Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, Robert Phillipson, Ajit K. Mohanty and Minati Panda (eds.) 2009. Social Justice through Multilingual Education. Bristol, Buffalo / Toronto: Multilingual Matters Limited. xvii + 389 pages, ISBN: 9781847691897, $88

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Introduction

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The present book offers evaluations of theories of multilingual education based on research in several contemporary issues of bilingual and multilingual school education throughout the world. Reading through it, one finds the answers to the questions on specific topics surrounding the plausible means of provisioning of effective and productive education in bilingual and multilingual societies in different countries. This is achieved, probably I should suggest, following the layout the book has.

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The volume opens with the Table of Contents, followed by an introduction to the twenty contributors to the volume (pp.ix-xv) and the editors' foreword (p. xvii-xviii). In some hundred and forty one pages, (pp. 3-344), the heart of the book is provided with seventeen book chapters which are organized in five parts as follows:

Part 1	Introduction	pp. 1- 15
Part 2	Multilingual Education: Approaches and Constraints [three chapters]	pp. 18- 81
Part 3	Global and Local Tensions and Promises in Multilingual Education [six chapters look into the situations in individual countries]	pp. 83-198
Part 4	Multilingual Education in Theory and Practice – Diversity in Indigenous/ Tribal Experience [five chapters]	pp. 199-297
Part 5	Analysing Prospects for Multilingual Education to Increase Social Justice [two chapters]	pp. 299-344

The seventeen chapters illuminate each other successfully. This suggests that the authors have been acquainted with the topic under discussion and communications between them were conducted well. I would not hesitate to mention that the cross-referencing and borrowing ideas across chapters make the volume quite coherent.

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After these parts, the book proceeds to provide the list of references. It informs the reader how the contributors are both well informed and updated on the subject matter discussed in their individual works. And I will not bother myself, neither the reader, to bring in a suggestion for other readings nor any new literature in this review. The book ends with an index for subject and person (pp. 381-389).

The Contents of the Chapters in the Volume

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It should be noted right away that the chapters in this volume are quite detailed and in several occasions are technical as far as multilingualism and education are concerned. I would possibly

not be able to shrink the contents into this summary. Nonetheless, I will try to point out some of the main points towards the understanding of the contents of each chapter.

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Part 1: Ajit K. Mohanty initiates the book with his title "Multilingual Education: A Bridge Too Far?" (pp. 3-15). The purpose of this chapter, as I see, is to conceptualize and outline the issues discussed in the volume. Also, he brings into light the need of research in language and education, on the one hand, and remarks that deprivation of the rights to proper education is attested in formal schooling worldwide, on the other. Furthermore, as is common habit of the first chapters of omnibus volumes, he goes on to hint in passing the contents of the contributions in the book.

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Part 2: The chapters by Jim Cummins (pp. 19-35), Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (pp. 36-62) and Carol Benson (pp. 63-81) which make the second part of the book set the theoretical and practical grounds for the discussions that follow in the subsequent parts, particularly part 3 and part 4. Part 2 is opened by the chapter "Fundamental Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic Principles Underlying Educational Success for Linguistic Minority Students" by Jim Cummins. Cummins remarks vigorously in his introduction that bilingual education should be viewed as teaching the contents of the subjects in a language and not teaching the language in question. He points out that this method needs to be implemented in a way that allows to do so (p. 19). He stresses that we need to understand the psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics patterning to research in education for minority languages. Cummins goes on to discuss the various approaches available for multilingual education. At the end, he suggests that different models employed in multilingual schooling can be successful, but that successes depend on various factors which need to be considered.

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Chapter 3 by Tove Skutnabb-Kangas ("Multilingual Education for Global Justice: Issues, Approaches, Opportunities", pp. 36-62) also sets grounds for the discussions in the following chapters in part 3 and 4. It is revisiting the present indigenous education systems in various countries, some of which are covered in the rest of the present volume, the approaches employed and the argumentations for and against these approaches. She opens her discussion on the basis of decisions made in most bilingual or multilingual countries in the world. According to the decision education should be harmonized in a way that it creates uniformity through teaching in one medium of instruction. However, Skutnabb-Kangas is skeptical on the outcome of such education system because usually the medium of instruction dominates the indigenous languages and it affects those learners who are speakers of these languages. This results into discrimination of some languages and an ultimate denial of rights to some people in the education system. In my opinion, this is what happens in various parts of the world where English, French, Spanish and Portuguese are selected as media of education in multilingual societies (for detailed discussions in the African context see Rubagumya 1990, 2004; Wolff 2003; Brock-Utne et al. 2003, 2004, among others). She argues that this situation needs to be changed and that there are opportunities that the governments should opt for (pp. 55-56) and situations on the basis of which researchers can further their investigations (pp. 57-58).

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The educationist Carol Benson in the last chapter of part 2, chapter 4 ("Designing Effective Schooling in Multilingual Contexts: Going beyond Bilingual Models", pp. 63-81), presents different models of bilingual and multilingual education systems. e.g. in North America and Europe. Among these are: *submersion* [speakers attending schools in languages that they do not understand], *transition* [teaching one language as a stepping stone to another language], *maintenance* [use of both languages, but the teaching language feeds the learning language], immersion [using two languages, such as English and French in Canada], *and dual method* [resembles

immersion]. Benson observes that all of these models appear to fail in low income countries in the south.

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Part 3: In chapter 5, "The Tension between Linguistic Diversity and Dominant English" (pp. 85-102), Robert Phillipson analyses the linguistic relationship between English and other languages as media of instruction on both local grounds and on a worldwide level. It is true the many makers of the educational policies consider English the best solution to cope with socio-economic and technological issues given that the USA and Britain are the nations leading in economic and technological progress, Phillipson claims that the progress observable in India shows that English is not necessarily the ideal medium of instruction and communication (p. 85-86). Throughout the chapter, he also sees counter-evidences to the claim that English is central and irreplaceable. He concludes with the idea that we need to provide everybody with a high degree of competence in both his/her mother tongue and a second, national or foreign, language (p. 100).

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The African continent is represented only in chapter 6 by Kathleen Heugh: "Literacy and Bi/Multilingual Education in Africa: Recovering Collective Memory and Experience" (pp. 103-124). She starts with a description of the three phases of the sociolinguistic situation in Africa: (i) the pre-colonial period where African societies reveal multilingualism, (ii) the introduction of the foreign languages, i.e. English, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese in formal education, by the colonial powers, and (iii) perpetuation of these languages in most independent countries in Africa, e.g. "English only" in Zambia, the choice of only one national vehicular next to the ex-colonial language official media as e.g. in Tanzania, or the use of a range of national and two international languages, as in South Africa (pp. 104-105). She goes on to analyse two educational projects, one on the use of native languages in Ethiopia and the other on the use of native languages in South Africa. She is convinced that poor research on multilingual education hampers proper information and that transferring English-dominated materials to Africa can never rescue the detrimental effects the education systems have today (p. 122).

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Chapter 7 titled "Empowering Indigenous Languages – What can be Learned from Native American Experiences" (pp. 125-139) presents the lessons learned from experiences with the programmes geared to empower indigenous peoples in the USA. The lessons are obtained from the empowering of the Navajo speakers through education in their language in the English dominated super power. The most striking lesson is that young native people, particularly Navajo speakers, are deeply concerned about their languages and cultures and have a serious interest to promote it (p. 36). This lesson, in her opinion, could be transferred to other multilingual areas as well.

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Ofelia García, in Chapter 8 titled "Education, Multilingualism and Translanguaging" (pp. 140-158) evaluates the models of multilingual education and proposes what should be done in the 21st century for the betterment of the multilingual learners. In the same spirit with other contributors, she questions the applicability of the models mostly prepared in the northern hemisphere, e.g. Canada to other places like Africa and Asia (pp. 141-142). She supposes that constructivist approaches would bring the multilingual learners to better education (p. 153).

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David A. Hough *et al.* present in chapter 9, "Privileging Indigenous Knowledges: Empowering Multilingual Education in Nepal" (pp. 159-176), the education system that privileges the indigenous peoples in multilingual Nepal. They analyse the bottom-up approach that has been put in place to replace the top-down approach in the education system in the country. The authors are convinced that once some topical issues had been put in the bottom-up system, [such as herbal medicine, numerals, religion in Nepal] the community based results could well be achieved.

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The Caste System in Canada is the topic of discussion in chapter 10, by Shelly K. Taylor (pp. 177-198). Canada has a policy that stipulates explicitly the position of English and French as official and national languages and media of instruction in formal schools. The chapter presents the lessons learned from the immersion classes in the experimental country as far as multilingual education is concerned. Taylor is aware that due to massive immigration, Canada has witnessed the presence of several international languages which are now minority languages in the country (p. 180). She is convinced that immersion classes can work well in multilingual societies.

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In the first chapter of **Part 4** Suzanne J. Péres discusses the challenges and prospects of multi-lingual education in Peru under the title "The contribution of post-colonial theory to intercultural bilingual education in Peru: an indigenous teacher training programme" (pp. 201-219). Her aim is to investigate how indigenous bilingual education works for the Quechua-speaking population in Peru (p. 202). The chapter looks into the contribution of the in-service teacher training for provisioning of the indigenous education in indigenous tongues, i.e. Quechua in the presence of the official and international language Spanish in the country. In Peru, lower schooling is available throughout the country, but secondary education is restricted to urban areas (mostly the district capitals) (p. 208). The author argues that code switching between Quechua and Spanish is pervasive in schools; and poor documentation of ethnic languages other than Quechua increases their insignificance (pp. 211-212). At the end, native languages are left unused. In my opinion, this situation matches that in African classrooms.

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The following chapter covers the challenges and prospects of native language immersion schools in Canada and is titled "Reversing Language Shift through a Native Language Immersion Teacher Training Programme in Canada" by Andrea B. Nicholas. The focus is on three Abori-ginal languages Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut, because the numbers of speakers decrease signifi-cantly (p. 211). This problem is aggravated further by the fact that the government of Canada while demanding that everybody is taught in at least two languages, accepts that these two languages may be English and French, (p. 225). Focusing on the projects on the native language Mi'qmak, the author assumes that promotion of native languages is possible through provision of teacher education in immersion programmes. These latter should will serve in schools, as it is the case in Quebec in Canada where English, French and other native languages are involved. But such a success does not come easily rather its necessity rests on commitments to the principles of mother tongue education and the importance of the mother tongue in the community as a whole (p. 236).

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Chapter 13, "The Ethnic Revival, Language and Education of the Sámi, an Indigenous People in Three Nordic Countries (Finland, Norway and Sweden)" (pp., 238-262) brings into the open the way the Sámi speakers are situated within the formal education systems in these three countries. The author begins with an idea that in promoting the Sámi education, we need to focus on the content of the instruction and the position of the native culture in question (p. 241). For a long time, the Sámi were positioned in very strict national-language mediums of instruction, e.g. in Norway (p. 243). This situation has changed resulting in an improvement of the Sámi education. As a result, as the author observes, the youngsters don't shy-away any longer from being Sámi, as they did formerly.

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Chapter 14, "Hundreds of home languages in the country and many in most classrooms: coping with diversity in primary education in India, investigates the situation of language in education in plurilingual and pluriethnic India" (pp. 263-283). Dhir Jhigran describes the situation of a coun-try with several standard (national) languages, e.g. Hindi; a standard regional language usually

used in formal schooling; non-standard regional language usually used at home; and dialects (varieties of the same language in Finland, Norway and Sweden). Children who use only non-standard regional languages and dialects are deprived of their education rights because teaching is done in a language they do not master. As a consequence they spend much of their time in school reciting without comprehending the material (pp. 271-272). There are some, good education policies [which ones, what makes them good], but these have not yet been implemented. Jhigran tackles issues that compel countries to opt for English language in schools, e.g. policies, desire of parents, etc. He claims that it is rather the market that places Indian education at the fate of English language (p. 275). It appears that this is the situation globally (cf. Rabagumya 2004 for the situation in Tanzania).

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The chapter "Overcoming the Language Barrier for Tribal Children: Multilingual Education in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa in India" (pp.283-297) by Ajit K. Mohanty et al. concludes section 2. The authors consider that the improvements obtained in the two multiethnic and plurilingual provinces resulting from the fact that here education is multilingual. Based on research in Orissa (p. 289) they conclude that bilingual children may perform better than monolingual children. They suggest that it is necessary to set multilingual education programmes and evaluate their prospects.

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Part 5: The last part contains two chapters. Minati Panda and Ajik K. Monanty in "Language Matters, so does culture: Beyond the Rhetoric of Culture in Multilingual Education" (pp. 301-319) claim that the whole essence of multilingual education has more to do with empowering the learners and than about their mother tongues (p. 301). They continue to perpetuate the contributions of the experimental programmes of the multilingual education in India and are convinced that these programmes could work in all government schools in India and beyond. However, the dominance of repetition and chorus answers appears to hamper the actual learning process (p. 306). Also, following constructivist approach, the authors believe that learners bring to schools their indigenous knowledges which need to be respected. They claim that some of the projects neglect the learners' knowledges while others bring these knowledge to the surface linking both modern and local knowledges for the benefit of the learner. The authors clearly opt for the latter.

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In the last chapter, "Multilingual Education Concepts, Goals, Needs and Expense: English for all or Achieving Justice?" (pp. 320-344), the editors, summarize the ideas presented in the preceding chapters. They underline the need for recognition of mother tongue education and for executive education rights for all speakers of minority languages.

The Contribution towards Implementations of the Policies

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A few comments should be made here. First, it is motivating to see that some of the researches reported in this volume come from implementation-oriented projects. This means the studies have an impact into the bilingual and multilingual communities concerned and their governments as well. This, however, leads itself into the second comment.

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The enormous contributions therein come, as noted above, from leading specialists in "multilingual education" from various countries. For instance, we notice that India, Sweden, Canada, and Peru are well represented. However, one wonders what is the impact such time-consuming and economically-demanding enormous researches on language in education in bilingual and

multilingual societies. I arrive at this puzzling end from the experience that in bilingual and multilingual societies, one national language is purposefully chosen as medium of instruction and of official information, and the cultures embedded in the respective languages are taken as the leading cultures for the nations in question. This suggests that the rest of the languages with their cultures and knowledges are left-overs! This, according to my opinion, is not quite correct because each language is a linguistic resource of its own and needs to be appreciated. This is in line with Batibo (2005) who stipulates that we need to provide proper documentation of all native languages because, with regard to Africa, they are linguistic resources for the continent.

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The argument is further supported by the fact that much of the decisions about the implementations of user-friendly and multilingual curricula sensitive to the bilingual and multilingual countries are taken by politicians and bureaucrats with university degrees. This means that they are well aware of the problems and conclusions presented in this volume and elsewhere (cf. e.g. Phillipson 1992; Bamgbose 2000; Mufwene 2008), nevertheless they are quite apparently not eager to implement them. The question comes up as to where things in Africa went wrong with regard to multilingual education?

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I am in line with those scholars who argue that multilingual societies need a kind of education that accommodates all languages. For instance, Brock-Utne et al. (2003, 2004) argue for an education system that puts into consideration harmonization of the languages spoken in a given society so as to provide favorable conditions for each individual student to be successful in his/her studies. South Africa is a good example for the rest of the continent because here several languages are recognized as official languages and as media of instruction in some grades in its education system.

Observations on the Book

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The purpose of the volume is well set, i.e. for presenting investigations on multilingual education worldwide. The African reader might be troubled to realize that the book covers only fractions of the multilingual world. Apart from India and Peru, the volume deals mostly with countries of the Western world and/or where majority of the population is white. Most of the highly multilingual African countries are not considered, but no reason is given for this "unproportional" choice of cases.

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Secondly, the use of derogatory terms like "tribal", "native", "local", "ethnic" etc. with regard to the situations in the USA, Africa and India is common. One wonders about the negligence upon the provision of the working definitions used in the book. This would have spared the trouble some readers in the intended audiences face while reading through the volume.

Conclusion

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As far as multilingual education is concerned and with regard to a synthesis of multilingual education worldwide, the present volume is a most welcome contribution to the topic. The various articles offer a wide range of thorough investigations on this important matter.

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