

Bilingual Education. From Compensatory to Quality Education. Second edition. María Estela Brisk, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 2006, pp. xiii + 252.

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Reviewing a second edition of a book is not a common practice except for those occasions in which the second edition differs so much from the first one or the book comes out at a very opportune moment. In this case, both circumstances surround the publishing of this volume.

Many schools systems and ours, in particular, are making an effort to set up so-called bilingual schools and/or to impregnate the system with a plurilingual flavour. This book has a lot to say in this respect, although not for the language majority students as we might infer from the title but for the language minority students that steadily and increasingly come to our classrooms.

To tell the truth, the book does not come in isolation and both the author (e.g., Brisk, Burgos & Hamerla 2004) and the publisher are (e.g., Pérez 2004) making important contributions to the field.

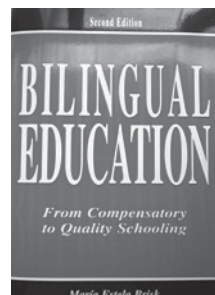
The book is divided into seven chapters, which are preceded by a preface and the acknowledgments and followed by the references, the author and subject indexes.

A few lines from the preface set up the tone of the whole book in the sense that it reports hundreds of classroom-based situations in which the language and culture of individuals cater for the difference in each context: *classrooms are not set up laboratories, so that results in one classroom do not necessarily ordain similar results in other classrooms. In bilingual situations, the complexity is multiplied by the addition of linguistic and cultural variables* (p.ix).

The book is also immersed in a sort of positive atmosphere that the author tries to communicate and exemplify by using a lexicon that permanently highlights words such as *success* and *quality*: for example, the subtitle of the book, the titles of chapters 1, 4, 5 or 6. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the whole book and it is full of definitions of terms such as *bilinguals*, *code-switching*, *culture*, etc. The most significant contribution of this chapter is its approach to the issue of success in bilingual education and how to measure it at schools. Chapter 2 devotes a large number of pages to the discussion of bilingual education in the USA and provides a very well-informed table on the models of bilingual education (pp. 33-34).

The third chapter deals with all the contextual and individual factors that affect bilingual education: cultural, economic or linguistic factors, individual characteristics as well as the role of the families.

Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 have to do with the practices that will play an active role in the design, planning, development and evaluation of bilingual programs and schools: special attention will be paid to the goals of schools, the recruitment and training of teachers, the design of curricula, the type of instruction and assessment, etc.



Apart from the potential audience this book is addressed to (p. ix), I would recommended it to Spanish teachers going to the USA every year by means of the MEC Visiting Teacher program and also to those who make decisions on the schooling of immigrant students in our school system.