

Marianne Turner: Multilingualism as a Resource and a Goal: Using and learning languages in mainstream schools

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Multilingual research, intervention, and practices typically focus on either the school or the homes of children learning another language. It is rare to find work that bridges the two ‘habitats’ where children spend most of their daytime and childhood years. Snow (2009) claimed that ‘[t]he relational milieu in which children are raised could not be separated from the nature of the verbal input to which they are exposed’ (p. 101). Marianne Turner’s *Multilingualism as a Resource and a Goal: Using and Learning Languages in Mainstream schools* builds the bridge between home and school language by exploring multilingualism, both as a resource and a goal, in schools with great student diversity that also maintain institutional monolingual language learning traditions. Grounded in translanguaging (García & Li, 2014; Skutnabb-Kangas et al., 2009; Canagarajah, 2013) and sociocultural theories (Lantolf and Poehner, 2014; Vygotsky, 1989), Turner showcases the learning and use of both foreign and heritage languages across the curriculum in mainstream schools.

Bringing together the home and school environments and proposing a unique multilingual framework, she leads the reader through linguistic experiences in four mainstream Australian school settings where her multilingual framework was utilized. This multilingual framework was introduced into mainstream Australian schools where the dominant language of instruction is English, and other languages are taught (as subject matter) and valued (for practical purposes). As such, Turner argues that the additional languages taught just like any other subject matter are stripped from their linguistic and cultural capital, a perspective that resulted from neoliberal values. The dominance and privileged status of English is perceived as entirely functional and sufficient among Australians. This book makes an essential contribution in two ways. First, it expands our understanding of translanguaging and multilingualism both theoretically and practically. Second, it presents new structurally and methodologically sound curricular activities that combine linguistically sustainable pedagogical practices into institutional structures and empowers the learners’ linguistic and cultural backgrounds as a learning device.

Multilingualism as a Resource and a Goal: Using and Learning Languages in Mainstream Schools delves into translanguaging presenting insights on language theory, practice, and pedagogy. The central proposition is that schools should take a multilingual approach in educating every student, using every language even when teachers do not speak the languages that their students speak. Turner advocates the accommodation of different language learning experiences (i.e., heritage language

learning, second language learning, foreign language learning, and content-based instruction) in different contexts and contents. To this end, she proposes different categorizations of bilinguals, arguing that bi/multilingualism is a complex phenomenon that should be at the heart of contemporary and future education. She posits that teachers should be aware of and sensitive to the outcomes of the facto English-only policies in their schools, which can discourage or even suppress the de jure bi/multilingualism policies and privilege monolingual English speakers while keeping the language minority student at arm's length. The proposed multilingual framework goes beyond the typical macro pedagogic and policy concerns to address planning and micro language educational policy, specifically at the classroom and schoolwide levels with emphasis on student engagement as well as a concerted institutional ideology which promotes and nurtures the practice and maintenance of multilingual education.

The book is thoughtfully structured, making it very accessible and reader-friendly. It contains three parts that are prefaced by an introduction and followed by a concluding chapter. In her introductory chapter, Turner sets up the book's theoretical and conceptual framework, emphasizing the centrality and importance of multilingualism as a social phenomenon that requires scholarly attention. She questions (specifically in Australia yet equally applicable to any country) the monolingual paradigms that still prevail in language teaching and, in particular, in a monolingual schooling tradition. She concludes the chapter advocating for a multilingual stance to be adopted when teaching every student to empower both students from minority and majority languages in a world that has become more and more globalized and multilingual.

Following this introductory chapter, Turner organizes the contents of the book into three main parts. Part one lays out theories and research that emphasize the importance of promoting multilingual education, elaborating on three main issues. First, she lays out the need to reconceptualize our understanding of language and understand that languages are commodities and currencies in society that can reset linguistic hierarchies and provide a socially just education. Second, she argues for the need to shift practices in education that foster bi/multilingualism through translanguaging. Third, she calls for the need to bring together classroom-based multilingual policy, enhance students' engagement with different languages, and encourage multilingual institutional policy to establish a well-balanced and multilingual learning environment.

In the second part of the book, the author showcases four of her studies that introduced the multilingual framework she developed in four intentionally selected schools representing Australia's different educational system. She explores her multilingual framework in a primary school with different heritage-language

speakers, a bilingual primary school, a secondary school with teacher-driven Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) program, and a secondary school with a curricular structured CLIL program. The four studies reported in different chapters were organized into a brief introduction of the setting, the multilingual stance, the students' engagement with the languages, the institutional structure including pedagogical practices, and the students' learning opportunities and attainments. These studies led the author to conclude that there is a need to expand the multilingual repertoires rather than increase proficient monolingualism, especially in English. Accordingly, she suggests that the way to expand multilingual education is by introducing the use of heritage languages and other minority languages across curricula. The presence of authentic and active language usage for other curricular activities requires that both multilingual and monolingual teachers espouse heteroglossia practices and create opportunities for students to learn multiple languages. The author puts forward not only a change in policy and practice but also a change in the underlying ideology. The schools' underlying ideology needs to reconceptualize language teaching not just as a subject matter to be taught but rather as a tool for learning and, in so doing, enabling opportunities for more egalitarian learning powers in the school.

Part three consists of two chapters that bring the main themes and studies together. The first chapter recaps the different underpinnings of the teaching and learning objectives developed through the author's multilingual framework. The second chapter explains the convergence of the three dimensions of the multilingual framework deployed by teachers in planning how to bring together multiple languages into the classroom. Turner underscores the importance of student-centered education practices as opposed to teacher-centered mainstream practices in these Australian schools. However, she believes that the gravitas of multilingual education must have the common goal of promoting meaningful and sustainable students' linguistic diversity.

The author concludes the book by calling for the creation of more multilingual spaces where students, especially those underprivileged, will have better chances of becoming academically successful. If the school system espouses such an approach to foster more multilingual spaces, schools will become inclusive, intellectually accessible, and welcoming. This book supports other trends both in Europe and the U.S. towards declared and de facto multilingualism in the school systems. However, it also raises some questions which seem to be in contrast to these statements. For example, while advocating multilingualism in these schools, the presence and dominance of English is quite strident. The changes cannot, and perhaps, will not occur if curricula still treat languages as named language (or nation-state languages), and teaching is still assessed by the monolingual "proficiency" scale. Factors that

would further hinder such a change would be teachers not getting proper multilingual training and if students and their families are still viewed or kept as a minority and underprivileged, both educationally and possibly socially.

Turner's *Multilingualism as a Resource and a Goal* is of great relevance to both undergraduate and postgraduate students engaged in teaching-learning languages in a multilingual context, TESOL, and applied linguistics. Moreover, the book offers valuable insights for school leaders and practitioners towards making informed decisions about how best to promote multilingualism in their school and enhance the learning outcomes of bi/multilingual. The author has gone out of her way to balance the unavoidable technical terminology involved in multilingualism with prosaic language that makes it easy to follow. She has clearly visualized Australia's language context in which she magnified the impact of the neoliberalist attitude towards what language is and what language teaching and learning processes are involved.

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