



Reviews

Critical Literacy, Schooling, and Social Justice, by Allen Luke. Routledge: New York, 2018. 320 pp. Hardback £84 ISBN-13: 978-1138294714

With the development of new media, it becomes increasingly important that educators have a sound understanding of how to assist children, youth, and families preparing for difficult and unprecedented challenges and problems in their daily life (Hayes, 2016). As both academic scholars and management leaders, we often reflected that how we could enable them to voice and build new cultural and political, social environmental futures. This collective book written by Allen Luke is therefore both timely and valuable not only for this reason alone, but also spans his work from early 1990s to 2018 with a broad range of countries, multicultural and different intuitions in a chronological way. These works focus on educational equity and social justice in showing sociology, culture and political engagements with critical literacies (Xii). Compared with other works that only look at a particular educational problem or phenomenon in a local context, Allen Luke's collective essays shed light on contractions, tensions and unsolved problems in a multicultural lens.

In Chapter 1, Allen Luke narratively overviews his pathway through the “politics of literacy education – via those culturally vexed institutions of schooling, the academy and government” (p.1) which is “one of unintended but then deliberate displacement” (P.1). The author mentions that for him, it might be “...even triple consciousness, was a cultural gift from family and kin, generation, culture and place” (p.1). In our opinions, we wholeheartedly agree with the author that our unique identity could be a mirror for us to reflect which is a vital key to unique epistemological and cultural power. Our unique experiences, identities and languages could enable us to revoke discussions on the development of theories and practices, and these remain key for us to deal with political struggles in order to remake schooling for social justice.

Of particular value to teachers and teacher educators, Chapter 2 is written as an introduction to the previous research studies and theories grounded in literacy as social practice. In this Chapter, Allen Luke shows how “literacy is shaped and constructed in schools, and how the selective traditions of school literacy contribute to the marginalisation of students on the basis of their gender, cultural, linguistic and social class background” (p.27). The novice teachers could learn the social constructivist approach based on symbolic interactionism and socio-historical psychology and finally develop critical sociology of the curriculum. A critical discourse analysis was used in Allen Luke’s early version of the work. In this regard, Chapter 2 focus on “unpacking how the message systems of curriculum and pedagogy work together to shape and construct a particular literate habitus” (p.28). We appreciate that the author revisited the previous version and has made it abridged for school teachers to provide abundant information with both solid theories and practice cases.

From Chapter 3 to Chapter 9, Allen Luke presents his work while being involving in teacher education programs, trying to understand literacy education in practice, constructing new theories and models, experiencing new observations from early 1990s to the middle of the 21st century. Chapter 3, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 could be formed in a line as the author used discourse analysis to present literacy education and literacy curriculum in Australia and the United States. Chapter 3 interrogates relationships between religion and literacy which is neglected in educational studies. Chapter 4 uses Foucault’s discourse theory and Bourdieu’s critical sociology to reframe early literacy training. Chapter 5 focuses on “ethnomethodology, narratological analysis and critical theory to explain identity formation in early childhood education” (p.123). For us, we believe that a unique thread could be throughout Chapter 3-6 as they outlined the “diverse social theoretic foundations and resources for a normative approach to critical literacy” (p. 167). The theoretical focus has been shifted in Chapter 7. This chapter is structured based on Allen Luke’ teaching notes and bibliographic resource for the work Allen and his colleagues developed with a generation of Queensland teacher educators, teachers and young people in Australia. As readers, the highlight of this chapter should be given to its “practical implementation by teachers working in state systems, and due skepticism towards the continued policy push for commodified, packaged approaches to literacy” (p.168). Chapter 8 and Chapter 9 are all short essays focusing on discussing questions raised in critical literacies.

The tone has been changed in Chapter 10 and Chapter 11. Allen Luke documents the transition of his positions in various roles as policy makers in state government. Allen also pointed out educational policy studies and language in education planning were vital for developing a multicultural and multilingual society in Australia and consequently benefits global community as well. One of our favorite parts is that Allen's auto-ethnography descriptions of "both arbitrariness and motivated 'play' of discourse in the sites of local policy development" (p.247) in the two chapters. Chapter 12-13 are written based on his experience working in a more complex policy Asian countries. We appreciate the author could present his classroom observation field notes on discussing "the concept of education and pedagogy as intergenerational gift" (p.272). We have improved our understandings of how cultural, linguistic and religious minority students have resisted and achieved in literacy education in East Asia. Chapter 14, as a concluding chapter, echoes the beginning of the collective volume with an interview undertaken by Antero Garcia and Robyn Seglem, with a look at the next twenty years of multiliteracies.

We hope this collective volume would not only be favored by experienced teachers but also treasured by a board range of audience, such as novice teachers, teacher educators, university students, and academics. We admire the author narrated his teaching experiences with various cases and presented field notes from classroom observations for readers. The author has added a brief narrative frame and revisited some essay pieces, but we believe that the chorological thread presentation would be better if it was interwoven with particular theoretical lens or models based on Allen's other works referenced in the book.

Reference

Hayes, C. (2016). *Language, Literacy and Communication in the Early Years: A critical foundation*. Northwich: Critical Publishing.

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MARTÍN-MONJE, E, ELORZA, I., & GARCÍA RIAZA, B. (coords.) (2015). Technology-Enhanced language learning for specialized domains. Oxon, Reino Unido: Routledge, 285 pp. ISBN: 9781138120433

Specific didactics are usually not reflected in general education journals mostly because editors tend to believe that they may only have a relative interest for the audience. On the contrary, in not a few occasions, cross-curricular methodologies are an asset for many practitioners and researchers who have the opportunity to learn from other fields. This is why a book of this nature, mostly devoted to language learning has a specific spot in a journal like *Revista de Educación*. *Technology-Enhanced language learning for specialized domains* gives an overview of the latest developments in the field of language learning through ICT. The book has an excellent combination of the theoretical approaches and their implications for the classroom. In fact, most chapters show three different levels of application: a theoretical one, an application for specialist readers and also a more accessible information that can be used not only by teachers of foreign languages but also teachers of other subjects. Thus, the book deals with an interdisciplinary approach which includes the use of technology for topics such as assessment, mobile-assisted language learning, the new language massive open online courses, corpus-based research and computer-assisted aspects of translation. The authors have a well-deserved international reputation achieved through a long-standing experience in language teaching but also in the use of technology for educational purposes as a whole.

In contrast to many educational technology volumes where chapters tend to be either an oversimplified set of activities or, just the opposite, so theoretical that practitioner teachers can hardly get to foresee the real potential of the information included in the different chapters, this book achieves an excellent combination of basic theory that can lead to the implementation of similar projects. For instance, Margarita Vinagre in chapter 2 addresses a very interesting project for intercultural competence and language that certainly can benefit many primary teachers. Likewise, M. Ángeles Escobar suggests a number of activities to enhance language learning used at the National Distance University with an interesting analysis of their effectiveness. All in all, the book is divided into six parts: 1) General issues about learning languages with computers; 2) Languages and technology-enhanced assessment; 3) Mobile assisted language learning; 4) Corpus-based approaches to specialized linguistic domains and 6) Computer-assisted translations tools for language

learners. Besides, each thematic section is introduced by a brief chapter that serves to orientate the reader and the readership will certainly benefit from these general exploratory introductions. Of all these section, obviously, the first four are a must for teachers and administrators immersed in renovating the 21st century skills in the classroom. The last two are a little more specific to researchers but still very appealing. I particularly found very attractive the fourth part which extensively deals with MOOCS (massive online courses) which are becoming very popular in education nowadays especially for underprivileged students or those who have distance problems to access very high level courses, especially because it is very common to find outstanding teachers and researchers providing these courses for free. This novelty is also shared by the third part and more specifically by chapter nine on the design and creation of materials for ubiquitous language learning (also very profitable for teachers in CLIL or bilingual programs).

As a consequence of what has been previously described, the readers of Technology-Enhanced language learning for specialized domains will find an updated reader-friendly book which is mostly accessible to a general audience and that can be used as a reference item for teachers, students, administrators and become a part of the compulsory readings of any Master of educational technology worldwide.

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Ruíz Rosillo, M. A., SANCHO GARGALLO, M. A., De Esteban Villar, M. (coords.) (2017). Indicadores comentados sobre el estado del sistema educativo español: 2017. Madrid: Fundación Ramón Areces, 183 pp. Legal Deposit: M-20554-2017.

Free access <https://issuu.com/efse/docs/indicadores-2017>

Free Access http://sgfm.elcorteingles.es/SGFM/FRA/recursos/doc/Libros/1043442843_1992017112554.pdf

Educational policies have become a fundamental aspect for the advancement of society and it is unquestionable that, more and more, reliable data must be maintained that relate the multiple variables that affect it and that, generally, go unnoticed. The volume, *Indicadores*

comentados sobre el estado del sistema educativo español: 2017 (*Indicators commented on the state of the Spanish educational system: 2017*), reports about these factors in a very simple and accessible way. This is especially highlighted by the fact that the publication on the internet is available free of charge to any reader, teacher, university student or educational manager.

This volume conveniently supplemented with very visual full color boards is divided into four fundamental parts. The first part, Education in Spain, shows aspects as important as the educational level of the population, the general lessons in detail to conclude with an analytical article of the data carried out by June Carabaña that highlights the drop in school failure and a large increase (30%), delay in completing studies (32%), and dropping out of school should be considered in countries such as the United Kingdom, Slovenia or Sweden. The second part, Resources and Educational Contexts, focuses on education budget, scholarships and study aids as well as on the faculty situation, communication and information technologies, organization and school environment including leadership school, quality and evaluation. These data are complemented by two more interesting contributions by Miguel Ángel Sancho on the benefit of educational leadership, a valuable information on how the Pisa report shows the involvement of parents by Rafael Feito and the benefits of school autonomy by Miguel Ángel Alegre. Undoubtedly, this second part is the most attractive for most of the audience and it is really interesting to see that Spanish teachers are very involved in their work, that spending on education without being brilliant is not as low as is frequently claimed, that the student ratio is in line with the more developed countries, that scholarships have fallen (although in 2017 they have increased again) and many other data that mix curiosity with the facility to better understand and value our educational system. Of particular interest is chapter 3 for educational managers, which addresses early school leaving, educational attainment, employment rates of recent graduates, and a unique and significant aspect of the 21st century, such as participation in training throughout of the life. It also adds the results of Spain in the international assessments PISA and TIMSS (international evaluation of mathematics and science) (<http://timss2015.org/#/?playlistId=0&videoId=0>). Especially relevant is the study of the low incidence of duties performed by Javier Valle, the regional differences of Gabriela Sicilia or the role of non-cognitive skills

of Jose Clavel as well as the analyzes of Pau Mari-Klose, Emma Garcia and Álvaro Choi. Finally, the last part is dedicated to the relationship between education and employment. The book is supplemented by a small bibliography, a glossary of technical terms to facilitate reading, a classification of the lessons and a list of countries participating in the international statistics of 2016.

As a summary, it is worth mentioning the practicality of this book at a time when it finally seems that Spain is moving towards a great pact for education as necessary as desired by parents and educators.

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Vesca, I. (Ed.) (2015). Spanish versus American perspectives on Bilingual Education. Alcalá de Henares (Madrid): Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alcalá. 167 pp. ISBN: 978-8416133512.

While bilingual education has been in some Spanish autonomous regional boards of education for over 35 years, Spanish-English bilingual programs have developed very recently (over the last 15 years). However, most studies up-to-now have just intended to show the benefits but left aside the many drawbacks that the system proves. The system as also relied on a number of advisors which in fact were not always original experts in bilingual education. The Franklin Institute hereby presents a short but rather interesting book showing what commons and differences can be found between the most significant and successful bilingual programs in Spain and the US.

As the book states, “Globalization has increased our expectations about Bilingual Education and also has determined our need to acquire more than one language or culture” (p. 11). This is probably the main idea behind the whole book which introduces examples of traditional Bilingual Education, Dual Language programs, Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) proposals and proposals for more humble educational paradigms of bilingual classrooms. The book includes institutional approaches or successful programs in New York, a description of the American language Policy and also the description of Dual Language programs.

From the Spanish perspective, the book includes references to the origin of Bilingual Education programs run by the British Council, the demographic and global evolution which has brought in many immigrant students who also bring their cultural and linguistic richness. The book also emphasizes the benefits of bilingual education for Spain but fails to include a serious study of its limitations which in turn can become strengths in time.

The volume is divided into four parts: Bilingual Education, Dual Language Programs, CLIL proposals and proposals for the bilingual classroom. The book also has an introduction which explains the very same content of the book. The first part has three chapters. The first compares a summary of bilingual programs in the US and Spain which is followed a Fulbright research which analyzes Bilingual Education in Spain and a third chapter on bilingual education of Puerto Rican students in New York.

The second part follows a similar pattern and after a description of Dual Language Programs by the only one chapter by Lucia Buttaró. The following part is more appealing to the Spanish audience because it deals with Content and Language Integrated Learning of central subjects. A second chapter deals with teacher education for bilingual programs. The last part of the book, on proposals for the bilingual classroom is very attractive because it deals with practical matters in schools without bilingual programs or limited resources. It is very applicable to Primary teachers with an example brought from Andalucía with International Assistants, another from Primary Education and another that reflects on the increases in motivation in bilingual programs. Another interesting chapter in this part deals with the teaching of culture which is so necessary in our bilingual schools in Spain.

All in all, this is a well-written volume with plenty of considerations which will indeed benefit many teachers. Probably, the most significant criticism is the excessive practicality of most chapters. However, this could also be positive for many teachers who need to struggle to obtain fresh new ideas for the daily activities. I really believe this can be an excellent book for many instructors in Madrid and Spain.

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