



Negotiating Bilingual and Bicultural Identities: Japanese Returnees Betwixt Two Worlds

Yasuko Kanno

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This book examines the changing linguistic and cultural identities of bilingual students through the narratives of four Japanese returnees (*kikokushijo*) as they spent their adolescent years in North America and then returned to Japan to attend university.

As adolescents, these students were polarized toward one language and culture over the other, but through a period of difficult readjustment in Japan they became increasingly more sophisticated in negotiating their identities and more appreciative of their hybrid selves. Kanno analyzes how educational institutions both in their host and home countries, societal recognition or devaluation of bilingualism, and the students' own maturation contributed to shaping and transforming their identities over time. Using narrative inquiry and communities of practice as a theoretical framework, she argues that it is possible for bilingual individuals to learn to strike a balance between two languages and cultures.

Negotiating Bilingual and Bicultural Identities: Japanese Returnees Betwixt Two Worlds:

*is a **longitudinal study** of bilingual and bicultural identities--unlike most studies of bilingual learners, this book follows the same bilingual youths from adolescence to young adulthood;

*documents **student perspectives**--redressing the neglect of student voice in much educational research, and offering educators an understanding of what the experience of learning English and becoming bilingual and bicultural looks like from the students' point of view; and

*contributes to the study of language, culture, and identity by demonstrating that for bilingual individuals, identity is not a simple choice of one language and culture **but an ongoing balancing act of multiple languages and cultures.**

This book will interest researchers, educators, and graduate students who are concerned with the education and personal growth of bilingual learners, and will be useful as text for courses in ESL/bilingual education, TESOL, applied linguistics, and multicultural education.

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