

Studies in Bilingual Education. Madrid, Daniel and Hughes, Stephen (eds.) (2011). Bern: Peter Lang. ISBN 978-3-0343-0474-0, 483 pages.

Tony Harris
University of Granada

Focusing principally on the topic of bilingualism, the book is drawn from the results of a Research and Development Project into the effects of bilingual education in certain skills and competences developed in primary school pupils. It examines three areas of the curriculum related to pupils attainment: language and Spanish literature, the social domain, and foreign languages (specifically English)..

Moreover, it highlights other bilingual programmes in Spain and the United States through specialists in the field, thereby offering a broad perspective on the topic which may be applied to other educational situations.

The book is organised in three parts. Part I attempts to contextualise the study in three chapters. The first of these introduces the notion of bilingual and plurilingual education defining underlying concepts, theories and basic principles as well as describing several bilingual programmes in Spanish regions which do not have another regional language. Chapter 2 outlines Spanish primary and secondary education, the context for this study. Within the Spanish context, Chapter 3 looks at the Andalusian bilingual and plurilingual programme in which many of the pupils under review are a part of.

Part II describes the results of the bilingual project carried out in this study. Chapter 4 outlines the details of the project, its objectives and the type of bilingual programme different groups within the study have followed. Chapter 5 centres on the effect of the specific competences of monolingual and bilingual education developed in the L1 (Spanish), and it is hoped that readers will be able to discern if the hypothesis of linguistic interdependence in the context of the study as well as the time invested in bilingual education in English is to the detriment of pupils' performance in Spanish. Chapter 6 reviews the effects of the use of English on linguistic and communicative competence in the L2 and shows a selection of different texts, which reflect the different levels achieved by students in distinct educational contexts. Chapter 7 analyses competences of the social and natural type in monolingual and bilingual settings, respectively; whilst Chapter 8 compares cultural competence in both settings.

Part III compares studies taken from bilingual and trilingual contexts. Notable amongst these is the bilingual education programme undertaken in California in collaboration with the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science, which has been a feature in California for decades.

