

## Book Review

**Carder, Maurice. *Bilingualism in International Schools: A Model for Enriching Language Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. 2007.**

An often overlooked locus of the convergence of societal and individual multilingualism can be found in the communication occurring in and around the international schools of the world. From a societal perspective, these schools daily confront the curricular and social challenges posed by a linguistically very diverse student (and staff) population. At the level of individual multilingualism, many if not most students in these institutions are faced with a situation requiring the development of not only their home language, but also the language of the community in which the schools are located, and a language of international communication. From this perspective, the title of Maurice Carder's book is something of a misnomer. It might better be called *Multilingualism in International Schools*.

As the eighth volume in Multilingual Matters' "Parents' and Teachers' Guide" series, *Bilingualism in International Schools (BIS)* has the dual purpose of convincing parents, school leaders and teachers of the long-term benefits of a program designed to address the linguistic demands faced by their children, and of offering concrete suggestions for putting such a program in place. It's not a volume intended for academicians or graduate students. Nevertheless, as Jim Cummins points out in the Forward, Carder argues forcefully for the advantages multilingualism, first language maintenance and L1 literacy development more generally. To my knowledge, it is the

only volume that does so within the context of International Schools and the issues of relevance to them. In doing so, it sets forth a detailed account of an educational program aimed at students' developing multilingualism and offers a window onto an area of language education often unfamiliar to applied linguists.

The book is based on Carder's lifetime of experiences working in International Schools around the world and in the professional organizations that service them, such as the International Baccalaureate Organization and the European Council of International Schools. From that experience comes the basic premise for the book, namely that 'in International Schools there are students from many nations, who speak many languages.' (p. xii) To address the needs of these students, Carder describes a program designed 'to provide an enriched education for second language learners' (p. xiii) established at the Vienna International School, where he has taught since 1981. The model consists of three components: English language instruction for non-native speakers, staff training stressing the benefits of bilingualism, and Mother Tongue instruction to develop the first language and literacy of students for whom it is not English.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter briefly outlines the evolution of International Schools from earlier overseas schools established to serve the children of dependents from the home country. As the student bodies at these schools became more international, there was a growing need make language services available to students who speak neither the host country language nor the language of instruction (usually English)

as a first language. The chapter goes on to enumerate the advantages of additive bilingualism and the dangers of programs that result in subtractive bilingualism. Finally it outlines the three-component model that the rest of the book advocates.

Each of the next three chapters is devoted to a description of each of the three components. Chapter Two, devoted to the Second Language Program, identifies two characteristics of a good program as personnel trained in applied linguistics and inclusion of the costs of ESL into general costs of education. For early childhood (ages 2-6) and primary level education (ages 6-11), Carder recommends a model in which children who speak the host-country language and children who speak English be taught in a bilingual class while linguistically heterogeneous classes be given EFL instruction. In settings where all three populations are present, Carder recommends bringing all three groups together for some subjects taught in English. He warns, however, against misdiagnosing ESL children as children with learning difficulties (LD) and against assigning letter grades in content subject to ESL students before they are ready. For secondary ESL students, the author proposes ESL subject-content parallel programs, in which there are special sections of ESL history, ESL geography, ESL science, etc., as the way to develop the context reduced and cognitively demanding language proficiency (Cummins 2000) necessary for academic success.

Staff training is the subject of Chapter Three. Here Carder describes in detail two training modules designed by the South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services, *ESL in the Mainstream* and *Language and Literacy*.

The first is a 25-hour course intended to enhance understanding of ESL learners' needs, to develop awareness of approaches to learning materials and teaching practices to meet those needs, and to foster collaborative relationships between ESL/Bilingual specialists and subject area teachers. The second is a nine-module course presenting a common framework for educators to talk about language and literacy issues confronting ESL students.

Chapter Four discusses the Mother Tongue component of the program and aims to 'show that schools not running some sort of mother tongue programme are disadvantaging students, possibly undermining their cognitive development, lessening their chances of successful reintegration into their home country and limiting opportunities for variety in their lives' (p. 97). It offers theoretical justifications for mother tongue development, and concrete suggestions for setting up the program and recruiting teachers. The curriculum content is based on the students' national syllabus plus 'repair work' involving spelling and vocabulary to facilitate writing in the students' L1.

Enlisting parent support is the topic of Chapter Five. In it Carder delineates ideas and information for presentations to parents. Topics include additive vs. subtractive bilingualism, common underlying proficiency, and the threshold levels of bilingual proficiency necessary to access the cognitive advantages of bilingualism. The chapter also critiques of some of the resource materials available for promoting parental involvement.

The last and best of the chapters traces the development of the ESL-Mother Tongue program at the Vienna International

School over the course of the school's history since 1978. Here Darder describes the diverse groups of students, in terms of language backgrounds, ages and proficiency levels, enrolled at the VIS and tells how he and the VIS dealt with the challenges encountered in trying to address the various linguistic needs of this diverse student body: internal conflicts of administrative structure, program content and scheduling; recognition by examination boards; support from the professional associations of International Schools, etc. The establishment of the Mother Tongue program in particular is an accomplishment which those concerned with language education would do well to study carefully..

Each chapter of the book contains a chapter summary, references for further reading and a list of relevant websites. Major points in each chapter are illustrated with vignettes from students' own writing.

Intended as a guide for parents and for teachers without a strong background in applied linguistics or language development, the book lays out in a simple, straight forward, often repetitive manner the theoretical assumptions and framework for the program. Unfortunately the internal organization of many chapters is sometimes opaque, and chapter titles and subtitles don't always reflect their content. For example, among the twelve sections in the first chapter, 'International Schools: Their Origins and Development; Overview of the Three-programme Model for Second Language Students,' only is dedicated to the origins and development of International Schools. Four of the sections deal with the model. The section entitled 'Different Models of Bilingual Education' contains only two, and although the author asserts that these are

the most suitable for International Schools, a critical reader might want to read about more and make that decision for oneself.

Issues of organization and depth of discussion notwithstanding, the book affords an excellent window into the challenges and complexities of language education in an International School setting. The establishment of an ESL and Mother Tongue Department and its apparent success in promoting high levels of multilingual proficiency begs for more research, both quantitative and qualitative, by applied linguists interested in language education issues in all settings and at all levels, from classroom practices to measures of multilingual proficiency to policy and planning.

*Reviewed by*

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