

**Kahtleen Heugh, Mei French, Janet Armitage, Kerry Taylor-Leech, Necia Billinghamurst and Sue Overhead: Using multilingual approaches: moving from theory to practice.**

(London: British Council. 2019. 152p.)

*Using multilingual approaches: moving from theory to practice* is a resource book intended for professionals teaching English as a second/foreign language or for those using English as a medium of instruction in low-resource multilingual classrooms. A team of Australia-based educational researchers working with the British Council edited this ground-breaking collection of best practices in multilingual classroom activities bringing together extensive teaching experience in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts.

The underlying mission of this resource book was to bring together the growing body of research evidence supporting the use of home/heritage languages in the English language classroom as an asset for learning the language and protecting the children's linguistic rights, as well as providing valuable opportunities for teachers to draw on their students' knowledge and experience as resources for their own teaching. (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009).

In this book, the authors present different theory-driven strategies, activities, and intervention projects that were implemented, evaluated, revised, and provided recommendations for constructive teaching.

This volume is crafted into three parts, starting with the theoretical concepts, followed by the different forms of translating theory into practice and implementing it, and closing with providing recommendations for further resources to be developed and considered in different language learning contexts.

The first part, 'Guide for teachers, teacher educators and education officers,' laid out the authors' rationale for a field-driven and theoretically-grounded interest in developing better educational strategies for students in diverse, multilingual contexts, especially for those whose native language is different from the language of instruction.

In this section, Heugh, French, Armitage, Taylor-Leech, Billinghamurst, and Ollerhead explain the importance and centrality of the students' local languages in addition to English as a language for broader communication constituting the linguistic repertoire of the students. At the same time, the authors assert that learning English as the additional language must be throughout methods and strategies to ensure that it is not just learned as another subject in school, but as a tool for greater use such as a medium of instruction of other subjects and contents. The authors argue that if English is learned in what they deem to be a proper way, children will be able to learn not only in the home language but also in English, because "students cannot learn what they don't understand" (Heugh, K. et al., 2019: 9).

Authors elaborate and illustrate the use of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). Accordingly, they point at the requirements for the successful attainment of EMI in terms of the following: the number of years (6-8) required for students to learn the English language before they can use it to gain knowledge in other content areas; the teacher's language proficiency, training, and teaching resources; and the availability of resources and books in English for students to use in class or at home.

This part closes with the authors' discussion regarding differences in the types of multilingualism per the context and country, the number of languages constituting the multilingual classroom, and the diversity of minorities in a multilingual classroom. This aspect positions the following parts of the book within a shared conceptualization of multilingualism, multilingual individuals, multilingual classrooms, and societies, implying the different facets and complexity of multilingualism and an ecological linguistic system (Hornberger, 2004).

In the second part, 'Strategies, activities, and projects for the classroom,' there are 12 hands-on projects: two projects on mathematics, two projects on science, and eight projects on the English language. All the projects are described in detail and include a reference list where each project publication can be investigated in detail, along with their results, analysis, and recommendations.

All the projects follow six fundamental principles: the importance of local language, the place of the local language in the children's learning, the amount of time devoted to learning a second language (English) for a sustainable EMI, the provisions of the development of a strong biliteracy and trilateracy, the purposeful use of code-switching and translanguaging, and the provision for supporting the special needs of some students regarding their proficiency in a second, third or fourth language.

To achieve these guiding principles in the projects, the authors contributing to this section present six strategies and approaches to support translanguaging in the classroom. The first three strategies are geared toward building awareness of language learning among teachers, parents, and pupils. The second set of strategies concerns enhancing learners' reflections on what they already know, enabling purposeful use of code-switching, and the translation of and separating the use of language for content/ideas to learn the language itself.

The third part of the volume, entitled 'Further resources,' constitutes different activities divided into resources such as literature, programs, interventions, activities, etc. These resources are further categorized by domain: teacher development, community engagement, planning for learning, class environment, classroom interactions, storybooks, teaching materials, content learning, multilingual education languages, programs, pedagogy, teacher education, materials design, text development, multilingual identity, and assessment.

The section of useful literature includes categories domains such as storybooks, curriculum and assessment materials, pedagogy, and teacher education/development programs. The other section included a cluster of references and resources such as literacy and reading programs, research publications related to multilingual education, alternative multilingual education projects, and research papers and publications focusing on the advantages of multilingualism and the use of multilingual practices in the classroom.

These latter resources are annotated and contain a short description of the topics covered, providing access and references to a specific website or book, content information about the resource, such as main chapters, pages related to the topic, or useful representations (examples, charts, etc.). The authors include a useful appendix with a glossary that contains abbreviations of the terminology and definitions of terms used throughout the book.

This book is an excellent guide for professionals working with low-resource classrooms in linguistically and culturally diverse multilingual contexts. For this target audience, the book's major contribution is in the ideas underlying the projects, the strategies and the activities presented in the twelve projects. The projects were presented and organized in a user-friendly manner, with a rich and adequately theoretical overview, a varied number of activities, accompanied by the teacher's notes on how to prepare, supplement, and adapt these activities, as well as the teacher's procedural guidelines in terms of follow up reflection questions, the objectives, time, materials, steps and suitable material to carry out.

In addition to the structure and uniformity of these projects, the volume is a valuable asset because the projects are not guided by a particular syllabus or curriculum, which provides flexible application in different contexts. Also, they recommend alternative adaptation to suit different age groups and alternatives for differing levels of English than their original target group.

One of the outstanding qualities of this book is that all the projects are hands-on, and their contents deal with real-life situations, which would lead students to meaningful learning.

The activities in the projects raise students' awareness and value to their surroundings, their environment, all the languages involved in the region where they live, and the value of being in a multilingual context.

Although the projects were developed in Africa, South and East Asia, it would be interesting to implement them in other regions of the world such as Europe and North and South America, where different contexts of multilingualism, different proficiency level, diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds in need of fostering interactions between minority, regional and national languages exist within the classroom.

In conclusion, this is a valuable resource book for teachers who work with different languages inside the classroom or teach in a community with different

languages using EMI. It is a book that provides a lot of adaptable and innovative ideas for different contexts.

### **References**

**Hornberger, N. H.** (2004). The continua of biliteracy and the bilingual educator: Educational linguistics in practice. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 7(2-3),155-171.

**Skutnabb-Kangas, T.** (2009, January). The stakes: Linguistic diversity, linguistic human rights and mother-tongue-based multilingual education-or linguistic genocide, crimes against humanity and an even faster destruction of biodiversity and our planet. In *Bamako International Forum on Multilingualism*.

CLAUDIA MALTOS  
University of Pannonia  
maltos.claudia@phd.uni-pannon.hu