



# New technologies in literacy research: “Measuring” embodiment through galvanic skin response

**Dr Csilla Weninger**  
National Institute of Education  
Nanyang Technological University

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12:45 – 14:00  
Room 411-412, Meng Wah Complex, HKU  
*Chair: Dr Clarence Green*

## Registration:

[https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec\\_regform.aspx?guest=Y&UEID=91114](https://hkuems1.hku.hk/hkuems/ec_regform.aspx?guest=Y&UEID=91114)

## Abstract:

There has been much interest in the notion of embodiment within literacy research over the past decade or so, coinciding with a broader turn toward the affective dimension of human experience and meaning-making within the social sciences. Several strands of research have developed along somewhat different epistemological dimensions. Sociomaterial approaches focus on the body's relational engagement with objects, texts and people and how they shape the nature and process of literacy-as-event (Burnett & Merchant 2018) while multimodal literacy scholars have investigated embodiment as corporeal resources (Lim, 2020, p. 2) in an attempt to map sensory literacies (Mills, 2016) within the increasingly digital literacy terrain. Yet this intense focus on embodiment and the body and theoretical advances in its relation to literacy has not been matched with the same level of methodological innovation. Drawing on a study of home literacy practices of secondary-aged youth in Singapore, in this talk I explore embodiment at the intersection of theory and method in literacy research. The teenagers in the study were observed engaged in various literacy activities and their levels of arousal tracked through a wearable sensor that measured galvanic skin response. The question I aim to pursue in the talk is not so much what the measures 'tell us' about literacy, but rather how we may conceptually integrate new methodologies into the study of embodiment in literacy.

## About the speaker:

Trained as a sociolinguist, A/P Csilla Weninger's research examines language in its social contexts of use along two main strands. First, she is interested to explore how spoken, written and visual discourse manifests, propagates and reinforces cultural and political ideologies that can be traced and uncovered through the detailed analysis of text and talk. A bulk of her publications in this area concern the impact and imprint of ideologies on the conduct of schooling, primarily through textbooks, policies and classroom discourse. Second, and as an extension of the first area, her research aims to examine and develop critical approaches to English language and literacy education. A key concern for such approaches is moving beyond literacy as a skill and fostering students' engagement with texts as a reflexive and affective situated social practice. In this regard, she has been involved in researching and teaching digital media literacy as a foundational skill and disposition for 21st century education. Theoretically, her work is situated at the intersection of critical discourse studies, sociocultural linguistics and critical literacy studies. She is co-editor in chief of *Linguistics and Education*, and head of English Language & Literature, at National Institute of Education, Singapore. Email: [csilla.weninger@nie.edu.sg](mailto:csilla.weninger@nie.edu.sg)



~ All are welcome ~

For enquiries, please contact the Office of Research, Faculty of Education at [hkchow@hku.hk](mailto:hkchow@hku.hk)