Language Policies in Education

LANGUAGE POLICIES IN EDUCATION

Critical Issues

James W. Tollefson

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How do language policies in education serve the interests of dominant groups within societies? How do policies marginalize some students while granting privilege to others? How do language policies in schools create inequalities among learners? How can schools further the educational, social, and economic interests of linguistic minorities? These questions are at the heart of fundamental debates about the role of schools in society; the links between language policies and inequalities of class, region, and ethnicity nationality; and conflicts between linguistic minorities and "mainstream" populations. The connections between language policies and inequality are examined, as well as successful efforts to use language policies in education to assert the social and linguistic rights of language minorities. * All of the chapters are original and substantial contributions to the study of language policy and exemplify major theories and research methods in the field. * The case studies are international in scope, including cutting-edge analyses of important language policy debates in North America, Australia, Eastern Europe, Africa, East Asia, South Asia, and the Pacific. * The multiple meanings of critical language policy study are highlighted. First, the term refers to the field of critical linguistics. Second, the book seeks to develop readers' ability to critically "read" language policies--that is, to understand the social and political implications of particular policies adopted in specific historical contexts. Third, it features chapters that are critical of traditional analyses that fail to capture the full social and political context of language policies and too often accept uncritically the claims of policy. * Sections are included on theoretical issues in language policies; the use of language policy for governance; the role of language policy in managing ethnic conflict; the link between language and globalization; and the impact of critical pedagogy on social change. This volume is intended for scholars and other specialists in language policy, education, applied linguistics, critical linguistics, and language teaching. It is designed for use as a textbook in graduate and advanced undergraduate courses on language policy and language education.

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