

Martha Montero, Ed. *Bilingual Education Teacher Handbook: (v.I) Strategies for the Design of Multicultural Curriculum*. (Cambridge, MA: National Assessment and Dissemination Center for Bilingual/Bicultural Education, 1979) 128 pp., (v.II) *Language Issues in Multicultural Settings*. (Cambridge, MA: National Assessment and Dissemination Center for Bilingual/Bicultural Education, 1981) 89 pp.

*Bilingual Education Teacher Handbook* is a two volume collection of articles developed by bilingual staff at the Boston University Training and Resource Center of the National Network of Centers for Bilingual Education. The goal of this project is to “develop teacher awareness of those areas that underlie bilingual education, namely, (a) the role of the systems-context approach; (b) the role in curriculum design of goals and objectives; (c) the development of pedagogical skills in bilingual education.” (p. 3) The articles were not intended to be neatly packaged curriculum kits, but rather to provide the fundamental basis for developing and evaluating bilingual programs. Their major focus is on the junior high school and adult school population. The successful use of these volumes as handbooks is dependent upon the devoted energies of teachers, community members, parents, and administrators who are totally involved in bilingual education.

Volume one, *Strategies for the Design of Multicultural Curriculum*, discusses various aspects of curriculum design. What is unique about the five articles is that together they form the rudiments for developing a bilingual curriculum. This volume is more than just an anthology of articles and opinions; it has been carefully integrated to offer teachers a useful guide for creating their own curriculum.

Antonio Simoes, in “The Systems Context Approach to Curriculum Theory in Bilingual Education,” presents an eclectic yet systematic perspective for understanding all aspects of human/cultural and language experiences as a means for designing bilingual curriculum. He believes a systems approach is a good alternative to the haphazard methods generally used in this process. Simoes’s theory outlines the meaning of systems, i.e., the universal ideas, theoretical schools of thought, and institutions, which are affected by context (cultural variables), pedagogy (teachers), ideology (beliefs in how children learn), and existential concerns (the multitude of human experiences).

In conjunction with Simoes’s article, Arlene Duelfer, in “The Statement of Goals and Objectives in Bilingual Education,” suggests that consistent goals and objectives for effective instruction are imperative in a bilingual curriculum design and gives examples of such objectives.

Gregory Chabot discusses the use of films, slides, audio tapes, video

tapes, skits, and puppet shows as a means of giving oral language training in a bilingual context in “Teacher Strategies: The Role of Audio Visual Methodology in Bilingual Education.”

Martha Montero examines the impact on the curriculum of how cultures change or vary from one another, and how certain ideas are viewed differently depending on one’s cultural background. Further, Montero, in “Structure and Context in the Design of Bilingual Multicultural Curriculum, “includes strategies for understanding these variables by intertwining history, sociology, economics, psychology and politics when children look at their own families, neighborhoods, cities, and nation.

Finally, Mae Chu Chang, in “Procedures in Curriculum Evaluation,” describes what is necessary to evaluate the program. Chang encourages field testing programs and illustrates the need for cultural sensitivity in the evaluation process. This article was less detailed and lacked the depth of the four previous articles. Volume I is well worth reading for teachers not only in bilingual education but also for those truly committed to the multicultural learning process.

Volume II, *Language Issues in Multicultural Settings*, encompasses the ideas of five authors. Maria Estela Brisk’s article “Language Policies in American Education,” traces these policies from the American Indians, first European settlers, Africans, 19th Century Europeans to the present. Brisk reviews the various acts, Supreme Court decisions, and legislation which support bilingual education in the United States. Her examination is superficial and erroneously promotes the assumption that most Americans have become “reconciled to cultural heterogeneity and the survival of our rich and varied cultural heritage” (p. 10). She needs to be cognizant of the constitutional amendment introduced by former Senator S.I. Hayakawa concerning the adoption of “English as the Official U.S. language” and the support he is generating for its passage.<sup>1</sup>

“Understanding the Role of Language in Bilingual Education,” by Lucy T. Briggs uses sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics to analyze language and the roles languages play within cultures. She also points out how value judgements are used to categorize languages—creolization and pidginization—as well as illustrating the usefulness of such terms when they are applied to cultural/linguistic mixes. Understanding the differences among languages, formal and informal uses, syntax and grammar, and the variety of meanings within an ethnocentric cultural perspective enhances the language sensitivity necessary for any bilingual program. Briggs is one of the few authors who thoughtfully examines not only language and cultural diversity but also how audio, written and perceptual variations that are understood within a particular cultural framework are often misunder-

stood by observers.

Charlene Rivera and Maria Lombardo, in "Considerations for Developing Language Assessment Procedures," establish basic guidelines which must be used to assess adequately a child's proficiency in speaking, writing, listening, and reading. They enumerate the variables which must be considered, i.e., school, peer, community, and family environment, along with the student's cognitive abilities. They also cite the difficulties in any attempt at language assessment, again demonstrating the overriding need for culturally and linguistically sensitive personnel.

The final essay by Celeste E. Freytes, "Procedures for Assessing Learning Problems of Students with Limited English Proficiency," targets another aspect of language assessment. Freytes discusses psychological and behavioral patterns which may hinder a child from becoming proficient in English. The strategies suggested for identifying these problems are tests (standardized and non standard), informal methods (teacher observations), and teacher tasks (directed instructions). The teacher is the key to recognition of the existence of maladaptive psychological and/or behavioral patterns among his/her student population.

Because it concentrates only on bilingual ability and language assessment procedures, Volume II is limited in its worth to bilingual teachers. Assessment guidelines *per se* fail to provide information which is appropriately culturally attuned, information which would enhance the book's value in the field of multicultural education. The sole exception is Lucy Briggs' article, which integrates linguistic and cultural facets of evaluation.

The *Bilingual Education Teacher Handbook* is an important work because it is one of the first attempts to incorporate a multicultural framework in developing a bilingual program. Much more groundwork in this area is required, primarily because bilingual and multicultural education continue to be appendages to the "regular" school program rather than the standard educational format.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>For an indepth review of Hayakawa's proposed amendment and some implications for ethnic people, see Ricardo Valdez's article, "Dejenme Hablar por Mi Raza!" (Let Me Speak for My People!) *National Association for Interdisciplinary Ethnic Studies Newsletter*, Vol. 7, No. 1, May 1982, 26-28.