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Book Review

Liddicoat, A.J and A.Scarino (2013). **INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING**. Wiley-Blackwell: viii -200 pages. ISBN978-1-4051-9810-3

Reviewed by Mohammad Reza Jadidoleslam *****,Khalil Motallebzadeh

1.PhD Student, Torbat-e-Heidarieh Branch, Islamic Azad University Torbat-e-Heidarieh, Iran. Email: Mrjadidoleslam@Yahoo.com
2.English Department, Torbat-e-Heidarieh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e-Heidarieh, Iran. Email: k.motalleb@iautorbat.ac.ir,kmotallebz@gmail.com

Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning is a very useful book that provides the readers with a good survey of different issues involved in intercultural language teaching and learning. It covers a wide range of topics such as language, culture, language learning, second language acquisition, language teaching and learning as an intercultural endeavor, designing classroom interactions and experiences, resources for intercultural language learning, technologies for intercultural language teaching and learning, assessing intercultural language learning, programming and planning, and evaluating language programs.

Liddicoat (2002) noted ''culture shapes what we say, when we say it, and how we say it from the simplest language we use to the most complex. It is fundamental to the way we speak, write, listen, and read''. The book is penned by two celebrated scholars: Anthony J. Liddicoat, aprofessor in Applied Linguistics at Research Center for Languages and Culture Education, in the School of Communication,International Studies and Languages at the University of South Australia; and Angela Scarino, Associate professor in Applied Linguistics and Director of the Research Center for Languages and Culture at the University of South Australia.The book contains ten chapters. It also includes an extensive bibliography, an index of names and subjects.

The first chapter, *Introduction*, begins with an exploration of the concept of the method and then the authors provide a section about the critiques of the method. Next they move beyond the methods quoting Kumaravadivelu (1994, 2003) ''language teaching now faces a post-method condition, that is, language education has moved beyond method as a basic organizer of practice. Post –method condition gives more recognition to the role of the teacher in the act of teaching and constructs the relationship between theory and practice as closer and multivalent''. In the last part of chapter one, the aim of the book is elaborated. The aim of the book, as the writers mention, is to investigate language teaching and learning in a way that is broadly applicable to a diversity of languages,contexts, and levels of learning.

Chapter two, *Languages, Cultures, and the Intercultural*, explores understanding of language and culture as they apply to the contemporary context of language teaching. It also examines the evolving understanding of the nature of language and culture and their relationship and the consequences that this idea has for how languages are taught. It develops a view of language as a complex, contextualized, phenomenon that cannot be understood in terms of the linguistic code alone, but which must also include an understanding of language as a form of making and interpreting meaning. It examines different ways in which the idea of culture

has been understood in language education and argues for an understanding of culture as a dynamic process within which meanings are created, exchanged, and interpreted.

Chapter three, *Language Learning, Second Language Acquisition, Language an Intercultural Orientation,* discusseslearning, and within the understanding of learning that underpin an intercultural perspective on language teaching and learning and considers briefly some aspects of second language acquisition (SLA), leading to a discussion of the central debate that emerged in the field in the mid-1990s about the nature of SLA and second language learning.

Chapter four,*Language Teaching and Learning as an Intercultural Endeavor,* draws on the issues of language culture and learning together and frames our understanding of the intercultural as its place in language education. It is also argued that the intercultural is a dynamic engagement of the relationships between language, culture, and learning.

Chapter five, *Designing Classroom Interactions and Experiences*, argues that teaching and learning languages within an intercultural perspective requires an expansion of the construct of "task" to highlight the nature of the interaction as interchange, that is, as the interpretation, creation, and exchange of meaning, and to acknowledge that for the learners these interactions constitute lived experience along a trajectory.

Chapter six,*Resources for Intercultural Language Learning*, explains in detail how the interactions and experiences can be resourced within a language program. A language-learning resource does not exist in isolation but needs to connect with other resources to form a coherent whole, and resources are not simply texts and materials, but learners themselves can become the resource. This chapter also examines the selection, adaptation, and creation of resources and the ways in which resources are used for diverse purposes, such as discovery, scaffolding, and reflection, and the ways in which teachers use resources for multiple purposes.

Chapter seven, *Technologies in Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning*, develops the discussion of resources by considering technology as integral to intercultural language teaching and learning because it provides the best source of contemporary material for language education and allows for the participation in the target language and its community.

Chapter eight, *Assessing Intercultural Language Learning*, is devoted to assessment. It contextualizes assessment in relation to the tension between traditional and alternate assessment paradigms, its institutional character and the need for a reconceptualization of the assessment process. Afterwards it considers four processes of assessment – conceptualizing, eliciting, judging, and validating.

Chapter nine, *Programming and Learning*, considers how a program of interculturally oriented language teaching and learning can be planned as a developmental experience of learning over time.It also considers ways of understanding the content of a program of learning in which language, culture, and learning are integrated and interrelated.

The final chapter, *Evaluating Language Programs,*considers evaluation as an integral aspect of the ecology of language learning within an intercultural perspective. It discusses the nature

and purpose of program evaluation, research paradigms that shape the process, and the process of evaluation itself.

Tosum up, this publication is a well-ordered, user-friendly, comprehensive, and seminal work which discusses a wide range of issues involved in intercultural language teaching and learning.

This really good read will prove useful for anybody- novice teachers, graduate students, researchers and professionals. It begins with the description and explanation of key concepts in the field of language teaching and learning and then elaborates on intercultural language teaching and learning. It provides the readers with a broad and profound view of language teaching and learning in general and intercultural language teaching and learning in particular. Traditionally, language was perceived as a structural and communicative system. But in more recent views, there has been an increasing trend towards incorporating an intercultural dimension into language teaching and learning. As Richards and Schmidt (2010) put it "one of the important dimensions of language learning is the cultural dimension". This reading takesan intercultural approach to language teaching and learning.

An intercultural approach to second language learning aims to develop an understanding of how a community or language group uses language and how the values and beliefs are articulated and negotiated within the particular group (Corbett, 2003).

The aim of intercultural learning is to develop the learners' abilities to explore different cultures and to mediate in situations of cultural misunderstanding. The authors seek to enhance intercultural understanding which in turn will lead to intercultural competency. They thoroughly combine theory and practice and skillfully bridge the gap between the theoretical and empirical research in the area of intercultural language teaching and learning. They see culture as a set of symbolic, interpretive, meaning-making process and language as the medium through which these processes are realized. One disadvantage of this book is that it lacks authentic activities in order to engage learners in actualintercultural language learning. In any case, this is a highly recommended reading which deserves kudos.

References

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