



Legitimising disciplinary literacy: rewriting the rules of the literacy game and enhancing secondary teachers' professional habitus

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Abstract

This paper takes up key questions of this special issue regarding tensions and challenges in the field of literacy education by exploring how literary knowledge and skills intersect with subject area teachers' disciplinary ontologies and epistemologies. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's thinking tools, we analyse how literacy across the curriculum has been approached in policy and practice terms in recent decades, particularly in the context of neoliberal reforms and increasing accountability cultures. We then discuss the implications and limits of these approaches for teacher identity and professionalism, and using two initiatives in both pre-service and in-service contexts as examples, we consider ways of reconsidering the field of disciplinary literacy and the habitus of subject experts, so that secondary teachers might be best placed to support diverse learners in their classrooms.

Keywords Disciplinary literacy · Teacher expertise · Bourdieu

1 Introduction

While there is general agreement that *all teachers are teachers of literacy* (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Humphrey, 2017), how literacy learning might be embedded across the curriculum areas in the secondary years of schooling, and the institutional and policy mechanisms needed to support this, has been the focus of ongoing debate and intervention since the

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1980s. Despite the efforts to integrate literacy across the curriculum and a range of incentives to enhance students' literacy learning in secondary subjects, teaching literacy remains a key issue for governments and school systems (Kelly et al., 2019; Kostogriz & Doecke, 2013). Since the mid-1990s, the genre approach to literacy has been widely adopted in Australia. Building on Michael Halliday's (1985) functional language model in social contexts, the genre approach to literacy foregrounds how a text's social purposes impact language use. By doing so, genre approaches to literacy aim to educate students about linguistic choices, thereby providing them access to privileged discourses within their culture (Derewianka, 2015).

More recently, developments in literacy education, particularly in the secondary context, have built on the genre approach to focus on disciplinary literacy approaches (Moje, 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Whereas genre approaches support students in understanding the social function and linguistic features of a given text, disciplinary literacy approaches support students in understanding the specialised literacy skills of a given discipline area. In this way, disciplinary literacy recognises the increasing specialisation of literacy development across the school years, from basic literacy development in lower primary school to intermediate literacy (which includes generic comprehension strategies) in upper primary through to disciplinary literacy in secondary schools (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). In addition, disciplinary literacy emphasises the role of literacy in enabling students to make meaning in ways that are valued by discipline experts, and the recognition that each secondary school subject has its own 'characteristic patterns of language that present new forms, purposes, and processing demands' (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010, p. 591). Put another way, distinctive literacy demands require that students are supported to read, write, speak, and listen in a way that construes their knowledge of the discipline (Accurso & Gebhard, 2021; Brisk, 2014; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Moje, 2008; Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006).

In this paper, we draw on the sociological theories of Pierre Bourdieu to offer insights into why efforts to enhance and support literacy across the curriculum in the secondary years of schooling are yet to gain traction fully in Australia. We argue that while the focus on the ways that literacy across the curriculum can benefit students' academic achievement, it has resulted in attention to the new knowledge and understanding subject teachers need to develop, rather than drawing from the expertise they currently possess. We contend that introducing literacy specialists, such as coaches, has had significant and detrimental implications for some teachers' disciplinary professional identity and, therefore, the project of embedding literacy across the curriculum.

Drawing on Bourdieu's key terms field, habitus, cultural capital, legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1993), the rules of the game and symbolic violence (Hussey, 2010), we explore how the field of disciplinary literacy has been framed in policy and practice and taken up by teachers and schools. Reading with Bourdieu offers the opportunity to think differently about the ongoing challenges of promoting literacy across the curriculum and, in doing so, to re-orient the concepts and practices of disciplinary literacy to effect lasting and ongoing change. We explore how existing interventions across the domains of curriculum, teacher standards and institutional structures challenge secondary teachers' sense of professional disciplinary identity and expertise, often inadvertently amplifying tensions between literacy and disciplinarity and reinforcing a more generalised approach to literacy. We argue that paying attention to issues of teachers' sense of disciplinary epistemology, ontology, identity and expertise offers us key insights regarding the way forward for supporting literacy across the curriculum in the secondary years. To this end, in the final part of the paper, we share understandings from initiatives undertaken in pre-service education, in partnership with schools, and the context of

teacher professional learning projects undertaken in partnership with two state education departments in Australia. All initiatives seek to (re)locate disciplinary literacy knowledge at the centre of subject area teachers' expertise.

2 Using Bourdieu to think with literacy across the curriculum

The value of Pierre Bourdieu's work to the field of literacy studies is well known and has been taken up in a range of ways by literacy scholars. For example, Bourdieu's work has been deployed widely in research to explain the field and activities of literacy education (Heller, 2011; Albright & Luke, 2010; Grenfell, 2007) and, more specifically, the way literacy is mobilised to maintain mono-cultural capital through the selection of texts (Bliss & Bacalja, 2021; Teese et al., 1995; McLean Davies, 2012); writing assessment (Frawley & Davies, 2015); reading practices (Loh & Sun, 2020); and literacy policy (Luke, 2009; Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). Grenfell (2007) argues that this take-up of Bourdieu's work by literacy scholars can be attributed to his theories of *habitus*—the unconscious dispositions that guide an individual's actions and preference in social situations—and *field*—the context of these social interactions and discourse communities—which can be so clearly applied to language and linguistics (Grenfell in Grenfell & James, 2003, p. 74). This is because 'linguistic relations are always relations of symbolic power through which the relations of power between speakers and their respective groups come into being' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 188). Additionally, Bourdieu's concepts of the *rules of the game* and *symbolic violence* have clear resonance for literacy and language research in the twenty-first century. Within the socio-linguistic field, the rules of the game refer to the expectations for behaviour and interactions that bestow legitimacy on individuals. At the same time, symbolic violence entails the often-unconscious actions that inform an individual's habitus and prompt them, singularly and in groups, to silence, marginalise and disempower those who do not play by the established rules.

In the following sections, we will think with Bourdieu's conceptual tools to interrogate why disciplinary literacy approaches remain difficult to embed and sustain across education systems. We will investigate how teachers have been positioned by policy and institutional approaches to enact and integrate literacy across the curriculum and the impact these approaches have had on subject area teachers' professional and disciplinary habitus and sense of professional legitimacy, or illegitimacy. Through analysis of how disciplinary literacy has been presented to subject specialists over time and supported in schools in recent decades through coaching and mentoring programs, we argue that such approaches to literacy across the curriculum shift the rules of the games and enact a form of symbolic violence against a disciplinary habitus. It is important to note, of course, that other scholars have also used Bourdieu's concepts to interrogate issues at the intersection of disciplinary knowledge and literacy knowledge and practices. For example, Alvermann et al. (2011) used a Bourdieusian framework to explore mathematics teachers' approach to content area reading instruction. Our approach builds on and expands this work as it uses Bourdieu's critical frame at the level of field analysis—on the curricula rendering and institutional enactment of literacy across the curriculum—and the possible implications for subject area teachers' professional disciplinary habitus.

3 Literacy in a disciplinary field: challenges of current policy and practice

Literacy across the curriculum approaches is designed to support students' access to cultural capital (Clarke & Eastgate, 2011)—the capital that can be accessed through literacy education. In this way, one can argue that literacy across the curriculum approaches mobilises the field of literacy to unmask the *hidden* curriculum (Bourdieu, 1990) and expose the rules of the literacy 'game'. This was arguably the modus operandi of the Australian genre school (Halliday, 1991; Martin & Maton, 2013), which sought to expose the standard structures and genres of schooling so that students from 'disadvantaged' backgrounds would have explicit teaching in the forms of language that are affirmed and rewarded by schools. The key issue here was to note the commonality of structures across disciplines and promote a specific understanding of these structures (Martin, 1999; Jones & Derewianka, 2016).

While educational research has explored the benefits of introducing a more focused, disciplinary literacy approach (see, for example, Moje, 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008), this has yet to be fully realised in Australian schools. Many schools still adopt a generalised literacy across the curriculum approach, emphasising what Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) label 'intermediate' literacy skills, such as critiquing authorial intent, understanding more complex forms of text organisation, and awareness of generic conventions. While intermediate literacy supports more sophisticated responses (whether in terms of comprehension or creation), they are not closely aligned with disciplinary specialisations (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Although the movement to a disciplinary approach may seem a subtle shift, from a more generalised understanding of literacy to a more specific one, the difference for subject area teachers is substantive. A generalised understanding of literacy requires teachers to buy in, and value adds to their teaching practice, expanding but not reinterpreting how they teach their disciplinary content by promoting disciplinary practices in relation to reading, writing, speaking and listening. A more specific, disciplinary approach, however, requires teachers to closely interrogate, and in some cases rethink, their own disciplinary knowledge in light of disciplinary literacy understandings.

Although scholarship has continued to argue for the value of students developing disciplinary literacy, literacy performance remains of concern globally (although tests designed to measure this do not necessarily measure disciplinary literacy—see assessment paper in this special edition). The parlous state of literacy, as it is accounted for through high-stakes tests, has doubtlessly contributed to the greater examination of teachers' practices and knowledge in this area, a focus that resonates more broadly with investigations into teacher quality (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Alter & Coggshall, 2009). Indeed, research into teachers' literacy pedagogical practices in secondary schools often emphasised teachers' lack of understanding of both disciplinary literacy and subject content (Fang & Coatoam, 2013; Moje, 2015, 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008, 2012), with scholarly recommendations suggesting more time spent in understanding the intersections between literacy and subject knowledge (Barry, 2002; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). In this way, reports on teachers' disciplinary literacy knowledge could be read as paternalistic and/or punitive. Considered in this light, it is not difficult to see why subject-area teachers might resist and resent a focus on literacy across the curriculum (Konza & Michael, 2010). It is worth, therefore, considering the policy and institutional/structural and personal factors that impact secondary teachers' attitudes towards and take-up of disciplinary literacy understandings and approaches.

4 Disciplinary habitus and secondary teachers

It is well established that many secondary teachers are motivated to become teachers because of the opportunity to inspire young people to learn about their specialist areas (Lipka & Brinhaupt, 1999; Lortie, 1975; Tusin, 1999). Further, it is important to note that to qualify to become a teacher in a discipline area, an aspiring teacher must have completed a certain number of disciplinary subjects in their undergraduate study deemed ‘legitimate’ by university entrance panels and/or teacher regulatory bodies (AITSL, 2018, 2019; TEMAG, 2014). Thus, when secondary pre-service teachers enter pre-service programs, their professional habitus, and capital, is already established as strongly disciplinary. By contrast, primary teachers in Australia and other parts of the world have not traditionally been required to have specialist knowledge when entering pre-service programs, but are prepared for ‘generalist’ teaching, although this has been the focus of debate in various Western countries for at least the last decade (Arzdejewska et al., 2010). In pre-service primary education programs, the notion of preparing generalist teachers means that literacy, along with other core curriculum areas such as science and mathematics, is given equal and substantive weight. In contrast, in Australian secondary pre-service teacher education programs, literacy is given far less academic and practical course time than the ‘methods’ or learning areas that a pre-service teacher is preparing to teach, contributing to a sense of literacy as outside and in addition to disciplinary knowledge (Maniaci & Chandler-Olcott, 2010). Literacy subjects, in this context, potentially occupy a place of tension in Australian initial teacher education (ITE) degrees. Although all ITE degrees would argue that literacy is central to learning and that disciplinary literacy is fundamental to successful educational outcomes, those who coordinate and teach into these subjects tend to be literacy, rather than disciplinary, specialists, which inadvertently positions literacy as outside rather than inside a discipline area.

This notion of literacy as external to disciplines and skills-based is powerfully reinforced, through the mandated literacy and numeracy tests that are set externally to ITE programs, such as the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) test which was introduced in Australia following reviews into quality teacher preparation and quality teaching (TEMAG, 2014). These tests significantly changed the ‘rules of the game’ in that they required teachers to pass a test external to their university course to gain entry to the profession, elevating literacy and numeracy as core skills teachers must have to legitimately be ready for the classroom. Significantly, though, these high-stakes tests focus PSTs’ attention on literacy as personal and external, rather than disciplinary, and necessarily connected with their professional and developing teacher habitus.

The importance of the learning areas in the Australian context and related disciplinary pedagogical content knowledge is further affirmed by the weight both ITE programs and secondary PSTs themselves place on the practicum (Zeichner, 2012), which occurs in learning areas, with a ‘mentor’ teacher assigned to provide the PST guidance and practice within the relevant curriculum areas. In practice and through a disciplinary perspective, PSTs feel they are learning the rules of the game, not just about their specialist subjects, but about the ways school ecologies and educational communities function. Mentor teachers have substantive actual and symbolic power, as ultimately, they have a core responsibility for assessing the PST’s readiness to teach, primarily within a disciplinary context. Additionally, it cannot be guaranteed that the mentoring teachers (who are chosen or nominated for this role because of their disciplinary expertise) have embraced disciplinary literacy perspectives. This, of course,

does not mean that mentor teachers are not experts in their discipline, but that the shared language of disciplinary literacy may not be visible or prioritised.

5 Standards, curriculum, and assessment—shaping literacy legitimacy in secondary schools

On one level, the demarcation of duties regarding literacy and disciplinary preparation often seen in ITE programs reflects the ways literacy is managed in Australian schools (which we will discuss further below) and reflects the expertise of the academics leading core aspects of ITE programs. On another level, though, in the context of the implementation of Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2018), the separation of literacy and disciplinary subject knowledge can be understood as pragmatic: it ensures that all standards are being ‘met’ and are visible to regulators. For example, standard 2, ‘Know the content and how to teach it’ is divided into six sub-sections. Sub-section 2.1 addresses the ‘Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area’ and requires teachers to ‘Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, substance and structure of the content and teaching strategies of the teaching area.’ At the same time, 2.5 pertains particularly to literacy and numeracy strategies and requires teachers to ‘Know and understand literacy and numeracy teaching strategies and their application in teaching areas’ (AITSL, 2018, n.p). The language of 2.5 gestures to a more generalised understanding of literacy: it is ‘applied’ rather than embedded and central to disciplinary knowledge. While literacy is more explicitly articulated as the ‘responsibility’ of all subject teachers in the UK version of teacher professional standards, these standards also position literacy in more general rather than disciplinary terms. Specifically, standard 3: ‘Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge’ emphasises that all teachers must ‘promot[e] high standards of literacy, articulation, and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher’s specialist subject’ (Department for Education, 2021, p. 11). Thus, while literacy is emphasised in Professional Standards across the career stages, in Australia and the UK, the focus on skills effectively positions literacy as generalised, supporting rather than embedded in disciplinary content.

While pre-service teachers are required to take generalised literacy and numeracy tests in Australia, Australian students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are similarly mandated to participate in the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). As discussed in this edition, NAPLAN testing was designed to measure students’ core literacy and numeracy skills to provide ‘a general national perspective on student achievement’ with a particular focus on ‘how their schools are performing’ (Lingard et al., 2013, p. 539). Generally understood as a measure for student learning, in the same way that the pre-service LANTITE test is one proxy for teacher readiness for practice, the NAPLAN tests also reinforce literacy as a generalised set of skills. This is significant in that NAPLAN reading, writing and language tests (the most extensive of the suite) and the associated MYSchool website (ACARA, 2021) exert considerable pressure on teachers as measures of performance in relation to school funding, teacher and school reputation and target setting for student outcomes.

Considerable research shows teachers attend to the demand to deliver highly visible student outcomes that show improvement when measured against performance standards: ultimately, national testing influences not only what teachers ‘do’ in the classroom but also the professional identity of teachers as educators (Ball, 2003; Lewis & Hardy, 2017; Perryman et al., 2011). In the secondary years of schooling, it is English and mathematics teachers who are

considered best placed to support students with test preparation. Thus, the structure and expectations of these tests impact significantly on the curriculum in these subjects (for a discussion of subject English, see Frawley & Davies, 2015). Tellingly, practice tests, produced by commercial publishers, are often set on schoolbook lists in these subjects in the years the test is administered. In terms of literacy, high-stakes testing thus has the effect of both enforcing a generalised understanding of literacy as the highest form of literacy capital at school (as opposed to the more sophisticated approach offered by disciplinary literacy) and positioning the development of these skills in the field of English teaching, rather than across the curriculum.

The possibilities of disciplinary literacy are also somewhat undermined by the Australian Curriculum, which was developed, notably, after the national-wide NAPLAN testing regime (Doecke et al., 2018). Indeed, the 2014 review of the curriculum and its implementation indicated that the Australian Curriculum needed to align with the NAPLAN tests (ACARA, 2014). While ‘literacy’ is a general capability in this first national curriculum, it is also an organising learning strand within subject English. Further, close analysis of an early iteration of the curriculum revealed a basic and generalised understanding of literacy (Lu & Cross, 2014). In the current revised version of the Australian Curriculum, this tension has yet to be resolved: the emendations and additional annotations explicating literacy as a general capability arguably further exacerbate this issue and emphasise the bifurcation of literacy and content knowledge. For example, on the one hand, curriculum readers are advised that ‘Success in any learning depends on being able to use the significant, identifiable and distinctive literacy that is important of learning and representative of the content of that learning area’ (ACARA, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.p.). In another section, however, curriculum readers are advised that ‘While much of the explicit teaching of literacy occurs in the English learning area, literacy is strengthened, made specific and extended in other learning areas as students engage in a range of learning activities with significant literacy demands’ (ACARA, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.p.). Following this statement, learning areas or discipline subjects are ordered based on the proportion of their content descriptions that have been tagged with ‘literacy’, with the three lowest-ranked subjects being mathematics, science and work studies. This implies that literacy across the curriculum is not an equally shared responsibility and that disciplinary literacy is more relevant to some learning areas compared to others.

The Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA) have recently developed literacy and numeracy progressions and offered more specific learning area advice to support these. However, these additional resources are located separately to, and do not directly articulate with, the mandated curriculum and do not include all learning areas (mathematics does not have literacy advice). The organisation and inconsistency of the curriculum, then, do not support the whole school dialogue about literacy and disciplinarity or disrupt or reshape teachers’ dominant perceptions of subject epistemology and ontology or the nature of student learning in the subject areas.

6 Institutional/pedagogical structures

While the place of literacy education in schools is an ongoing concern, it became a national focus in the early 2000s in response to Australian students’ decreasing literacy performance in standardised tests, including NAPLAN and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Thomson et al., 2010). To redress this, and particularly target teacher ‘quality’ and a

perceived absence of disciplinary literacy knowledge, a significant systemic educational intervention in Australia saw the implantation of literacy coaching. This can be traced back to the Australian government's Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Program between Federal and State, and Territory Governments which saw the implementation of a range of initiatives to improve students' literacy (and numeracy) skills. Many of the literacy reform strategies adopted by the states and territories across Australia involved the training and employment of coaches, who worked within and across schools to increase knowledge regarding effective pedagogical practice and literacy content in both primary and secondary schools. While the Partnership Program and its resulting coaching initiatives, amongst others, ran from October 2009 to December 2012, literacy coaching continues in a modified form through the employment of specialist literacy instructional leaders within several educational systems across Australia.

Models of coaching for teacher development have been implemented worldwide for many years (see, for example, Costa & Garmston, 1994; Joyce & Showers, 1981; Showers & Joyce, 1996). However, this global focus on literacy coaching felt new and perhaps more focused, given its specific connection to reading instruction than previous models. Almost immediately, the educational research field became saturated with literature that delivered theoretical and practical descriptions of coaching to demonstrate best practices in relation to literacy and student learning (Casey, 2006; Dole, 2004; Dole & Donaldson, 2006; Sturtevant, 2006; Toll, 2005; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). Yet, problematically, literacy coaches were being hired, trained, and moved into schools with little shared understanding of the goals, roles, and responsibilities of the position (Bean et al., 2003; Dole, 2004; Duessen et al., 2007; Al Otaiba et al., 2008; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010; Walpole & Blamey, 2008). Consequently, models of literacy coaching and the role of the coach developed differently in various locations (Duessen et al., 2007). In other words, from a Bourdeausian perspective, the global literacy coaching phenomenon drastically changed the rules of the game in relation to literacy education, yet these rules were not homogenous across nor, arguably, within educational jurisdictions, whether at the national or state level.

Although literacy coaches were employed to support student learning, empowering them to access curriculum and content, the role of literacy coaches can be seen as having a different effect on subject teachers. Exposing the rules of the disciplinary game at the outset inadvertently positioned subject teachers as (a) unwittingly keeping these rules and, therefore, symbolic capital from students and (b) possessing a *habitus* that made the rules of the game invisible to them. Bourdieu writes that as a form of invisible power, symbolic capital 'can only be exercised with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it' (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 164). Literacy across the curriculum approaches were attempting to make this power visible and recognise that it is mobilised and carried through language.

Problematically, there is an inherently unequal power relationship between literacy instructional leaders and classroom teachers when literacy leaders are viewed as experts. The corollary to this is that classroom teachers are positioned in a deficit position, as they are ill equipped to teach the literacy demands of their subject areas, which, as we have noted above, runs counter to the messages about disciplinarity and literacy that have been communicated through teacher education programs, experiences of practice, and curriculum documents. The literacy coach-subject teacher relationship located symbolic power with the literacy coach and, consequently, delegitimised the subject-specific knowledge of the subject teacher. By elevating the rules of literacy above, and potentially distinct from, those of the subject area, literacy

coaching maintained the symbolic capital associated with the literacy coach. It inadvertently supported the very dichotomy literacy experts sought to redress, namely the segregation of literacy from subject content.

Similarly, Hargreaves and Skelton (2012) express concerns about the politics of coaching and whether it functions to support teachers' professional development or to ensure teacher fidelity and compliance to prescribed practice. Within coaching, power issues are magnified when 'coaches are positioned as the mediators and managers of mandated reforms' (Hargreaves & Skelton, 2012, p. 128). While sustainable change is more likely when teachers learn from each other (Dufour et al., 2006), because of the unequal power relationship between coaches and subject teachers, the potential for change is compromised because (a) subject teachers may perceive coaching as a threat to their established pedagogical habitus; (b) literacy is still positioned as not central to their learning area; and (c) there is confusion over whose role and responsibility it is to teach literacy (Konza & Michael, 2010). As such, it is not only the relational dynamics between the specialist literacy teacher and the disciplinary teachers that needs to be reconfigured but also the perception of the place of literacy within discipline subjects.

7 Enhancing disciplinary habitus and rewriting the rules of the literacy game

We agree that the overarching rule of the game in relation to literacy is that it is every teacher's responsibility to incorporate and engage with literacy strategies relevant to their learning area, from a generalist foundational level to a disciplinary-specific senior level. Yet, as discussed above, literacy policies, manifest in teacher standards and curriculum, as well as policy and school-based intervention, have meant that disciplinary literacy has not gained traction across systems and over time. In part, as we have argued, this can be understood as a result of the way literacy is positioned in terms of secondary teachers' developing professional habitus. At the stage of initial teacher education, PSTs are positioned to see the 'stakes' of the literacy game personally and predominately in terms of disaggregated skills tested outside the pre-service programme. This is supported by curriculum structures and professional standards and by the high-stakes testing regimes applied to teachers and students.

With this backdrop, literacy interventions, such as literacy coaching programs, have had differing amounts of success, in part because of how instances of (literacy) symbolic violence have impacted teachers' professional disciplinary-oriented habitus. For these reasons, we argue that it is necessary to re-examine how we understand and embed disciplinary literacy in teachers' knowledge and practice and, like MacPhee and Jewett (2017), suggest that a more collaborative and collegial relationship between the literacy experts and the subject teachers may lead to more effective uptake of disciplinary literacy practices by the subject teacher. Such collaboration should be grounded on the validation of the subject teachers' knowledge of both content and pedagogy.

As such, we make the following recommendations for literacy policy and practice that aim to expand teachers' pedagogical habitus across the career stages and shift:

1. Curriculum frameworks, assessment regimes, and professional standards must present a coherent understanding that literacy demands increase as students progress through their

- learning. In other words, policy documents must reflect literacy demands shifting from basic, to intermediary to disciplinary (see Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008, p. 44).
2. Disciplinary literacy, the unique literacy demands of subject areas, needs to be seen as foundational to supporting students' understanding of content knowledge. Understanding of the specialised literacy demands of subject areas is integral for students to be apprenticed in discipline areas.
 3. Discipline teachers need to be empowered, and their expertise in their field acknowledged. Rather than implying that discipline teachers need to develop a new disciplinary (and literacy) habitus because disciplinary literacy recognises literacy as central to disciplinary knowledge, secondary teachers already have the disciplinary literacy knowledge of their field, having completed a university sequence in their speciality.
 4. Discipline teachers need to be supported to recognise their own expert literacy practices, and then make these explicit in their pedagogical practices. In other words, discipline teachers' habitus needs to be enhanced such that they can articulate the various frames for the unique literacy practices of their subject area, which they have already mastered.

As experts in literacy, the role of the literacy coach is to support the discipline experts to recognise their disciplinary literacy practices, which may have been internalised and have become intrinsic or intuitive. In other words, the role of the literacy expert is to legitimise teachers' subject knowledge and to provide a metalanguage through which the subject teachers' knowledge of both content and disciplinary literacy can be articulated to students as they are apprenticed into the respective discipline.

8 Disciplinary literacy in pre-service contexts

In this closing section of the paper, we take up the recommendations suggested above and share some work we have done towards this agenda at pre-service and in-service stages of teacher development and professional learning.

As discussed above, a substantive challenge in secondary ITE programs is linking and embedding literacy within disciplinary preparation, as it is often positioned as a separate subject. In 2010, to better integrate core, non-disciplinary education subjects with pre-service teachers' disciplinary and practicum experiences, a team of academics across education sociology, psychology, and literacy subjects in the pre-service master of teaching degree at the University of Melbourne designed an assessment task that drew on student knowledge developed in these three core subject areas and enacted theories in the context of practice. Called the 'Clinical Praxis Exam' (CPE), following the clinical approach to teacher education adopted by the University of Melbourne (McLean Davies et al., 2013; Rickards et al., 2020), this assessment requires pre-service teachers to present a data-informed, evidence-based account of their differentiated support for one student, or a group of students, in the context of their disciplinary classroom practice. This innovation has been recognised, more broadly, as an example of best practice in teacher education assessment (Renshaw et al., 2013; Loudon, 2015) and has had specific affordances for pre-service teachers' conceptualisations of disciplinary literacy, as pre-service teachers see literacy as foundational rather than additional to learning in their discipline (Kameniar et al., 2017). Further, as this assessment task is undertaken in practice, it also impacts the knowledge of mentor teachers supporting pre-service teachers in the discipline and starts

or expands important shared conversations about literacy, and other core educational understandings, in disciplinary practice (McLean Davies et al., 2017).

Considered in light of the suggestions above, the Clinical Praxis Exam can be understood as responding to the first three recommendations. Understanding that approaches to literacy would not shift towards a more disciplinary understanding without the support of formalised assessment structures (recommendation 1), this curriculum innovation contextualises literacy within the disciplinary practice (recommendation 2) and positions pre-service teachers and their mentors as experts in the literacy of their discipline and empowered to use their understandings to support learning for diverse students.

9 Supporting literacy disciplinary knowledge for practising teachers

The secondary component of the Literacy Teaching Toolkit (LTT) was collaboratively developed by a community of literacy experts and subject disciplinary experts at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE). The unifying purpose was to develop an accessible online teaching resource that would do more than merely encourage teachers to employ generic literacy strategies by offering practical ways for teachers to embed disciplinary literacy in their subject area and across the year levels from 7 to 10. The approach, grounded in the disciplinary literacy literature, recognises that the language and literacy demands for different secondary subject areas are not the same (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010). That is, the way students read English texts, for example, differs from how text is read in mathematics or science. In addition, literacy is valued across schooling, but many teachers have not known how to deploy literacy teaching within their subject area. It is in this context that the collaborators developed some key principles to guide the work on the LTT resource that included (1) the need for literate practices to be explicitly taught and scaffolded to progress learning; (2) a shared language for talking about literacy that empowers student learning and establishes a consistent metalanguage for teachers to explain and unpack literate strategies to their students (Rose & Martin, 2012); (3) recognition that literate practices differ across the discipline areas (Fang, 2012; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008); and (4) the ability for subject teachers to select and teach literacy strategies that are meaningful to their discipline and relevant to the intended outcomes for each lesson (Fang & Chapman, 2020).

The LTT online resource highlights the distinct literacy demands in each subject area and the affordances of embedding subject-specific literacy strategies as a way for students to access subject content and build knowledge and understanding. Academic and expert teachers in the subject area were contracted to write content for the toolkit and guided by a literacy expert (recommendation 5). Additionally, classroom teachers were filmed *in situ*, demonstrating and reflecting on the use of evidence-based best practices. This not only honoured their expertise in their field (recommendation 3) but also shifted the perception that literacy teaching is outside the scope of secondary teacher expertise (recommendation 2). The structure of the toolkit, and its various resources, were developed to appeal to subject teachers' disciplinary identity, such that the toolkit would enhance their pedagogical habitus by allowing them to recognise their own expert knowledge of both content and literacy practices and then support them to make explicit to their students the literate demands and strategies unique to their discipline area (recommendation 4).

As with the secondary component of the LTT, the design and implementation of the Literacy 7–9 professional learning programme offered through Orbis, Department for

Education, South Australia, can be said to respond to all the above recommendations. Co-designed by literacy experts from the University of Melbourne, Department for Education (Orbis) staff and secondary teachers working within government schools in South Australia, the Literacy 7–9 programme is delivered over four 2-day intensives. The programme represents a concerted shift in the system-wide understanding of the foundational role disciplinary literacy plays in supporting student learning within the secondary context in South Australia (recommendation 1). In contrast to the R-2 and 3–6 Literacy programs offered by Orbis, the 7–9 Literacy programme adopts a disciplinary literacy approach to develop secondary teachers' understanding of both the literacy demands of their subject area and how to adopt and adapt evidence-based literacy strategies to support learning within their subject area (recommendation 2). Throughout the programme, the subject-specific expertise of the participants is in the foreground (recommendation 3), while the presenters seek to develop a shared metalanguage and understanding of evidence-based literacy practices throughout the intensives (recommendation 4).

A key feature of the Literacy 7–9 programme is an Applied Learning Project, which invites teachers to design and implement an action research project to test the efficacy of one or more literacy strategies appropriate for their subject area. Similar to the CPE mentioned above, the participants' presentations of the findings from their Applied Learning Project require them to present a data-informed, evidence-based account of their intervention based on an identified group of students in the context of their disciplinary classroom practice. In addition to being supported by presenters during face-to-face intensives, participants are also assigned a literacy coach who supports the design, implementation, and analysis of the Applied Learning Project. External and separate from the participants' school contexts, the literacy coach's role is to legitimise and enhance the participants' literacy pedagogical content knowledge by reinforcing the metalanguage and understanding of literacy strategies that are developed in the intensive sessions (recommendation 5).

10 Conclusion

When we consider the initiatives outlined above in light of our recommendations, we can see that the key to taking disciplinary literacy forward is a sense of relationality within the broader educational field. To expand teachers' disciplinary habitus, they need to see from the outset of pre-service preparation the links between subject content knowledge and language. We are not simply reinforcing Schulman's notion of pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) here, but rather are identifying the fundamental role language has in shaping meaning and knowledge (Vygotsky, 1986). As subject matter experts, the teachers often have this knowledge implicitly, so the role of coaches or other literacy-focussed colleagues is to make this explicit, through the use of metalanguage and example. Further, we see through these examples the importance of partnerships between key stakeholders, such as universities, education departments and schools that are seeking generative approaches to raising the profile of teacher disciplinary literacy expertise rather than taking a deficit and remediating approach.

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