



Kristen Pratt

LRA Board of Directors Nominee

Biography

Dr. Kristen L Pratt is an Associate Professor of ESOL and Bilingual Education at Western Oregon University. She develops innovative community-centered teacher licensure programs within a Grow-Your-Own framework to fundamentally reimagine educator preparation. As a white cisgender researcher living without disabilities, she acknowledges her unearned privileges and works to unlearn colonial mindsets while actively addressing systemic, structural, and institutional inequities in education. Kristen's scholarship has been published in journals including the *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, *Bilingual Education Research Journal*, and *TESOL Journal*. She has also published a co-edited book, *English language learners' primary language impact on second language and literacy learning: Linguistically responsive strategies for classroom teachers exploring the role of culture in language teaching* with tangible guidance for language impact in literacy development. Kristen's research has been supported by over \$5 million in federal, state, and private grants, including the Office of English Language Acquisition, Grant Project PROMISE and multiple Oregon Grow-Your-Own initiatives that gave way to developing the FLEX (flexible licensure educator pathways) Program that she now coordinates. These projects have created sustainable pathways for educators supporting multilingual students' academic development. In addition to her scholarship, she teaches courses in language education policy, content instruction, educational linguistics, and English language development. Kristen has also served on various advisory boards and committees, including the Oregon Department of Education's English Learner Advisory Board. Her achievements include the 2018 AERA Second Language Research SIG Dissertation of the Year award and she is currently a Provost Fellow at her institution.

Candidate Statement

My introduction to LRA in 2013, while a doctoral student at Washington State University, proved transformative. I was captivated by the concentration of brilliant scholarship actively reshaping social thought, which pushed me to expand my own intellectual boundaries. I recognized that LRA would become an academic home where I could collaborate with scholars who shared my commitment to criticality, equity, and inclusion. These shared values have since guided my scholarship, as exemplified in a recent piece in the *TESOL Journal*, where I explore reconceptualizing educator preparedness through a critical lens. This work challenges educators to move beyond the notion of serving multilingual families to authentically partnering in bridging multilingual multiliteracies between home and school environments.

Throughout my 11-year engagement with LRA, my service has focused on criticality, equity, excellence, and inclusion. I have served the organization in diverse roles, including presenter, reviewer, session chair, and committee member. My leadership experiences include serving as an officer in the Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group (ICG), as Chair and Co-Chair of the Multilingual and Transnational ICG, and as a member of the Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism (ERM) Committee.

In the Multilingual and Transnational ICG, I collaborated with the ERM Committee and other ICGs on several key initiatives. For example, we hosted the symposium "Multilingualism: What Literacy Educators Need to Know," which brought together expert research perspectives from three different countries. That same year, we organized a scholarly discussion during study sessions featuring distinguished researchers who addressed "Challenging Monoglossic Ideologies in Literacy Research." Additionally, we partnered to host a symposium on "Multilingualism in the Context of English Hegemony: Current Policy, Theory, and Practice," where invited scholars skillfully guided participants to think critically about English hegemony in literacy teaching, learning, and research. We also hosted study sessions that explored "Border Realities as Assets for Fostering Transliterations, Multiculturalism, and Multilingualism." The integration of our symposiums and study sessions during my tenure encouraged our membership to learn, critique, engage in dialogue with one another, and build ideas together for transformational change.

In response to insights gathered during the study session discussions, I collaborated with colleagues to establish a working group dedicated to enhancing organizational equity. We engaged with our members to collect specific, actionable recommendations. The resulting proposals submitted to the board addressed several key areas, including improving conference accessibility, expanding language options for proposals and presentations, increasing international scholar participation through targeted funding initiatives, diversifying keynote speaker selection to feature scholarship from diverse researchers, and creating pathways to elevate diverse leadership within the organization.

During my 3-year tenure on the ERM Committee, I led and contributed to numerous initiatives that advanced the organization's mission. Through strategic collaboration with ICGs and committees, I helped develop and execute programming, including study sessions, symposiums, invited panels, and community engagement events. A notable event was co-organizing a symposium titled "Decolonizing Literacy, Language, and Ways of Being: Creating Cultural and Intellectual Spaces That Center Equity, Solidarity, and Opportunity." This collaborative effort, undertaken in partnership with the International ICG, Multilingual and Transnational ICG, and the Field Council, brought together distinguished scholars to examine and problematize how the literate identities of bilingual, bicultural, and transnational students were positioned within pedagogical frameworks and the critical need to decolonize literacy and language spaces in educational settings.

Under the ERM chair's guidance and in partnership with ERM colleagues, I designed and administered a comprehensive membership survey to gather vital feedback about the experiences of scholars of color within the organization. This initiative provided actionable insights to inform institutional, structural, and systemic improvements within the organization. Additionally, I served and co-led the selection committee across two cycles of the ERM travel award, contributing to the organization's commitment to supporting diverse scholarly participation of junior scholars.

Both my research and work within LRA has focused on developing strategic partnerships, advancing discussions on equity and access in education, and promoting inclusive approaches to linguistic diversity. These efforts align with and strengthen LRA's mission as a premier literacy research organization. As a potential board member, I plan to support our organization in three key areas: (1) enhance our systems to ensure linguistic inclusivity, making our organization more accessible to scholars and practitioners who work in multiple languages and linguistic contexts; (2) actively expand LRA's international reach by amplifying diverse global perspectives in our research, publications, and conferences; and (3) uphold rigorous academic standards while emphasizing research methods that honor and integrate community knowledge and partnerships bridging theoretical frameworks with practical applications that respect local ways of knowing.

First, I plan to strengthen our organization's linguistic inclusivity, building on last year's milestone decision to accept non-English proposals and presentations, which reflects the investment and dedicated advocacy by organizational leaders over many years. Moving forward, I will collaborate with colleagues, leadership, and partners to further integrate linguistic diversity across our platforms, frameworks, and internal resources while leveraging the multilingual expertise that already exists within our organization.

Second, promoting international perspectives within LRA is crucial for advancing educational research. This involves building partnerships across countries to understand diverse educational practices and methodologies in respective cultural contexts. It also requires developing intercultural competencies around educational philosophies and research approaches, enabling us to work collaboratively to build collective strength across borders.

If selected to serve on the board, my third priority will be strengthening our organization's community investments and incorporating diverse local knowledge into our annual meetings and partnerships. I recognize that valuable expertise exists within the communities where we hold conferences and conduct our daily work. By engaging with educators, community elders, caregivers, and students, we can create meaningful pathways for professional development and knowledge exchange, ultimately building a stronger collective for democratic participation.

My dedication to LRA spans over a decade of active engagement in fostering linguistic diversity, international collaboration, and community partnerships. If elected to the board, I will build upon this foundation to advance our organization's commitment to equity, scholarly excellence, and inclusive practices that honor diverse ways of knowing and being in literacy research. Thank you for your consideration.