

# UC Berkeley

## L2 Journal

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Critical Perspectives on Neoliberalism in Language Education

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A Special Issue of *L2 Journal*  
**Critical Perspectives on Neoliberalism in Language Education**  
Call for Abstracts

Guest editors: Katie Bernstein, Emily Hellmich, Noah Katznelson, Jaran Shin, Kimberly Vinall

Language is increasingly understood as a commodified skill that allows learners, seen as language entrepreneurs, to compete in the global marketplace. Language teaching has become increasingly privatized through the emergence of a global industry that presents language in pre-packaged, standardized forms in response to the needs of the free market. As language becomes both a target—as a technicized skill—and an instrument of neoliberalization, language education finds itself caught in the crossfire. Neoliberal ideology and policy affect decisions about which languages to teach and to learn, when, where, and to whom languages are taught, and how to teach them.

This special issue seeks to build on previous work related to globalization, language standardization, multilingual subjectivities, and linguistic imperialism, amongst other related topics. By situating these discussions within the frame of neoliberal ideologies and practices this issue seeks to critically explore the historically situated ways in which neoliberal discourse has influenced the field of language education in order to open up spaces for critical reflection and action.

#### ISSUE FOCUS

We invite both theoretical submissions that explore the relationship between neoliberalism and language education as well as empirical submissions (e.g. case studies) that focus on the effects of neoliberalism in specific contexts impacting L2 and TESOL/ESL teachers and learners. These contexts may range from the scale of a single language classroom—K-12, university, adult education; second language, foreign language, heritage language—to the scale of national or international language policies. Articles in this special issue, therefore, might explore:

1. Language policy: How does neoliberalism influence language policies on a national or international level? How does this intersect with colonialism, globalization, and postcolonialism? How is English bound up with neoliberalism?
2. Educational philosophy (such as competitive models): How does neoliberalism influence philosophies of education, particularly language education?
3. Curriculum: How does neoliberalism structure and organize curriculum and assessment?
4. Teaching and learning practices: How does neoliberalism seep into classroom practices? How does neoliberal education produce subjects? How do these processes intersect with constructions of race, class, gender, and/or sexuality?

We especially invite articles that investigate neoliberalism's operation on multiple scales and the relationship between scales (e.g. the effects of neoliberalized language policies on curriculum, the effects of curriculum on teaching, teaching on identities, etc.), as well as articles that address the possibility of resistance and influence from subjects and local practices.

#### SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Please submit a 300-word abstract to [L2specialissue@gmail.com](mailto:L2specialissue@gmail.com) by **February 28, 2014**. Inquiries can be directed to the same address. Authors will be notified of abstract acceptance by March 30. Manuscripts will be due August 15.

#### THE *L2 JOURNAL*

The *L2 Journal* is a fully refereed, interdisciplinary journal, which aims to promote the research and the practice of language learning and teaching. It publishes articles in English on all aspects of applied linguistics broadly conceived, i.e., second language acquisition, second language pedagogy, bilingualism and multilingualism, language and technology, curriculum development and teacher training, testing and evaluation. All manuscripts are peer reviewed.

