

Preface to the Fifth Edition

Readers of my earlier editions will notice some major changes in this volume, beginning with the title page. A book that started out as *Bilingual Education: History, Politics, Theory, and Practice* – a title that no one ever seemed to remember – is now *Educating English Learners: Language Diversity in the Classroom*. I hope this will be greeted as an aesthetic improvement. But more than that, the change is meant to reflect the broadening of language-minority education in recent years. English learners and the school programs that serve them are more diverse now than in the late 1980s, when the first edition of this book appeared. Meanwhile the public policy context has evolved; the politics have changed; the research has advanced. In short, for language-educators-in-training today, there is much more to know.

Bilingual education remains an important part of the picture. Yet, for a variety of reasons that will be detailed in the chapters that follow, many teachers are now serving English learners in nonbilingual settings. It is essential for these professionals, no less than their colleagues in bilingual classrooms, to understand the basics of this field. My aim here is to provide that context as comprehensively – but concisely – as possible.

Truly revising a book is like cleaning out an attic full of treasured possessions. At first it's hard to throw anything out; later on it becomes hard to stop. In earlier editions I largely avoided this dilemma by adding new furnishings without discarding the old. This time I have made the painful decisions, eliminating dated material on policy and practice, details whose relevance has faded with time, yet striving to retain matters of historical significance. Other judgment calls involved reorganizing the text to combine some existing chapters and incorporate additional ones. Throughout, however, I have continued to stress policy as a useful prism for bringing all the diverse elements into focus.

The Fifth Edition is divided into five subject areas of three chapters each. It begins with a new section on Diversity, followed by a rescrambled lineup of History, Theory, Practice, and Politics. There are five new chapters, which cover demographic changes of the past generation, program models for English learners, U.S. language policies and their ideological roots, school “reform” in the No Child Left Behind era, and the role of advocacy in language-minority education. In addi-

tion, four existing chapters on educational research and two-way bilingual programs have been considerably expanded.

Another innovation is a CD-ROM companion disk, the Online Resource Guide, which aims to facilitate further research. It contains primary source documents – key legislation, court decisions, Congressional hearings, and government reports – along with useful articles on research and practice that are in the public domain. In addition, there are numerous Internet links to copyrighted materials relevant to educating English learners. Many of the sources cited in this book are now easily accessible on, or through, the Online Resource Guide.

Acknowledgments

After nearly two decades of writing about language-minority education, I feel indebted to an ever-expanding list of people – more, I'm afraid, that I can ever thank properly. While the judgments expressed here are my own, they reflect the contributions of countless teachers, administrators, researchers, and advocates who have patiently schooled me in the basics of the field.

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James Crawford