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Gándara, Patricia & Hopkins, Megan. (Eds.) (2010). *Forbidden Language: English Learners and Restrictive Language Policies*. NY: Teachers College Press

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Forbidden Language: English Learners and Restrictive Language Policies is a collection of 13 chapters by 33 authors about English-only language policies in the United States and their impact on students and teachers. The three states that have passed these restrictive policies are California in 1997 with the passage of Proposition 227, Arizona in 2001 with Proposition 203, and Massachusetts in 2002 with Question 2.

Patricia Gándara, University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) professor of education and co-director of The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles, edited the book with Megan Hopkins, a doctoral student in the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. The book is divided into four parts containing from two to six chapters each. Part I provides an overview of English

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Learners (ELs) and education language policies in the United States; Part II discusses the evidence on the outcomes from such policies; Part III asks what evidence there is for better alternatives to these policies; and Part IV charts a future course for education language policy.

The goals of the book stated in the introduction are: (1) to determine the effects of restricting ELs primary language use in their classroom on both the students' outcomes and their teachers' abilities to meet their EL students' needs; (2) to look at how the restrictive policies align with empirical research on English-only and bilingual instruction; (3) to determine what policy recommendations should be made based upon a review of this research and suggestions for alternative options; and (4) to examine the legal issues that arise given the implementation of policies that do not appear to meet court mandated success requirements over a period of time.

This book is a part of the Multicultural Education Series. In his foreword James Banks, the editor of the series, discusses the imperative for multicultural education in the United States due to its "deepening ethnic texture, interracial tension and conflict, and the increasing percentage of students who speak a first language other than English" (p. xi, citing Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). He notes the projected increase of ethnic minorities from 1/3 of the population in 2006 to 50% in 2042 (citing Roberts, 2008), mainly due to immigrants approximating one million each year mostly from Asia, Mexico, Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean. In addition, he notes that a large but unknown number of undocumented immigrants enter the U.S. each year, with estimates of approximately 12 million living in the U.S. as of 2007.

This pattern of immigration and changing demographics is affecting the public schools dramatically, with "U.S. schools more diverse today than they have been since the early 1900s, when a flood of immigrants entered the U.S. from Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe (p. xi)." The percentage of students of color has increased from 22 to 43% in the public schools from 1973-2004, and is projected

to exceed the number of white students in 1-2 decades. Banks discusses the importance of the historical context in reading this book, particularly the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s and how its gains for ethnic groups of color are and have been undercut by the rising conservative and neoliberal movements beginning in the 1980s.

In Part I, editors Gándara and Hopkins provide an overview of the changing linguistic landscape of the U.S in the first chapter. They discuss the challenges for these students and their teachers in having adequate preparation and facilities to teach them, with a discussion of the impact of the English-language assessments mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Gándara and Hopkins join Daniel Losen, Diane August, Miren Uriarte, M. Cecilia Gómez in the second chapter, which gives a brief history of U.S. language policy. Language teaching for ELs and the laws and cases affecting their rights is discussed, including the California, Arizona, and Massachusetts English-only laws passed since 1997. In the conclusion to the chapter they note that while the U.S. has no official language policy, over the last century the environment has evolved into one that requires its citizens to “a primary allegiance to speaking only in English” (p. 31).

Part II, the longest section of the book, provides more depth about the various English-only policies, the first three chapters focus on the details of the various policies, with the last three focused on the impacts on teachers and teacher education practices. Wentworth, Pellegrin, Thompson, and Hakuta discuss Proposition 227 and its impacts in California. Next, Mahoney, MacSwan, Haladyna, and Garcia find that Castañeda’s third prong has not been met in the post-Proposition 203 environment in Arizona. Uriarte, Tung, Lavan, and Diez discuss the implementation of Question 2 in Massachusetts in the fifth chapter, with a focus on Boston public schools, where they find that the dropout rate for ELs has risen dramatically to the point of crisis.

Rumberger and Tran provide a quantitative analysis of the achievement gap for ELs in CA, AZ, and MA, finding that some form of specialized instruction for these students is

indicated to help close this gap. Artiles, Klingner, Sullivan, and Fierros, discuss the impacts on schools where programs for ELs have been limited or reduced due to language policy changes, with a focus on the placement of students in learning disabled or special education classrooms where the teachers may have little to no EL training. They focus on the increased placement of these students in these classrooms in California and Arizona pursuant to the passage of 227 and 203. Finally, de Jong, Arias, and Sánchez examine the impact on teacher preparation in Arizona and Massachusetts in the wake of the passage of 203 and Question 2.

Part III looks at what might be better alternatives to restrictive language policies. August, Goldenberg, and Rueda examine the research that supports such policies, finding it lacking. Arizona and California's policies are examined in depth, with severe criticisms of how Arizona is implementing its policy in grouping ELs by proficiency level, separated from proficient model peers, and with almost an exclusive focus on language and not content development. Morales and Aldena describe promising dual-language immersion programs found throughout the U.S., which are different from bilingual programs found ineffective such as transitional bilingual education. Massachusetts, in fact, exempts dual-immersion programs from Question 2. Why they are popular is because they are built on the idea of an equal-status environment, with biliteracy and bilingualism as a goal. The fact that often the participants are mixing white children of privilege with poorer EL students of color is observed but acknowledged as a way to foster school desegregation. Finally, Linton and Franklin end Part III delving into examples of dual-immersion programs that are increasingly flourishing in California, despite Proposition 227. Parental involvement is a key ingredient, with the more educated and affluent parents found to be those generally seeking and promoting such programs.

Part IV looks to the future of language policy, with Daniel Losen's discussion of important laws and legal decisions involving the education of ELs in Chapter 12. The 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Equal Education Opportunity Act, and cases such as *Lau v. Nichols*, *Castañeda v. Pickard*, *Flores v.*

Arizona, and *United States v. Texas* are all important to the analysis of whether ELs are receiving appropriate treatment mandated by these laws and court decisions. Despite the recognition that ELs need additional educational support, he notes that the passage of the English-only laws in California, Arizona, and Massachusetts is in part due to the difficulty in showing what effective instruction methods are for these students.

Losen discusses how the field lacks research proving that one method of teaching ELs is superior to another, often due to the problem of high EL student mobility and because of inconsistency in delivery of programs. Losen notes, however, that enough time has now passed since the first law, Proposition 227, was passed to reconsider EEOA challenges. In particular, Castañeda's third prong requires a proof of success of EL programs, and the increasing data from national assessments showing a widening of the achievement gap between ELs and native English speakers, can be used to demonstrate that this third prong has not been met. *The Texas* case focuses on this very issue, and its upcoming decision may be more important than *Flores*, for example, which although remanded on other issues, found that limiting funding for ELs to 2 years was not necessarily a violation of the EEOA. This was even though the court recognized that ELs might need more than one or two years of specialized instruction.

He analyzes the possibility of challenging language policies under state constitutional laws, with the 1973 *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*, providing an adequacy rationale that could be used in future challenges. The 2000 *Williams v. State of California* case provided the basis for future adequacy action, since this case focused on the inadequate resources provided to EL students, including the lack of training for their teachers. He ends the chapter discussing the upcoming reauthorization of NCLB as one potential opportunity for significant reform, since its requirements have had such wide-reaching impacts on EL learners and the schools that serve them.

Patricia Gándara ends the book in Chapter 13 discussing how EL students must be better served. She begins the chapter with a powerful analogy to medicine, and how we would not accept medical treatment decided by a poll or referendum, particularly if it was designed by an individual lacking medical knowledge. This is what has been done with ELs in the passage of restrictive language policies. Even if students may not have received, at least initially, very different instruction after the passage of the English-only laws in CA, AZ, and MA, the teachers were impacted in many ways. How to implement the new laws, how much primary language they could use, previous bilingual training that was now devalued, all are issues they face that she discusses.

Gándara echoes Losen's evidence that the restrictive policies have not led to programs that improve EL learning and outcomes as they are required to do. She advocates for a change to such policies and a return to learning environments where ELs primary language is supported and valued as an asset, not a deficiency.

The book is intended for all who are concerned with and work with the issues surrounding ELs: teachers, teacher-educators, school administrators, researchers and policy-makers. The authors encourage readers to think deeply about how restrictive language policies have affected English Learners, with many suggesting that the new programs created under these policies fail the third prong of the Castañeda test that they provide better outcomes. The various articles and authors invite the reader is invited to think deeply about how our nation's face is changing and the importance of finding better solutions to educate all of our students appropriately, including our growing EL population.

The book provides a solid, broad discussion of the issues with in-depth analysis of the policies that have been implemented in the three most restrictive states, and is a good resource for how language policy should be changed or reconfigured to serve students in our increasingly diverse public schools. It provides a solid historical context and

discussion for those both experienced in and new to the area of U.S. language policies and its impact on the public schools to develop a deeper understanding of the challenging issues around them.

About the Reviewer

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