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Educating emergent bilinguals: Policies, programs, and practices for English learners. Garcia, Ofelia and Kleifgen, Jo Anne (Eds.). Teachers College Columbia University Press. 2018. pp. 256. ISBN 978-0-8077-5885-4. US\$31.95 (Paperback).

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In this second edition, Garcia and Kleifgen (2018) present 10 chapters reminding educators and policymakers about effective schooling practices for teaching *Emergent Bilinguals*. These chapters carry out powerful messages that challenge educators to push back against injustices and irregular policies that ignore current research concerning bilingual students' home languages and cultures. The book focuses on policies, programs, and practices for English Learners, and raises important issues and controversies adjoining the education of language minority students in the United States. This book's targeted audience is educators, policymakers, parents, and anyone in language education.

The main idea presented in this book is that there are disconnections between research on the education of emergent bilinguals, the policies used to educate them, and the practices observed in schools. The book focuses on emergent bilingual students who face poverty, grapple with immigration issues, are framed as having limited English language proficiency, and therefore receive deplete education that contradicts research on language acquisition and biculturalism of emergent bilinguals. These injustices should urge educators who work with language-minority populations to advocate for them.

Garcia and Kleifgen (2018) state that the term English Learner suggests that students are seen in terms of limited English proficiency, instead of their potential of becoming bilingual and/or even multilingual. With that in mind, the authors use the term *emergent bilingual*, which does not only focus on their limitations but rather their cognitive, social, and educational abilities as resources (p. 5). Garcia and Kleifgen (2018) argue that by framing these students as emergent bilinguals, educators continue to build on their strengths and their cultural-linguistic practices. Chapter 9 reports on theoretical constructs, empirical evidence, and practices that are related to the education of emergent bilinguals, including: language, literacy, multimodalities,

digital technologies, learning, curriculum, and pedagogy. To emphasize equitable education for emergent bilinguals, the authors present useful theoretical frameworks and associated empirical studies from the fields of anthropology, education, linguistics, and psychology that support the use of students' home language practices in the classroom. It should be noted, these theoretical frameworks give opportunities for all students to participate in challenging academic work that promotes insight and encourages higher-order thinking skills.

One of the major issues addressed in this work is the different types of educational programs for emergent bilinguals. The authors note that language in education policies have shifted program options away from the focus of the home language towards English-only instruction, creating a gap between policy and practices in research. Some of these inequitable language and literacy practices (addressed in chapter 5) include the compartmentalization of English and languages other than English in instruction. Four language allocation strategies traditionally used in bilingual education include separating language by day, by teacher, by room and/or building, or by subject matter. If students are only being assessed in English, not given their first language, students will not be able to demonstrate what they really know (p. 146).

The compartmentalization of language is contradicted by the concepts of linguistic interdependence and common underlying proficiency explained by Cummins (2000), who argues that knowledge abilities acquired in one language are potentially available for the development of another (p. 53). This cross-linguistic relationship suggests that the students' home language may positively shape academic achievement in an additional language. In this regard, Garcia and Kleifgen (2018) argue that "rigid adherence to one language or another without regard to students' practices and how they make meaning contradicts research findings" (p. 75), and emergent bilinguals continue to be assessed with instruments that disconnect academic language and content that do not align with language practices (Chapter 9).

Furthermore, chapter 3 emphasizes that programs and policies should focus to ensure that students receive educational services from teachers. At the same time, Garcia and Kleifgen (2018) argue that the Seal of Biliteracy has extended ways in which policymakers and educators view languages as a resource, and not just for emergent bilinguals to acquire English. As an approach, biliteracy empowers minoritized speakers and their communities to connect with

social justice, required to fight against fear, shame, and stigma for equal educational opportunity, while using their full linguistic repertoire.

As supported by previous research, practices —such as heteroglossic bilingual instruction, translanguaging pedagogy, critical multilingual awareness, and complex language/literacy use— result in strengthening the home language practices. The authors suggest alternative language-focused theoretical constructs and literacy practices that support emergent bilinguals. For example, to support modifications needed to advance literacy instruction, Garcia and Kleifgen (2018) suggest teaching or presenting words in Languages Other Than English before teaching them in English. When teaching vocabulary, they recommend the usage of cognates, translations, texts and topics that are culturally appropriate for guiding students to develop comprehension. They also explain that complex language, literacy use, gestures, manipulatives, realia, technology, and graphic organizers, serve as scaffold for emergent bilinguals. Finally, they assert that through modeling, think-alouds, higher-order thinking questioning, and schema building, new information guides students to develop meaning-making strategies that support language (p. 86).

To conclude, students, policymakers, and educators will begin to understand how language use in society has been naturalized focusing on the historical oppression of certain linguistic groups. The increasing numbers of emergent bilinguals has made clear the need for comprehensive educational policy reform that attends to the disconnection between research, policy, and practices identified by Garcia and Kleifgen (2018). The strength of this book is that the authors offer a pedagogical approach focused on translanguaging theory that supports and extends on heteroglossic bilingual instruction that leverages all language practices. The authors argue that educators must support students to comprehend complex content and texts, provide opportunities to develop linguistic practices in regard to academic contexts, provide space for students' bilingualism and bilingual ways of knowing, and support the social-emotional well-being of their students while forming their identities (p. 81). By approaching those challenges from a critical multilingual awareness perspective, educators can build on the students' understanding of social, political, and economic struggles.

References

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