

**Piet Van Avermaet, Stef Slembrouck, Koen Van Gorp, Sven Sierens
and Katrijn Maryns (Eds.): The Multilingual Edge of Education**

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Multilingualism is a common topic in modern societies due to historical, social, political and economic reasons. These days, many schools consider multilingualism as one of their educational objectives. Being aware that English curricula are taking the biggest portion of attention in many schools worldwide, other schools are working on including minority languages in their curricula to balance and preserve the minority languages. Schools, among others, are responsible for teaching and maintaining languages through the education process. Since students spend many hours during their years at school, schools need to include bilingual or multilingual programs in their curricula to ensure their students become bi- or multilingual (Baker, 2007 in Cenoz, 2013). Furthermore, Cenoz states that plenty of schools worldwide include more than one language in their curricula as school subjects or as languages of instruction. These procedures may reduce monolingual education practices and increase the chance of minority languages to be part of the curricula (May, 2008; Baker, 2011).

Many authors have contributed to writing the four parts of the Multilingual Edge of Education book, which includes fourteen chapters. The main aim of the authors is to shed light on the importance of multilingual education. They also emphasize the necessity of using more than one language in the instruction. Indeed, The Multilingual Edge of Education suggests a wider perspective for the education system, in which linguistically heterogeneous classrooms can be applied to ultimately reach an inclusive, equitable, and efficient teaching policy.

The first chapter of the first part tackles Multilingualism in Education in a Context of Globalization. Stef Slembrouck, Piet Van Avermaet and Koen Van Gorp present a longitudinal pedagogical intervention in four primary schools that have diverse pupils from different backgrounds in Ghant. The qualitative results reveal that the intervention helped the teachers accept, appreciate, and adapt to their students' native languages. This stand from the teachers' side encouraged plenty of students to preserve their native languages and achieve high proficiency levels in those languages through reading and writing practice. Nevertheless, the quantitative results show that not all students achieved the same high level of proficiency in their native languages. Based on these findings, the authors recommend giving students room to expand their linguistic horizons by preserving their native languages and learning new ones. Besides, they recommend using scaffolding in the second language learning process.

The following paper, written by Garcia, Seltzer and Witt, presents how translanguaging pedagogy, the learners' full language repertoire, was effectively implemented in two monolingual classrooms in New York. The classes, which consisted of a group of immigrant students from different backgrounds, were challenging for the traditional teacher–student interaction. Interestingly, translanguaging pedagogy led to a higher engagement and enthusiasm for learning. It also demonstrated the multilingual and multicultural identities of the students. In the next chapter, Cummins highlights some potential barriers to immigrant students' academic success, such as low socioeconomic status, failure to understand the language of instruction, and socially-marginalized group status. The writer also refutes the idea that first-language use at home can lead to poor academic performance. He provides some evidence based on research to prove that immigrant-background students can overcome these barriers and achieve the same academic levels as their peers.

The first chapter of the second part by Marawu explores how English/Xhosa bilingual teachers' frequent code-switching in teaching might enhance information processing in South African schools in which English is always given a priority over the indigenous languages as a language of instruction. The next chapter is written by Alby and Legalise. It studies the situation in French Guiana. The results reveal that both teachers and students use their multilingual potential to maximize communication through code-switching and translanguaging. This action challenges the monolingual ideology of the institutions which attempted to prohibit the use of the other forty or so languages of the classroom. In the third chapter of this part, Caruana and Scaglione discuss how multilingualism in the school population has been largely disregarded. The study presents a sample of 57 primary schools in six countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Slovenia, Malta and Romania) and examines the results of such exclusion. The diversity of language backgrounds, including foreign or second languages taught at school, is not treated as actual interactional resources. This fact leads to a functionally monolingual educational context. Not only teachers but also parents respond negatively to linguistic diversity and plurilingual education. The authors suggest teachers should be trained in plurilingual education to transform the monolingual context. This should also be accompanied by raising awareness among parents about the benefits of translanguaging practices. Besides, Slembrouck and Rosiers concentrate on the necessity of considering translanguaging approaches as a multilingual and pedagogical practice and an interactional behavior.

The first chapter in Part III, written by Jaspers, presents research results of mixed-ethnicity classrooms in a Brussels secondary school. The researcher depended on a participant observation, in which he collected data by himself. He shows how teachers and pupils manage the daily complexities of linguistic friction by not being

strict about the school's policy that assigns Dutch as the only language of instruction. Heteroglossia can be valorized even by teachers who are generally in favor of the school policy. These teachers are flexible regarding valorization except for the office activities. In the next paper, Conteh highlights the importance of incorporating multilingualism in the education system to overcome the adversity of language diversity in school. He further states that multilingualism should be considered as a pedagogic resource for teachers and learners. Besides, he suggests applying multilingual education to promote academic achievements for learners, professional recognition for teachers, and social justice for all. Gkaintartzi, Tsokolidou, Kompiadou and Markou, in Chapter 3 of the third part, present an ethnographic study of the language views and practices of 19 bilingual students. The students are originally Albanian immigrants who attend a mainstream primary school and kindergarten in Greece. The students have shown to be fully aware of their bilingual repertoire and its social, functional, and personal significance. The chapter discusses a language project in which teachers give immigrant students a room to experience a multilingual environment. Concluding the third part, in the fourth chapter Makalela reports on the effects of a course that introduces translanguaging as a form of multilingual pedagogy. As expected, the pre-service teachers who took that course appreciated using translanguaging in teaching African languages to non-native speakers. The teachers realized that this implementation had had the effect of a cultural value beyond language boundaries.

In the last part of the book, Sierens and Ranaut present research results of four linguistically diverse urban elementary schools in Ghent. A local multilingual pedagogical intervention was implemented in these schools, which followed a monolingual ideology in public discourse and teaching policy. The findings reveal that the project assisted the Dutch-speaking teachers in creating a more home-language-inclusive pedagogy environment. Little, Kirwan and Heugh investigate how a Dublin-based school for girls, where almost 80% of the students were non-native speakers of English, responded to the challenge of linguistic and ethnic diversity. The authors suggest developing an open language policy in which an inclusive pedagogical practice of literacy skills can be applied to consider the professional autonomy of teachers. This last chapter recommends to conduct further research on urban educational multilingualism and school policy. Although multilingualism and plurilingual practices are gaining a worldwide interest, monolingual ideology is still dominant in most schools.

Nevertheless, this volume includes a great number of documented studies concerning multilingualism. These studies provide new insights and knowledge about designing an inclusive language policy for diversified students. The book is a great addition to promote multilingual and plurilingual education. It highlights the

importance of enhancing the quality of education and promoting inclusive education pedagogy for marginalized minorities. This book is highly recommended to teachers and researchers interested in multilingualism in the classroom.

References

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