

Questions for reading: 'Why don't they learn English?'

Tse tackles two widespread beliefs about language in the US: Immigrants don't learn English and don't encourage their children to. We've already talked about these issues historically, but this is a contemporary perspective.

1. She first examines the reasons given by people for why they hold the beliefs just noted. What are they?
2. What particular role do these views give to bilingual education and 'English Only' in education?
3. Who are immigrants to the US up to when she wrote (2001)? Does Wisconsin pattern differently from the national trend?
4. What evidence does she present on the learning of English among immigrants? What about children of immigrants? What conclusions does she reach for both groups?
5. How do children of immigrants compare in school to other children?
6. What challenges do immigrants face in learning English? (This is one of the most important points she makes in the book.)
7. If the evidence is this clear about immigrants and their children learning English, why do these beliefs persist?