

Epilogue

Artur Noguero¹

Dear reader,

You have now arrived at the end of this handbook, assuming you have followed the order of the contributions. This reading has been an adventure shared with members of the GREIP research group. Let us hope that it will also be the beginning of a new, shared process of creating new educational practices, inspired and strengthened by these pages. In them, you will have found many tools and resources for research on plurilingual and intercultural education. Having come to the end of the handbook, however, does not mean an end at all, but rather the opening up of possibilities for action based on what you have read, and the beginning of new projects aimed at improving language and cultural learning in contexts of diversity. In addition to being a starting point, this handbook should be a faithful, yet critical companion for the journey that you embark on, as you take on new professional commitments, and you ask questions and seek answers.

This handbook is designed primarily as a guide for graduate students who want to conduct research on different aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education, which have been the main focus of GREIP's work. The handbook will prove to be a very useful instrument, as, throughout its pages, readers will encounter a variety of research proposals, practical tools and resources, and even clues for writing texts to communicate the results of research, and to give visibility to the work carried out in educational settings. For university students, the handbook offers guidance for the completion of research projects. Tools and resources are presented in relation to specific investigations, mostly with an ethnographic and conversation analytic approach, that give meaning and unity to the volume. These studies help show how, in order to be rigorous in the application of the

1. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra, Catalonia/Spain; artur.noguero@uab.cat

How to cite: Noguero, A. (2017). Epilogue. In E. Moore & M. Dooly (Eds), *Qualitative approaches to research on plurilingual education* (pp. 501-504). Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2017.emmd2016.645>

proposals put forward in the handbook, one must be able to adapt to the specific circumstances of schools, classrooms and other educational settings.

The book also raises prospects that go beyond university-based studies and research, as it breaks with the traditional way of viewing the work of scholars, enclosed within institutions. It does this by tacking a relatively new approach to research in language teaching and learning, being that of plurilingual and intercultural education. This handbook encompasses, through different voices, the history of GREIP, a group based at a university that has always opened its doors to professional teachers and their educational practices, as central participants and objects of university research and teaching. GREIP breaks the boundaries between knowledge production and teaching practices: theory and practice are built reciprocally.

As several authors recommend in the handbook, active participation by the researcher and commitment to improving the processes of plurilingual and intercultural education must be embedded in research design. Teaching practices must be lived in order for research to be done on them, through participant observation or action research, among other approaches. In short, research should help critically mediate teaching processes in order to improve them. In the proposals found in this handbook, university students, university researchers and teachers engage on paths towards professional development. As the authors make clear, the goal of GREIP is to research collaboratively in order to find new ways of teaching languages in an integrated manner, to propose new ways of addressing the diversity of educational contexts in the multilingual societies we live in, and to ensure that plurilingual learners become adults who are sensitive to the linguistic diversity of their environment and the world.

Our society is undergoing profound and rapid changes that mean that, in language teaching, many key educational proposals have become a handicap to offering viable and effective responses to new situations. In this handbook, different conceptions of this plural and diverse reality, as well as how to teach languages, are touched on. In the different chapters, plurilingual and intercultural competence are referred to, as well as what it means to create educational

activities for their development. This involves coordination and integration between different taught languages, while also considering students' languages, languages of the environment, and other languages with which learners interact. In addition, the handbook recognizes that language learning is a social activity that takes place in interaction with other people, either directly or through written or multimodal texts, and through the mediation of technology. This includes the research presented in the handbook on telecollaboration, among other emergent forms of communication in today's society. In the handbook, language teaching takes a global dimension that accounts for variations depending on the variety of texts, areas of use, channels, media, formats, modes of textual organization, languages, etc. In short, language is treated as what it truly is: a means for the construction of complex thought, emotions, and personal and social identities.

One of the particularities of the handbook is that it represents the life of a research group, whose members have become traveling companions. This more personal story can serve as a model for real improvements in language education. GREIP promotes cooperative reflection with teachers, researchers and teachers in training, focusing on the observation and study of students' competences, their common social practices, and the role of educational institutions in plurilingual and intercultural education. Working side by side with teachers is foregrounded in the handbook as an essential starting point. I have already said that the handbook could be a faithful companion, and a good journey should never be embarked on alone, as teamwork is the key to the development and professionalization of those engaged in language teaching. Two aspects of collaborative research must be kept in mind: firstly, the need, which emerges in all the chapters, to rely on teamwork, to be open to working as a group and to avoid becoming fixed on personal research goals; on the other hand, the need to engage with educators on the development of educational practices that improve the teaching of language, and of languages.

And now, let's get to work!

Now you really have finished reading. Previously, once a book left the library or the bookshop, it was difficult to know what life it had afterwards. The situation

has now changed and the GREIP website might serve to strengthen the group's relationships with readers. The authors of this handbook, as an *opera aperta*, also hope to hear about your own research practices, as critical and faithful companions, in order to rewrite these pages with your own experiences.