



Lenny Sánchez

LRA Board of Directors Nominee

Biography

Lenny Sánchez is Professor and Program Chair of Language & Literacy Education at University of South Carolina. His research focuses on critical and cultural literacies with a specific interest in examining how literacy teaching and learning can promote equity, empowerment, critical inquiry, and bilingual meaning-making practices for young people. He has been actively involved in LRA through positions such as Area Chair, co-Chair of Multilingual and Transnational Innovative Community Group, Albert J. Kingston Award Committee Member, Ethics Committee Member, Nominations Committee Member, Member of Special Committee for Linguistic Plurality at Annual Meeting, and co-Editor of *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*. He also has been involved in other leadership positions such as President-Elect for Languages and Literacies for All of NCTE, co-Director of Bilingualism Matters Center @ University of South Carolina, Vice President and Executive Board Member for Center for Expansion of Language and Thinking, Chair of University of South Carolina Latino & Hispanic Faculty Caucus, Executive Board Member of Languages and Literacies for All (formerly Whole Language Umbrella), and Board of Directors of Early Childhood Education Assembly of NCTE. His research has been published in journals such as *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Teachers College Record*, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, *Language Arts*, and *Theory into Practice*, as well as in prominent publishing houses such as Routledge, Springer, Information Age, Stylus, and Peter Lang.

Candidate Statement

I serve in the roles of Professor and Program Chair of Language & Literacy Education and co-Director of Bilingualism Matters Center at University of South Carolina. In addition, I currently serve as a Fulbright Specialist and recently garnered the opportunity to join a collaboration with a trailblazing research team in Colombia through the Comisión Fulbright Colombia and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State. My scholarship focuses on advancing the work of critical and cultural literacies through two research strands: 1) through efforts to bring the community into the classroom through lenses of critical and global literacies to promote young people's agency and inquiry, and 2) through examination on how families and schools can foster children's bilingual and bicultural meaning-making processes. Empirically, my studies have principally involved working with people in/from historically marginalized communities and engaging in efforts to promote young people as critical thinkers and doers. Within my studies, my scholarship has sought to contribute to the larger field of education by examining how critical and cultural literacies can: bridge school and community contexts, shed light on young

people's brilliance, increase cultural responsiveness in schooling curriculum, and broaden definitions of classroom literacies to recognize the cultural, social, and political influences on literacy and language production. My research has been published in various journals (e.g., Journal of Literacy Research, Research in the Teaching of English, Teachers College Record, Bilingual Research Journal, Linguistics and Education, Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, Theory into Practice, Language Arts, Talking Points) and book publishing houses (e.g., Routledge, Springer, Information Age, Stylus, Peter Lang).

I am honored to serve on the ballot for the LRA Executive Board of Directors. I began participating in the LRA community nearly 20 years ago and have served in various LRA leadership roles during the past 12 years. Examples of leadership roles include Area 7 co-Chair, co-Chair of the Multilingual and Transnational Innovative Community Group, Albert J. Kingston Award Committee member, Ethics Standing Committee member, Nominations Committee member, Journal Editorship Selection Committee member, member of the Special Committee for Linguistic Plurality at the Annual Convention, Field Council member, and co-Editor of Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice. I have appreciated serving in these varied vantage points of the organization as they have: deepened my knowledge of others' incredible scholarship, fostered new advocacy partnerships, allowed me to grow in others' wisdom and inspiration, and forged invaluable personal and professional connections. In addition, these opportunities have enabled me to experience LRA through varied organizational structures and sites of impact. Most recently, for example, it has been an honor to work closely with the Multilingual and Transnational ICG and other committees and constituents to help LRA expand its existing linguistic borders on how scholarly dissemination exists within LRA conference proceedings. This is one of many important ways LRA can continue growing to support its ongoing mission of creating "a community of scholars dedicated to promoting research that enriches the knowledge, understanding, and development of lifespan literacies in a multicultural and multilingual world." As a board member, I would seek to advocate for the development of initiatives and systems of practice that advance the essence of this mission statement. This would include identifying ways to mitigate any siloed effects of having many moving parts in an organization as well as addressing new ways our organization can grow in solidarity to embrace the divide of academia and public engagement. As we all know well, the field of education continues to endure substantial measures of instability. I am a firm believer that LRA can play a valuable role for its members in addressing these critical issues, but this requires intentional and strategic bridging. I would be honored to support these types of efforts as a board member. As for many of us, LRA has provided me a crucial and life-impacting community where I have been nurtured and changed as a scholar. This impact, of course, is always shifting. As a board member, I would be committed to support how LRA can continue to reimagine its future and be a venue of positive impact for its members and their affiliated communities.