or what solutions would be considered appropriate.

Another way in which cognitive load can be reduced is when cognitive processes operate automatically rather than under conscious control. Automatic processing of schemas requires minimal working memory resources and allows problem solving to proceed with minimal effort. In the domain of reading, as an example, difficulties in decoding make the processing of text very difficult for a reader, such that the cognitive load is high. Reading fluency, however, helps reduce the cognitive demand and thus makes text comprehension easier for the reader.

Categories of Cognitive Load. Cognitive load theory specifies different types of cognitive load with very different and instructionally relevant features. *Intrinsic cognitive load* refers to the demands on working memory capacity intrinsic to the material being learned such as a specific text. Different materials or learning activities differ in their level of intrinsic cognitive load, and modifying instruction cannot change this. Changing a task so that it is a simpler learning task that omits some interacting elements, however, can reduce the cognitive load and thus the efficiency of the learning. A basic finding regarding human cognition is that working memory—where all conscious cognitive processing is thought to occur—can handle no more than two or three novel interacting elements. In contrast, LTM is made up of schemas. Such organization helps lighten the load—bringing the schema from LTM into working memory means only one element must be processed, even though the schema may incorporate many interacting elements. Thus schemas accomplish the same purpose as a factor analysis in a statistical context—simplifying many things into fewer so it is simpler to process and less draining on the available resources.

Extraneous or ineffective cognitive load is due to the manner in which information is presented or the nature of the learning activities. Ineffective cognitive load imposes an unnecessary burden on learning. Most instructional design work, where cognitive load theory has been most frequently applied, has focused on trying to reduce extraneous cognitive load because it is amenable to instructional characteristics. Extraneous cognitive load is primarily important when intrinsic cognitive load is high (i.e., reading a difficult or complex text) because the two forms

of cognitive load are additive. If intrinsic cognitive load is low (as with simple recreational text), levels of extraneous cognitive load may be less important because the total cognitive load may not exceed working memory capacity.

Germane or effective cognitive load refers to demands placed on working memory capacity by mental activities that contribute directly to learning, defined in cognitive load theory as schema acquisition and automation. Germane cognitive load enhances learning and is influenced by instructional design. Also, increases in effort or motivation can increase the cognitive resources devoted to a task. If these additional resources are relevant to schema acquisition and automation, it also constitutes an increase in germane cognitive load.

Applications to Cultural Accommodations and Reading Comprehension Instruction. An important principle in this work is that intrinsic, extraneous, and germane cognitive load are additive, and furthermore, the total load cannot exceed working memory resources available if learning is going to occur. Culture can be thought of (admittedly narrowly, but for purposes of the current discussion) as an automated schema that helps simplify cognitive demands in everyday tasks and activities. If every behavior or thought or sentence were novel, the cognitive demands would be very high. However, familiar schemas lighten this load, and when these are automated, cognitive load is further reduced. Thus, being in a culturally familiar setting is relatively effortless compared with being in a strange cultural setting. A culturally unfamiliar text (because of unfamiliar text structure or unfamiliar concepts or ideas) could impose intrinsic cognitive load even if the text could be decoded. In addition, culturally familiar materials, settings, and activities may help focus attention in ways that might promote learning. In essence, focusing one's attention represents more efficient and task-relevant use of those scarce resources in the limited working memory store.

The applications of this work to conceptualizing cultural accommodations and reading comprehension specifically should be apparent. In essence, culturally unfamiliar reading materials and texts, reading-related activities, and even ways of talking and speaking during reading instruction may represent sources of extraneous cognitive load and thus make learning less efficient and more burdensome. Recall that the different types of cognitive load are additive. Therefore, as the total cognitive load surpasses the capacity of the cognitive system, learning and comprehension will suffer. In essence, cognitive load may serve as a mediator between external cultural and sociocultural factors and environments on the one hand and internal cognitive processes on the other to facilitate or diminish learning. Cultural unfamiliarity with specific tasks, texts, discourse and interactional processes, and other important classroom features may therefore lead to the types of negative outcomes that the descriptive literature reviewed earlier has so long suggested. The reverse situation is likewise possible, whereby the cultural schemas some students bring to classroom learning activities advantage them in ways that reduce cognitive load and thus make learning more efficient. Thus, as many authors have suggested, when culturally responsive instruction is introduced, students can access their relevant schemas or "funds of knowledge" (Moll & Gonzalez, 2004) in such a way that extraneous cognitive load is reduced.

Rueda (2006) termed the processes just described "facilitative encoding". Under ideal circumstances, where students' cultural knowledge helps them access text and classroom activities, extraneous and thus overall cognitive load should be reduced in ways that facilitate learning and comprehension. Thus, while culturally compatible instruction and classroom settings may make students feel better about being there, which is not a trivial consideration, these approaches may also make tasks more comprehensible and amenable to connections with existing prior knowledge. A somewhat related concept from the literature on second language acquisition, comprehensible input, has long been proposed as an important instructional principle for second language learners (Krashen, 1982). If the preceding argument holds true, teachers of students

from diverse backgrounds need to be well informed about the cultural knowledge that their students bring to school, and the ways in which reading materials, instructional activities, and other aspects of comprehension instruction can serve to unduly increase cognitive load, leading to impaired learning. Similarly, it also suggests that children's existing schemas can be broadened such that previously unfamiliar material, activities, and settings are well integrated into long term memory.

Primary Intrapersonal Effects—Motivational Processes. Motivation has often been considered as a trait inherent to students. Contemporary motivational theory, in contrast, has focused on one's context-specific personal beliefs around specific tasks and activities and one's ability to engage in those tasks. Schunk, Pintrich, and Meece (2008) suggest that the central indicators of motivation include active choice, persistence, and mental effort, all of which are assumed to impact achievement. While there is wide agreement on these indices of motivation, motivation theory in general comprises a family of related theories rather than one singular theory. Thus, because the aim of this chapter is heuristic, not all possible motivational variables will be addressed. Rather, we will attempt to illustrate how motivational processes can be linked to cultural processes. One motivation theory that has been particularly influential is known as expectancy x value theory, and because of its relevance to the discussion, it will be the focus here.

A Social-Cognitive Expectancy Value Perspective on Motivation. Eccles and Wigfield and their colleagues (Eccles, 1983, 1987, 1993; Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Wigfield, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, 2000) outlined the motivational framework known as expectancy x value theory, which focuses on two key components of motivation. Expectancy is how well one expects to do on a given task, and value is how much one values a given task or activity. In this framework, greatly simplified here because of space limitations, aspects of the social world (cultural milieu, socializers' behaviors, and past performances) influence motivational beliefs (task value and expectancy) and individuals' cognitive processes (perceptions of the social environment and causal attributions), which in turn produce motivated behavior (active choice, persistence, mental effort) (Schunk et al., 2008). The key aspects of an expectancy x value approach are explained below.

The value component of this theory focuses on beliefs related to how individuals answer the question, "Why should I do this task?" There are four basic aspects of task value, including interest, importance, utility, and cost. Expectancy, on the other hand, refers to beliefs related to the question, "Am I able to do this task?" and the basic aspects include self-efficacy, perceived task difficulty, and causal attribution. The assumption here is that cultural factors (i.e., familiarity or unfamiliarity) can shape one or more of these motivational variables and thus mediate one's choice of activities, effort, and persistence. In cases where students have strong expectations for being successful in a task or activity and have high value and interest, engagement will be increased and vice versa. Thus, in culturally compatible situations, students may believe they are more likely to succeed and the task is less difficult, and attribute errors to lack of effort rather than lack of ability. They may also be more interested and believe the task or materials are more important, that mastering the task has some usefulness in other situations, and that the task will not require an unreasonable amount of effort. Thus cultural factors impact student outcomes and achievement at least in part through their mediation of basic motivational processes. Similar to facilitative encoding, which focuses on cognitive factors, the parallel here in the motivational arena can be termed "facilitative engagement."

In a comprehensive review of current work and issues in motivation, Pintrich (2003) outlined key motivational generalizations based on current research and theory. These include: (a) adaptive self-efficacy and competence beliefs motivate students, (b) adaptive attributions and

control beliefs motivate students, (c) higher levels of interest and intrinsic motivation motivate students, (d) higher levels of value motivate students, and (e) goals motivate and direct students (p. 672).

It can be hypothesized that culturally compatible instruction and culturally responsive learning environments and materials can have a significant impact on these key motivational areas and thus mediate student participation in ways that help (or hinder) their reading, comprehension, and ultimately achievement. Consistent with this hypothesis, some of the descriptive research on cultural factors described increased student engagement as a product of culturally compatible teaching (Au, 1980). While engagement is not necessarily the same as achievement, fostering engagement is not a trivial concern. A robust literature, in fact, suggests that mental effort is associated with motivational beliefs such as interest (Salomon, 1984), and that academic engagement and other "achievement-related behaviors" are associated with measured achievement (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004) and reading comprehension in particular (Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie et al., 2006).

In addition to cognitive and motivational intrapersonal ways in which cultural processes can impact reading and comprehension, a social constructivist perspective would suggest that intrapersonal processes play a role as well. These are discussed next.

Secondary Interpersonal Effects—Social Processes. These effects can be thought of as influences on individual learning mediated by the processes and organization of the social context. That is, the nature of students' participation in classroom activities has a major impact on learning (Lave & Wenger, 1998; Rogoff, 1991, 1995; Rogoff, Baker-Sennett, Lacasa, & Goldsmith, 1995; Wenger, 1999). These mediating effects might be reflected through social interactions with others in places like classrooms, and may ultimately influence important factors such as opportunity to learn through diminished participation, negative interactions with teachers, etc. (Cazden, 1985). There is evidence that everything a teacher does has a motivational impact on students (Stipek, 1996). Teachers' beliefs about their ability to teach and about their students' learning abilities and cognitive abilities influence their relationships with students (Davis, 2003). This is reflected in areas such as type of feedback given, the use of reward structures, praise and criticism, help, and overall classroom climate (Schunk et al., 2008). One way this may operate in classroom settings is when teachers or school personnel such as psychologists interpret the performance of culturally diverse students as reflective of cognitive or linguistic deficiencies because of nonmainstream discourse and/or interactional patterns (Labov, 1982; Lee, 2005b, 2007).

This section has outlined some possible mechanisms to begin connecting cultural processes and cultural differences, such as those found in many classroom settings, with cognitive and motivational factors which ultimately connect to achievement. As the overview of research in this area suggests, such factors have long been hypothesized to play a role in the lagging performance in reading and literacy of students of color. The work has been primarily qualitative in nature, however, for reasons outlined earlier, and there is no strong causally oriented research base linking such factors to student outcomes. The nature of the construct makes it difficult to manipulate experimentally. Equally important, however, is the lack of a theoretical framework to suggest possible mechanisms that link cultural processes and learning. Given the lack of models that might guide such research, we made suggestions for ways in which cultural factors might impact learning. These included primary intrapersonal effects, including facilitative encoding and facilitative engagement, focusing on cognitive and motivational factors respectively. In addition, we described secondary interpersonal effects, focusing on ways that social and interactional processes can be mediated by cultural factors and thus constrain or facilitate student participation and the nature of day-to-day interactions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY, PRACTICE, POLICY, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Research and Theoretical Concerns

One interesting observation related to the treatment of cultural processes in the literature is that cultural factors are often discussed solely with reference to students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as opposed to being a pervasive feature of all human activity. In addition, culture is often treated as a function of students primarily, rather than as a feature that permeates social contexts and learning processes in classrooms and schools. Although culture has been a consistent concern of previous volumes of the *Handbook of Reading Research*, there is still a significant amount that we do not know. As noted earlier, previous research focused more on the descriptive “what is” type of questions through careful, contextualized description of specific cultural settings and processes involving reading and literacy. This has been augmented by work that attempted to adjust classroom teaching and classroom settings to make them more culturally responsive to students, most often through various forms of cultural accommodations. In addition, over time, there has been a trend away from negative views of students’ cultural practices from home and community toward using these cultural practices as an instructional resource.

The task remaining is to develop a knowledge base that allows instructional practices developed in this fashion to be more strategic, and theoretically and empirically driven. From a research perspective, a significant need in the field is to examine more systematically the impact of cultural factors, to provide better guidance to teachers and schools. Part of the challenge in this regard is reducing or eliminating the cognitive-cultural divide, and building models that will integrate work from different perspectives—including models that speak to how cultural factors should or might impact reading and literacy processes specifically. It also involves connecting work on cultural processes and practices with work on learning. Consideration of a learning framework allows the development of specific testable hypotheses and provides some guidance about relevant constructs to assess and/or manipulate when considering literacy in general and reading comprehension instruction in particular. There are some examples of attempts to address multiple interacting dimensions of determinants of student achievement (e.g., Fredericks et al., 2004).

From a research perspective, questions of interest include:

1. Do culturally responsive teaching practices reduce cognitive load in learning activities? If so, does this result in better achievement?
2. Which types of accommodations are the most effective in mediating cognitive load?
3. Does the systematic use of culturally relevant text produce higher student engagement and/or outcomes (greater interest and task value, thus impacting the choice to read more, to persist at reading tasks, to exert more effort with challenging text, and finally to increased comprehension)?
4. Does culturally accommodated instruction lead to higher self-efficacy, or facilitate connections to prior knowledge, thus decreasing cognitive load?
5. Do features of culturally accommodated instructional routines or activities increase student interest, importance, and utility, thus influencing choice, persistence, or effort?

These and many other related questions have not been extensively explored to date, with a few notable exceptions (Au, 1980, 2000; Lee, 2005a). Instructional and curriculum designers are left to rely on intuition or educated guesses regarding if, when, and how to design and implement these approaches. Systematic work drawing on current understandings of learning and motivation promises to help unravel these questions. As this work on cultural factors becomes

more integrated into mainstream reading and literacy research, we need to see that it begins to be reflected in state and federal reading policy as well.

Instructional Considerations

Sociocultural theorists (Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000; Lee & Ball, 2005) remind us that learning and achievement are not solely a function of individual students and intrinsic characteristics, but rather reside in the interaction between the student and the environment. When students come to school with nontraditional backgrounds, those educators who try to facilitate literacy and reading comprehension processes need to systematically consider the learning and motivational implications of the classroom activities and materials they provide. Currently, the research base does not permit offering guidance (other than general principles) for school personnel who are trying to consider cultural issues in literacy instruction. The work of authors such as Gallimore and Goldenberg (2001), Gutierrez and Stone (2000), Lee (2000), and Rogoff (2003) on cultural models suggested that at a minimum the following types of questions would be important to explore in order to form the foundation of culturally responsive pedagogy that many have argued for (Au, 2000; Gay, 2000):

1. What is the range and nature of cultural settings that a learner has had experience with?
2. Who are/were the participants?
3. What is the range and nature of things people do or did in those settings? (This can bring in all of the traditional sociocultural influences, such as ethnicity, race, gender, socio-economic status, etc., without having to make monolithic judgments about individual characteristics based on group labels—the answers to these questions provides a window into how these factors operate a specific individual but not for an entire group).
4. Based on experience in these settings, what types of cultural models have individuals developed?

In terms of classroom settings, parallel concerns might include:

1. What are the typical and characteristic activity settings in this school and classroom? How are they structured?
2. How and when do they occur?
3. Who participates?
4. What are the cultural models that characterize this classroom or school?

Teachers well informed regarding these questions have at a minimum a principled way and an empirical base for modifications in instruction that will maximize the cultural resources of their students.

We should keep in mind that although the focus on cultural factors in reading and literacy is increasingly prominent in the research literature, problematic aspects of how culture has been treated in the past need to be avoided, including the following:

1. Making monolithic judgments about entire groups (often around racial and/or ethnic lines) without considering within-group and individual differences.
2. Focusing on surface features of culture.
3. Focusing on presumed culturally related variables that have failed to show a relationship to learning such as learning styles.
4. Treating culture as a deficit rather than a resource in learning.

5. Equating group labels, especially racial and ethnic group labels, with cultural characteristics.
6. Assuming cultural influences operate rigidly in all settings.
7. Relying on presumed characteristics without considering empirical validation.

Erickson (2004) noted that the presence of cultural differences in society does not necessarily lead to conflict or problems in school or other social and organizational settings. Rather, conflict is dependent on whether cultural differences are treated as a boundary or a border. Boundaries, which are to be expected, are simply a reflection of the presence of cultural differences. Borders, on the other hand, are social constructs, political in origin, involving the arbitrary exercise of power or authority of one group over another. It is when boundaries are treated as borders, when one's cultural knowledge is scrutinized or "stopped and frisked," as Erickson notes, that problems may arise. While there are descriptive accounts of how these processes operate in classroom settings, we know little about how to overcome these effects in educationally advantageous ways.

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