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Kubota, Ryuko & Lin, Angel (Eds.) (2009) *Race, Culture & Identities in Second Language Education: Exploring Critically Engaged Practice*. NY: Routledge.

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Race, Culture & Identities in Second Language Education: Exploring Critically Engaged Practice edited by Ryuko Kubota & Angel Lin fills an important void in the field of language education. It explores the nexus of race, culture, language, and identity as they come together in different school settings—bilingual, ESL, EFL—around the world (U.S., Latin America, Canada, Asia, and Australia). The explorations of the role of race and racialization are both theoretical and practical. Race is constructed theoretically “as a form of embodied habitus that gains different currencies in different social and cultural field governed by different rules of exchange” (Kubota & Lin citing Luke, within volume, p. 12). Race is also treated practically in the data-driven inquiries that span the spectrum of educational levels—from pre-school through high school and adult education.

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Raising basic and uncomfortable questions about race and racialization within the context of language education, the authors tackle dualistic perspectives within the fields of English-as-a second language (ESL), Foreign Language Education, Bilingual Education, and Heritage Language. For example, they propose going beyond the cultural difference theory that positions instruction as a place where sociolinguistics norms internalized by the learner have as a backdrop the social expectations associated with the dominant language. While pushing beyond the dualism to include race and racialization to be considered, it does not substitute race for cultural dimensions. To the contrary, it is a call for taking on a more complex explanation of the relationships and structures that govern schooling and the broader social context. While acknowledging the role of ancestral collective legacies, they do not juxtapose the associated values in contrast to the individualism and critical thinking mentality of the Western modern societies. Instead, they propose that there are multiple ways in which we can experience the nexus of race, culture, language and identity within language education.

There are a variety of focal points for the occurrence of race and racialization in the teaching of languages and through multiple languages. For example, some authors examine how it occurs in the relationship between the researcher and the researched, as it comes together in the explorations of identity and subjectivities, and as it is reproduced globally in classrooms, in instruction, and in the curriculum. Overarching connectors guiding many of the contributions in this volume are the postcolonial analysis of the discursive construction of categories and hierarchies and the post-neocolonial notions of power. They propose that power can be examined by studying the nexus of multiple notions, such as, collusion and resistance, of strategic essentialism and subaltern agencies, of destabilizing boundaries of identities, and of examining language ideologies as going beyond linguistic form and use to individual, collective, and institutional identities. The authors examine how domination, subordination, resistance are manifest in classroom discourse; they examine the teaching of language as complex relationships of power where differences are created by the process of racialization; and they invite the teacher to critically

reflect on how ideas of race can influence “what they teach, how they teach, and how they understand teaching.”

The book is divided in three parts: I: Interrogating Whiteness; Part II: Racializing Discourses, and Identity Construction in Educational Settings; and Part III: Toward a Dialectic of a Crucially Engaged Praxis.

In Part 1, Interrogating Whiteness, the authors embark on inquiries that define White privilege, both theoretically and personally. Liggett, by examining English education, suggests that when teachers come to terms with their positionality as dominant language and racial beings, they begin to understand and assume that with it comes the power of an unmarked language with associated norms that are taken for granted. They can then see how as individuals they can wield coercive power alienating classroom and curricular practices. Theoretically, Liggett challenges teachers to go beyond cultural difference to see the concrete ways in which they reconstruct privilege in linguistic and racialized ways. Grant and Lee illustrate the similarities of the discourse of English as a globalized language with the discourse of discrimination constructed against African American vernacular English. Taylor-Mendes examines how teachers and student perspectives of speakers of English are shaped by images found in textbooks used to teach English-as-a-second language. To conclude this section, Marx examines the assumptions educators make about Latino/a learners and how these are manifested in what they do, how they do it, and the inequities that result.

“Racializing Discourses and Identity Construction in Educational Settings,” Part II, focuses on the relation between everyday social interactions and how these are part of the construction of identities. Elwood debunks cultural difference as a positive way of thinking by illustrating how it fixes identities among Japanese students. She examines how this occurs in small movements in classrooms and offers the notion of unintelligibility, as developed by Butler, to denote the human tendency of staying within what is known rather than venturing beyond. Quash, Jo and Urrieta examine how nine Asian students were beleaguered with anti-bilingual sentiments, with explicit racist remarks, with the imposition of English-only settings, and with comments

devaluing their heritage language. They illustrate the power schools can exert on the racialization of students. Katz & Iddings use a dialogic approach to examine how bilingual students position themselves, how they are positioned by others, how the use of language influences their positioning, and how teachers mediate the construction of their identities. They identify specific practices that are inclusive of bilingual learners, such as, the integration of oral and written traditions as ways of making cultural content and narratives legitimate. Bangou & Wong explore how two teachers with culturally relevant pedagogy use technology during their student teaching practices in Spanish-as-a-second-language classrooms. They find that associated with both teachers' effective use of technology was the tendency to use their racial/cultural/linguistic identities to design instruction. Ibrahim illustrates how French-speaking African immigrant students upon entering the North American society find they are constructed as Black. These identity constructions not only seem to influence their own construction of identities and whom they identify and create meaningful relationships with, but also what they learn in and outside of school. Looming large in this study is the students' relationship to American pop culture elements like rap and hip-hop.

The third part, "Toward a Dialectic of a Crucially Engaged Praxis," features contributions that use race to theorize about classroom interactions, instructional texts, curriculum, teacher education, and personal reflection on teaching. Herrera & Rodriguez Morales use the psychological meanings perspective, which they define as a colorblind non-accommodative denial of race and racialization. They illustrate how teachers approach race and racialization, showing that the "I do not see color" mentality promotes a conformist approach to curricular and instructional classroom practices. They propose an association between teachers not seeing color and their perception about the need for accommodations in classroom instruction, structure, or curriculum. Carmen Chacon offers the notion of critical language awareness as a way of engaging educators in critical reflection around power, race, and language. The author demonstrates how participants have challenged racialization and inequity discourses in multiple languages. The point here was that race and racialization is not just found in English.

Michael-Luna investigates how children's literature and classroom interaction can create spaces for counter-narratives for children in bilingual early childhood settings. She illustrates how text content may tackle cultural artifacts superficially whereas the discussion in Spanish deepens their discussions in culturally and socially responsive ways. Austin, like Liggett, illustrates how the reproduction of racialized discourses associated with nonstandard English, dating back to slavery, are found in public discourses of today. Austin, however, examines cross-ethnic/racial interactions during key reform movements in U.S. public education and how it re-emerges as racial disadvantage within teacher education programs. Haque & Morgan, by engaging in a dialogue about their entry into the field of ESL teaching, reflect on the differential privileges and constraints race, gender, and identity offer them as teachers. Finally, Luke brings together the studies theoretically by drawing on Bourdieuan notions of habitus and capital to theorize race and literacy as forms of capital. He takes positive examples available to us within the fields of language education to argue for the possibility of transforming the conditions for students to use, arrange and make the most of the resources they bring to the school and of the ways schools respond and incorporate what the students bring to push education in a futuristic and fresh way.

About the Reviewer

María E. Torres-Guzmán is a Professor of Bilingual/Bicultural Education in the Department of International and Transcultural Studies at Teachers College, Columbia University, whose work focuses on the education of Latino populations and multiple languages in education. Her scholarly writing centers on critical theory and multiple languages in education, and includes five books, three edited journal volumes, and more than fifty journal and other publications. Her latest book is *Freedom at Work* by Paradigm Press.



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