

Imagining Multilingual Schools: Languages in Education and Glocalization. Ofelia Garcia, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and Maria E. Torres-Guzman (eds). Avon: Multilingual Matters 2006, Pp. ix+331. ISBN 0-85359-894-1/ EAN 978-1-85359-894-4 (pbk).

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Education like language must be faithful. I know this from years long ago. She was small and thin with black tangled hair and her name was Mary Rose. She lived in a neat caravan surrounded by dangerous dogs on dismal scrubland in a '50s industrial town in Northern England. In the primary school class, Mary Rose was scorned as an unwashed, poor, child. As an Irish-named 'minority' boy, myself, I was eager to join the mockery of another who was even further down the scale of contempt than me. Mary Rose spoke Yorkshire but talked funny as well. Her mother spoke to her in some other tongue. Mary Rose was what we called 'Gypsy'. Her mother plied the housing estates selling heather and curses and false teeth. Over the years, in my dreams, I have fallen on my knees, with tears, and begged forgiveness of Mary Rose. Where are you now little Mary? You have done great good to me. Speak to me, little Mary, and I will tell you and I will listen to your lovely voice, your mother's smiling language at the school gate.

Witness the spirit and adaptations, all over the world, displayed by multilingual children and their good teachers when confronting the lacquered armour of the state. What spirit! What skills! Too frequently educators and linguists assume the irrevocable imposition of the powerful on the powerless. It is familiar posture. It is a dreary picture. An innocent minority submits itself to imperial thuggery and exploitation. THE PEOPLE chug like a sad line of Butoh dancers, dreamlike and silent, across a stage. Their speech first humiliated then crushed. But does not this assumption accord too much prestige and power to the powerful? What of the agency of people, the power of the 'powerless' to strive and assert and overcome? What of the ability of people, nay children even, to make choices and impose those choices on their world. A further danger in this stance is the reliance on the rhetoric of binary opposites: the 'powerless' and the powerful, real people and the rulingclass, the indigenous and the colonized, big bad languages and small/indigenous good languages. Sure. But can we get a re-tread for these wheels?

This inspiring book is hope and imagination in full wing-span. From the editorial team of Garcia, Skutnabb-Kangas and Torres-Guzman this confident volume describes how many schools (and out-of-school programmes) around the world are, even now, bending their policies and pedagogical efforts to develop multilingualism through institutions with different populations: immigrant students, indigenous students, traditional minorities, majorities and multiethnic/multilingual groups. The book outlines the conceptual threads of this large tapestry through wide-ranging case studies around the world – how local conditions enable us to imagine and create multilingual educational spaces.

The book is composed of five sections. Following a comprehensive introduction, Jim Cummins highlights the centrality of the interactions that teachers construct with their students: a 'zone of proximal development.' Academic development occurs in such a space when there is both maximum cognitive engagement and maximum identity investment by students. Moreover, students' work in this educational framework is termed "identity texts" insofar as students invest their identities in these texts (written, spoken, visual, musical, or combinations in multimodal form) that hold a mirror up to the students in which their identities are reflected positively. In the next chapter, Helot and Young describe a language awareness project in a primary school in Alsace, France designed to legitimate the regional and immigration languages of some of the pupils in the eyes of all learners. European governments' parsimonious attitude to language rights is well exemplified by the authors. Their analysis is situated in a political context where "the protection of French in France, in Europe, and in the world is a priority and more of an issue than the protection of minority languages' (p.71). The reimagining continues with the results of a longitudinal study of Native American youth which examined the evolving contemporary causes of language shift among the young (McCarty, Romero, Zepeda). Three crucial themes were identified: concern about the future of the heritage language, the politics of shame and caring, and the constraints of larger standardizing regimes. The attitudes and motivations of schoolchildren are also concerns of Etxeberria-Sagastume who examines their disposition towards the learning of Euskara, Spanish and English in the Basque Autonomous Community of Donostia-San Sebastian. The analysis is particularly interesting given the challenged nationhood of the Basque Country. What languages do we call 'our own'? Inevitably, such thoughts ring in the mind of a reader of this book.

Research shows, unambiguously, that the longer children are educated in the language of the dominant community and the home the better the results. Likewise, immersion pupils in Canada acquire normal English proficiency together with a high level of fluency in a second language (Baker 2001). The book expands, in Part 3, towards the schooling theme, so-called 'formal instructional spaces', when Edwards and Pritchard Newcombe examine the possibilities of employing marketing strategies with prospective parents in Wales to promote the benefits of bilingualism. Likewise, the issue of cultural capital arises in Ogulnick's analysis of popular education and language rights in indigenous Mayan Communities and in particular the emergence of new social actors and gendered voices.

In Part 4, Shohamy envisions 'imagined multilingual schools' where Multilingualism Rules OK! but points out roadblocks that prevent the fantasy from becoming reality: the messages of de-legitimacy and suppression of other languages. Oh! And myth and propaganda. And blame? Bilingualism is often blamed for learners' low academic performance. Natch. Escamila deconstructs this nicely in a case study of Spanish/English bilinguals in the USA. From the battlefield in Colorado to Etsha Primary School 6 in Botswana where Nyati-Ramahobo tells the tale of government efforts to create monolingualism where 99% of the population speak one of 26 unrecognized languages.

In the final section, 'Negotiating Policies of Implementation' Hornberger looks at US language education policy at the federal level since 1974 from the perspective of one urban school district. The microcosm of important legal judgments which affirm the right to equal opportunity for all children irrespective of race or language origin have larger consequences as elucidated by Hornberger. Sure-footed, the author has captured the essence of this book which is to "recognize and celebrate" the seemingly stop-gap and transient but which succeed in forging much greater paths to the future: "I have mused on the hope and example offered by multilingual education policies, such as Boliva's 1994 Education Reform and post-apartheid South Africa's 1993 Constitution, in creating ideological and implementational spaces for imagining multilingual schools" (p.223). An example is Latin American bilingual education which is periodically reinvented through bottom-up indigenous proposals; in Bolivia and Guatemala especially where indigenous peoples constitute real national majorities (Lopez). The investigation of Indian multilingualism by Mohanty demonstrates a different reality where the "hegemonic role of English gives rise to a socially legitimated and transmitted hierarchical pecking order in which mother tongues are gradually marginalized and pushed into domains of lesser power and resource in what can be characterized as a "self-defensive anti-predatory strategy" (p.9).

There are uncomfortable moments in this book. Talk of 'linguistic murder' leaves this reviewer nervous. Just so the reader understands, the term 'killing' is repeated eight times in one paragraph, p.40. Yes. English marches on unchecked and responsible for much subtractive, push-out education. But talk of 'murder' is noisy and shrill. It is a burglary of conventional meaning. And what is worse, I know that such usage is entirely justified. By contrast, the term 'dispossession' (p.41) seems to do the trick. It is full of powerful historical and political nuance. 'Dispossession' may not assuage a victim's justified anger but it seems less disorienting as 'linguicide' (p.108). Dispossession helps maintains 'glocal' perspective – lexical modesty even. We must be careful with words. When physical murder and torture are being perpetrated on a mass scale around the world, mostly death by government, it makes linguists aware that they are grave guardians of words and good usage. A proper response to my unease might be to object: "Hey! Language is a raw material. It is a quarry of metaphor. It is designed to rebuild perceptions. Language exists also to effect change not to protect conventional usage and justify YOUR sensibilities, Sunny Jim". This is not my book so maybe I should shut up and play my guitar. I am not sure. Doubts remains.

The issue of minority children's in-between or 'borderland experience' (p.37) is interesting and merits further treatment. Another volume please. To explain a sidestream child's cultural hybridity is de rigeur if only to ward off stereotype and essentialism. I have noted elsewhere, in what I have termed 'metroethnicity' (Maher 2005), how young urban Japanese, both mainstream and minority, are eager to embrace multiculturalism, cultural/ethnic tolerance and multicultural lifestyle especially when it comes to friendships, music and the arts, eating, dress. It is a kind of post-ethnicity state whereby both Japanese and ethnic minorities 'play' with ethnicity (not necessarily their own) for aesthetic effect. It involves a cultural crossing, self-definition made up of borrowing and bricolage,

a sfumato of blurred 'identities', what one might term 'metroethnicity'. I have argued that metroethnicity is a critique of history. First of all it is skeptical of 'heroic ethnicity' by which a particular ethnic group claims the right to special sympathy and privilege from the mainstream ('just look how badly we have been treated). Secondly, it rejects the logocentric metanarrative of traditional ethnicity by which a particular ethnic group claims an internally validated description of itself ("we know what's best for our people').

This volume is a fine collection of articles by leading scholars in the area of bilingualism. It is relevant to scholars and students of applied linguistics in general and it provides an informative 'what's-going-on' for researchers in the field of bilingual education. Replete with multilingual chapter summaries the book displays abrupt shifts in style and articulation and length and emphasis. This is excellent. The volume thus becomes itself: the personalism that is celebrated in its pages - full of character, unexpected, lyrical and in places even affectionate.

In return for the pleasure that the book gave this reviewer I will give the authors a story. Listen. One sunny afternoon in Moscow, many years ago, the old Principal, Rabbi Blue, accompanied a school inspector from the Board of Education to the school gates. They stopped to talk. "I still don't get it," said the Inspector shaking his head. "Why? Why teach Hebrew and talking that Yiddish stuff at expense of Russian? Look around. Do you see what children really need in this society? And look at you. You'll never make it over there. Right? Is it just so as to be able to read THE book?" Rabbi Blue smiled. "No, not just that. Let me tell you the secret. Hebrew is a little language on earth but it is the language of Heaven. I need this language for when I go to Heaven." "And what, old man.." the Inspector grinned, "..and what if you go to Hell?" "No problem my son," Rabbi Blue replied, "I already speak Russian."

How can contemporary education confront the old and trusted language dualisms and bring instead a new spirit of promise and delight towards the advent of personal development and social justice? The first exercise towards such great goals is surely poetic. The authors of this book are correct. First, imagine.

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