

Cambridge University Press
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Edited by Allyssa McCabe, Alison L. Bailey, Gigliana Melzi
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SPANISH-LANGUAGE NARRATION AND LITERACY

This book is divided into three main parts: (1) parent–child coconstruction of narrative, which focuses on aspects of the social interaction that facilitate oral narrative development in Spanish-speaking children; (2) development of independent narration by Spanish-speaking children; and (3) narrative links between Latino children’s oral narration and their early literacy and other school achievements. Chapters address narration to and by Latino children aged 6 months to 11 years old and in low, middle, and upper socioeconomic groups. Nationalities of speakers include Costa Rican, Dominican, Ecuadorian, Mexican, Peruvian, Puerto Rican, Venezuelan, and Spanish–English bilingual children who are citizens or residents of the United States. Narratives studied include those in conversations, personal and fictional stories, and those prompted by wordless picture books or videos. Thus, the current project makes central diversity in nationality, socioeconomic background, and genre of narrative.

ALLYSSA McCABE, Ph.D., is Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. She founded and coedits the journal *Narrative Inquiry* and has researched how narrative develops with age, the way parents can encourage narration, and cultural differences in narration, as well as interrelationships among the development of narrative, vocabulary, and phonological awareness. She is the recipient (with L. S. Bliss and A. Covington) of the Editor’s Award from *Contemporary Issues in Communication Science and Disorders*, presented at the 1999 Annual Convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association in San Francisco, California, for the article, “Assessing the Narratives of African American Children.” Her current work concerns a theoretical approach to early literacy called the Comprehensive Language Approach, which looks at ways that the various strands of oral and written language affect each other in the acquisition of full literacy. With Lynn Bliss, she most recently published *Patterns of Narrative Discourse: A Multicultural Lifespan Approach*.

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Spanish-Language Narration and Literacy

CULTURE, COGNITION, AND EMOTION

Edited by

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KENDALL A. KING has taught in the areas of bilingualism, second language acquisition, and language policy at New York University, Stockholm University, and Georgetown University, where she was Associate Professor until 2008. She is currently an Associate Professor in the Second Languages and Cultures Program at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. She has published widely on Quichua (the variety of Quechua spoken in Ecuador) and Spanish bilingualism and bilingual education policy in Andean countries in journals such as *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, and the *International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*, as well as a 2001 book, *Language Revitalization Processes and Prospects: Quichua in the Ecuadorian Andes*.

ALLYSSA McCABE is Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. She founded and coedits the journal *Narrative Inquiry* and has researched how narrative develops with age, the way parents can encourage narration, and cultural differences in narration, as well as interrelationships among the developments of narrative, vocabulary, and phonological awareness. Her most recent work concerns a theoretical approach to early literacy called the Comprehensive Language Approach, which looks at ways that the various strands of oral and written language (e.g., vocabulary, phonological awareness, and print knowledge) affect each other in the acquisition of full literacy. A key concern is with assessment of preschool-aged children, especially preventing misdiagnosis of cultural differences in oral narration as deficits. Allyn & Bacon Publishers recently published Dr. McCabe's *Patterns of Narrative Discourse: A Multicultural Lifespan Approach*, coauthored by Lynn Bliss.

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PAOLA UCCELLI is Assistant Professor in Language and Literacy at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her research focuses on socio-cultural and individual differences in language and literacy development in Spanish and English. She studied linguistics at the Pontificia Universidad Católica in Perú, her country of origin, and then pursued graduate studies in human development and psychology at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Two main lines of research characterize her work. First, she investigates early language development with a particular focus on understanding how children learn to translate experience into narrative. Second, she carries out research on reading comprehension instruction and assessment with a special interest in the challenges faced, as well as the strengths displayed, by language minority children. In both lines of research she explores how different language skills (lexical, grammatical, and discourse) interact with each other to either promote or hinder the meaning-making processes of expression and comprehension, within and across languages. Currently, she is also investigating the challenges involved in academic language development and instruction. She has written articles and chapters on these topics for the *Cambridge Handbook of Literacy*, the *Handbook of Educational Linguistics*, *Child Psychology: A Handbook of Contemporary Issues*, and in several journals. Her postdoctoral work was supported by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

PREFACE

The initial idea for this book was simple: Alison suggested an edited volume that would recognize the impact Allyssa McCabe has had on two generations of researchers focusing on the study of narrative development. From the start, it seemed critical that Allyssa should be part of the editorial process – who better to make the book a strong contribution to the field? The extension of much of the pioneering work of Allyssa and her colleagues in the 1980s to populations of preschool and school-age children who do not have English as a first language made the choice of Spanish-language narration a natural one. Many of Allyssa’s former students were concentrating on both the formal and informal contexts of narrative development in children from diverse backgrounds outside the U.S. mainstream – indeed, some outside the United States entirely. Contacting them and others who have been influenced by Allyssa’s work to contribute chapters to the proposed volume set the book in motion.

AUDIENCE: FOR WHOM IS THIS BOOK WRITTEN?

We see a number of audiences for this book: students of language development in speech-language pathology, linguistics, and psychology, as well as those involved in literacy acquisition in preschool and elementary education. The book could readily serve as the main text of a graduate-level seminar devoted to the study of narrative development in Spanish-speaking children, as well as function as an auxiliary text in a course on narrative development or language development more broadly written.

Preschool and elementary schoolteachers and the staff who support them (i.e., principals and school psychologists) in the United States and elsewhere should find the descriptions of narrative diversity presented in the chapters critical to their own understanding of the stories told to them by the Spanish-speaking children they educate. The text can play a key role in the preparation

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Preface

of preservice teachers who will be working with Spanish-speaking children who hail from all over the Americas, as well as be a catalyst for comparison and discussion during the continued professional development of more experienced teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, we thank all the chapter writers for their excellent contributions to the volume. Their dedication to the project has meant that we have kept everyone we initially invited and we have managed to stay on publication schedule. On everyone's behalf, we also want to say a special "gracias" and "thank you" to the children, parents, and teachers all across the Americas whose narrative skills and experiences are at the very heart of this book.

Storytelling through its various media – oral, written, and visual – has a long-standing tradition across the Spanish-speaking Americas. In this book, we honor the unique ways in which oral stories are woven and shared by and with children. In choosing the cover for our book, we also wanted to honor the cultural heritage of visual storytelling; therefore, we chose to present an *arpillera*, a contemporary form of textile art created by Latin American women. The *arpilleras*, sometimes called *cuadros parlantes* (talking portraits) are three-dimensional sewn cloths that portray scenes of everyday life, much like personal narratives of everyday experience. The *arpilleras* began as a form of underground communication and political protest in the Chile of Pinochet, most notably as a way in which mothers protested *without words* the disappearance of their sons and daughters. Since then, this form of art has traveled north to give voice to the hands of other Latin American women. The *arpillera* on the cover is the work of Doña Julia Rosa Huaranga Vilchez from Lima, Peru, who was gracious enough to weave for us this tale of children playing in the streets of an Andean city. We thank her for her talent and generosity. We would also like to thank Carlos Fernández Loayza for helping us photograph Doña Julia Rosa's work.

At Cambridge University Press, we wish to thank Eric Schwartz, April Potenciano, and Ken Karpinski, who handled the creation of this volume so skillfully and painlessly from start to finish.

Finally, we gratefully thank our families and all of our friends for their continued support. Alison thanks Frank, Nick, and Will Ziolkowski for their love

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and abiding interest in absolutely everything. Gigliana gives heartfelt gracias to Jaime for his unconditional support and dedicates her work in this book to the memory of her sister, Cecilia, *con mucho amor, estés donde estés*. Allyssa thanks Charlie, Nick, and Jessamyn for many reasons.