

One Child, Two Languages: A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English as a Second Language, (1997).

Tabors, P. O. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.

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This book addresses the important issue of the effective education of linguistically diverse pre-school children in the United States. It combines research findings for second language acquisition and bilingualism with personal classroom observations of linguistically diverse students, interviews with experienced teachers of English as a second language, and parents, in order to provide the reader with a comprehensive guide to teaching these students. The reader is encouraged to reflect upon his or her own teaching of second language learners, but is also given practical tools for planning curriculum, classroom organization, and the accurate assessing of the English learner's progress.

This book is divided into two parts. The first section focuses on the learner and the second on the educator's role in the learning environment. In the first half of the guide, the educator is taken on a journey through a variety of linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms in the United States, where the majority of students are second language learners of English and the minority are monolingual English speakers. By examining detailed experiences of these individual students, the practitioner receives a glimpse of the process and development of the learner's acquisition of the second language. There are also important details about individual learner differences that may be encountered while working with these children, implying that each student passes through the stages of L2 acquisition at different rates.

The second half of the book focuses on the teacher's role in supporting L2 development by revealing organizational and curricular strategies for creating a classroom environment that is beneficial and supportive for young second-language learners. Concrete ideas are presented for working with the parents of these learners and for the development of effective assessment tools for second language learners.

This guide was intended specifically for pre-school educators of children learning English as a second language in the United States. However, the author is not limited to this audience, as it can be read and implemented by any early childhood educator who has linguistically diverse students learning a second language. It also serves as a guide for administrators and parents of linguistically diverse children. Administrators will benefit from the examples of research-based practices for second-language-learner children and the ideas for curriculum planning. It also provides practical advice for what parents can do in the home to aid in their child's L1 and L2 language development, as well as in their social and cultural development.

One strength of the book is the great importance placed on the child's continued development of his or her L1 at home or in other environments where this may be possible. The author emphasizes that the L2 process is indeed an additive process, rather than the replacement of the first language with the majority language. Another strength is the attention that is paid to the social consequences of being a language learner still in the stages of non-verbal communication. This aspect of language learning is often overlooked by the involved participants. The book dedicates a good deal of time to working through this problem and gives the reader sound advice and tools for combating these types of social situations that commonly occur in the classroom.

One limitation of this book is based on the author's assumption that this information is relevant in any early childhood classroom where linguistically diverse students are present. This includes countries outside of the United States, where the L2 the child may not be learning English. This assumption is based on second language acquisition research. Although the information presented touches on individual learner differences, it seems to be lacking as far as individual cultural differences that may also be affecting their second language development. In a classroom with great cultural diversity, it seems that this would be an essential element to be taken into consideration for further analysis and study.