



## The Impact of Multilingualism on Global Education and Language Learning: A Book Review

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In the rapid changing academic setting, language teachers are facing different issues and realities that require drastic and immediate measures for the improvement of language instruction. Gone are the days when traditional approaches and methods were being employed. Learners follow the trends and developments in technology and their attention spans keep on changing dramatically. It is not enough that language teachers will just provide assessment on grammar and speaking skills to evaluate the performances of the students, rather, they have to explore and uncover different factors that are pivotal in the teaching and learning process. The reviewers have decided to evaluate the book "The Impact of Multilingualism on Global Education and Language Learning" having the belief that in the contemporary period, multilingualism is such a formidable phenomenon that has tremendous impact on the lives of students, global education, and language learning and teaching. The ideas and insights crystalized from this review will help academicians, curriculum developers, language teachers, and educational leaders launch new projects for new directions in the field of education and language teaching. In a bigger world, people can see the effects of multilingualism due to spread of cultures, speedy communication, and diversity of learning climate. At the end of this book, the readers are able to imagine the power and influence of multilingualism and plurilingualism in changing educational landscape.

The First Section is Multilingualism and Plurilingualism. In here, multilingualism is defined and explained. It brings abundant ideas and realities to people on the concepts and events they witness related to multilingualism and plurilingualism. Indeed, the rise of globalism and diffusion has led to interculturalism. Peoples around the globe have embraced common beliefs, fashion, ideas, and culture. Plurilingualism has been defined in this section with relevance to multilingualism. From this part, different ideas and insights are being offered. It brings and connects readers to possible existence of the phenomena such as multilingualism and plurilingualism in a diverse region or country. Also, the attitude of a group of people and community is being examined and described here. Through clear illustration, linguists and language teachers can get a picture of the phenomena and the ways they can do to revise and update their instructional materials and teaching methods. Further, the importance of having a lingua franca is clearly expounded here. Recent studies were explored on how new technologies can help spread English as a lingua franca. The section concludes the fact that because of the prevalence of multilingualism and plurilingualism, there is a great chance that multiculturalism also exists rapidly as it is occurring now.

The Second Section of this book is the multilingual landscape. This section delves on how the concept of multilingualism significantly entered the world of sociolinguistics. It narrates the beginning of multilingualism, and how it was before monolingualism became a norm, from the beginning in the Old Testament to the rise of Roman Empire in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The discussion is deemed to be very important for linguistics enthusiasts and researchers as it gives in-depth insights on historical foundation of multilingualism. We can no longer deny the fact that multilingualism is an important consideration in language policies and curriculum development. For instance, here in the Philippines, many linguists claim that learning English effectively is always attributed to the learner's mother tongue and how it highly influences the learners' second language acquisition. It is interesting to discover in the narrative that aside from many European nations like India, China, and Africa multilingualism is a norm. Nowadays, different countries have different official languages spoken on the record. We come to think about how these countries develop, plan, and implement their English language policies. The diversity of language all over the world is very evident. The world has 195 countries, but language spoken is several thousands more. Although languages are diverse, it not a hindrance in globalization. In this case, the role of English language plays a very important role in the aspiration of all the nations to globalize their citizens.

The third section is the role of English. English plays an important role in communicating to different places. This section of the book highlights that all languages are mandatory in various places in the world; hence, English language cannot be an exemption. This portion somehow made us realize that proficiency in English is of utmost importance especially if a person wants to land on a high paying job. Moreover, English is already integrated in the various curricula from early childhood education up to high standards of entrance examination in different universities. The author cited different excerpts of several studies as evidences for a notion that English has been becoming more dominant while the world is getting more multilingual. Compared to Latin-Greek languages as discussed in the narrative of the second section, English is not the language of the elites, but an aspirational language for all. Since English plays a very important role in a person's life, English as a national language is pushed by the government officials. However, lack of preparation for materials is a big problem to teachers. For instance, in a case study by Rwanda, the French Government mandated that a switch from French to English, with only a year of preparation; thus, the proficiency to use English will of course may be compromised and cause a bigger problem, since some teachers are not as well proficient in French let alone another language. The lack of preparedness and English Proficiency will only multiply the problems which will make their life miserable as claimed in the excerpts shown. In addition to that, they claim that it could be more challenging as some students feel embarrassed and failure because of the mistakes they made using the English language. This section is concluded with a realization that English is not really a threat for establishing identity; instead, a powerful tool to enrich one's cultural uniqueness.

The fourth section is the trends and issues in multilingual education. This portion talks about how English was viewed as just a subject by some, and in reality, is used in the learning process throughout the curriculum. This part scrutinizes reasons why English has been tagged as an important tool in a student's life. Many believe that students must possess higher order thinking skills such as hypothesizing,



evaluating, inferring, generalizing, predicting or classifying. Through this, student's cognition will be developed and thus, they will not forget English. One example is the Tower Hamlets, a school in London who was reported to be the worst performing schools and now one of the best performing schools in the country. This was evident in their National Curriculum Test. During this test, students' grades in reading and writing surpasses Kent. This book also mentioned how learning English is not only limited to the educational establishment, but outside it through daily conversations and the use of internet. Since the diversity of the culture of European Union (EU), is very evident, the aim of the EU. To conclude this section, the author clearly explains about EU's language policy. He states that the main goal of Language Policy is that every European shall be able to speak at least two (2) more languages in addition to their mother tongue. This is due to the fact that in EU acquiring foreign language competence is a basic skill the citizen needs to improve their educational and employment opportunities.

The last section is the recommendations for national systemic change. In this juncture, the author discusses the societal change to support multilingualism and educational change. We believe in the two main propositions made by the author here. The first one being the overall societal context that is wider in scope than education; and lastly being the specific direction of educational provision and resource allocation. He explains it by mentioning Comenius (1657) and Piaget (1993). The former believed that the society's fate is dependent in the quality of education, while the latter claimed that education is not dependent to the action of school and family; instead, an essential building block of life in general. Human society is an educational society. The school system is constantly improved throughout the world to accommodate the demands of English proficiency. With this, the researcher suggested to the policy makers three (3) areas that they should consider: Validation, Practical Encouragement, and Specific Planning. This requires different language goals rather than one size fits all. Since each language require different approaches, in addition to that not all languages are learned formally. Anyone can learn language through listening to music, playing games, and watching films and of course communicating electronically. The new integrated language policies have lots of consideration. With this, the magnitude of these effects pale into insignificance compared with class/teacher effects. Since the teacher plays a very important role in the implementation of these policies.

### **Conclusion**

The reviewers recommend this book because of its functional, practical, and authentic value. The sections are extensively and intensively discussed. They offer practical and theoretical examples that are felt and visualized by any reader who has growing interest in the field of linguistics and language education. Through this scholarly work, more language teachers can better understand the complex and dynamic transitions and developments in language teaching and learning. They can better design effective and appropriate materials and books that can address issues, challenges and problems in language education. In the years to come, more and more constructs will be discovered in relation to multilingualism and plurilingualism but language teachers and linguists have to do introspections on how education and stakeholders can remain attuned to global changes.

### **Reference**

Lid, K. (2018). *The Impact of Multilingualism on Global Education and Language Learning*. Cambridge Assessment English Perspectives UCLES.

### **Bio-Notes**

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