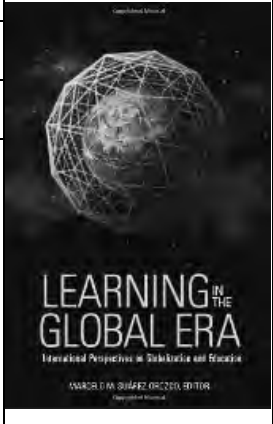


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Learning in the Global Era: International Perspectives on Globalization and Education		
Author:	Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (Ed.) (2007)	
Publisher:	University of California Press	
Pages	ISBN	Price
Paperback, 335 pages	9780520254367	\$23.95 US



Learning in the Global Era: International Perspectives on Globalization and Education is an eclectic collection of 13 (14 if you count the lengthy introduction) articles related to global education. Published in 2007, the information and data, and there is a lot of raw data, is relatively fresh and applicable to today’s issues and concerns on a variety of global education related topics.

Learning in the Global Era is divided into three main parts. The first part deals with Interdisciplinary Approaches to Learning and Understanding in the Global Era. It contains four articles ranging from Teaching Globalization to Neurobiology. This section “examine[s] the function and responsibilities of schools to equip all youth with the skills and knowledge required to lead successful lives in increasingly complex, globally linked twenty-first-century societies.”

The second part deals with Learning and the Functions of Education in a Changing Global Economy. It also contains four articles ranging from women’s schooling to computerization. This section is “a sample of basic research on the relationships between education in formal settings and rapidly changing economies and societies in the twenty-first-century.”

The third part deals with Learning, Immigration and Integration. It contains five articles on wide range of topics, from honor and human rights to integration of immigrant youth. This section illustrates the “changes [that] represent an important challenge and have implications

not only for immigration controls but also for social, economic, and educational integration policies.”

Learning in the Global Era has one of the most complete introductions that I have ever seen. It is almost twice as long as any of the actual chapters, but it does a very thorough job of explaining each and every chapter. It does this so well, in fact, I would suggest ripping it out if you plan to test anybody on this book because it is essentially built in Cliff Notes, allowing the lazy reader to circumvent reading the actual chapters altogether. The first part goes on quite a bit about the importance and inequality of education around the world, hence the need to read the book, but it is well labeled and worth glancing at to help orientate you with the rest of the book.

Learning in the Global Era provides a plethora of useful and interesting charts, graphs and tables. While not every article contains one of these visual aids, they are scattered about as needed, including a fascinating chart in the appendix dividing the world into high, middle and low income countries.

My own hesitation with this book is that I did not feel that it flowed well and, indeed, there is very little consistency in either style or format. I guess that is to be expected from a book with 20 authors, but I found it to be bit jarring at times. One minute I would be reading an article with nice flow and pacing, only to have it abruptly change at the start of a new chapter. While the book tries to organize itself into three sections, as previously mentioned, these sections are perhaps too broad and loose.

I came away with the feeling that the book’s publisher just scavenged the 13 best articles from a year’s worth of Global Education scholarship without too much regard for how well they fit together or complemented each other. I wouldn’t go as far as to say that anything in any of the articles contradicted each other, but there was obviously limited collaboration between the individual authors and I wished the book had been more upfront about this so I would know what to expect rather than have to figure it out for myself three confusing chapters in (I originally skipped reading the introduction because of its length, which turned out to be a big mistake).

That having been said, this book is a diamond mine of information on learning in the global era, by which I mean you have to dig your way through the academic jargon to claim the shiny pieces of greater knowledge and enlightenment. This book was written by academics for academics, which is perfectly acceptable in the academic world, but I wish the cover of the book had “Non-Academics Beware” stamped across it somewhere so the reader would have some forewarning about what they are about to get themselves involved in. It is by no means a light read and should be approached with all attitude of “no pain, no gain.”

However, I suppose one of the advantages of having so many different authors is that not all the chapters are as heavy reading as the rest. In fact, *Learning in the Global Era* is one of the few books that I have read that actually gets easier as you go along. The front end, especially the introduction and the first section (four chapters) is easily the heaviest reading, while, with a few exceptions, the reading picks up pace and is a little lighter the further on you go.

My final recommendation is that *Learning in the Global Era* is well worth the effort of reading for any ELS teacher or any teacher dealing with an international population of any sort. It reminds me of the old saying “the more you learn, the less you know.” Reading this

book introduced me to issues and ideas that I didn't even know existed. You can't ask questions about something you never knew was there in the first place. *Learning in the Global Era* is a starting point for educators' exploring new horizons of understanding and possibilities.

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