

STRIVING TOWARD A CRITICAL THEORY OF TECHNOLOGY PEDAGOGY IN  
LITERACY EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

As the future unfolds and technology continues to develop at a rapid pace, it has become clear that technology will play a significant role in many facets of our daily existence. In addition to becoming conscious of new technologies, we must also learn how to maneuver these high-tech innovations. When we learn how to operate technology, we become literate; or, we understand how this piece of technology functions. Therefore, literacy now becomes a metaphor to encompass all forms of learning - no longer pertaining to the relatively simple definition of knowing how to read and write.

Today, technology is being incorporated into all areas of literacy learning. While some may think the integration of technology will facilitate literacy learning, evidence is emerging to the contrary. Along with its benefits, unfortunately, as a result of the amalgamation of technology with literacy learning, complications regarding literacy acquisition are becoming prevalent. For instance, theorist Brian Street purports that the ideologies and practices of reading and writing are firmly rooted in the context of particular societies, and thus cannot be “isolated or treated as ‘neutral’ or merely technical” (1). Ideals and notions of literacy and what it means to be literate are found in texts, and now a plethora of media – all of which students experience in a variety of content-areas. Trying to understand what denotes literacy involves understanding how a society uses and values it. Technological advances are now complicating the way we think about literacy and literacy learning

As technology is here to stay, arguing either for or against its use in literacy learning is not the focus of this thesis. However, it is pertinent to contend for a critical

theory of technology in education, so that the complications will be minimized through various solutions geared toward successful literacy development.

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## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Nana, Nancy Harris Phillips Musser, and my mother, Jerri Phillips Meldrum, both whose strength and determination in life taught me to pursue my goals no matter what obstacles there are to overcome; they will never know how much this contributed to my personal and professional academic growth.