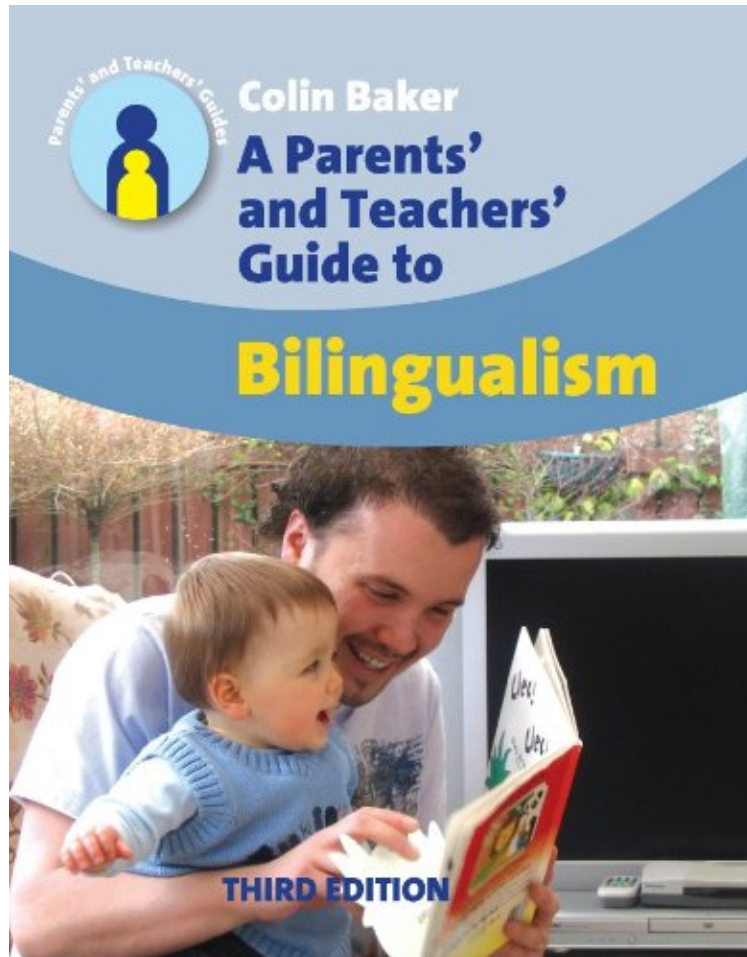


(Read free ebook) A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism (Parents' and Teachers' Guides)

A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism (Parents' and Teachers' Guides)

Colin Baker

ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF



 Download

 Read Online

#1261737 in eBooks 2011-09-06 2011-09-06 File Name: B005MJA568 | File size: 44.Mb

Colin Baker : A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism (Parents' and Teachers' Guides) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism (Parents' and Teachers' Guides):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ExcellentBy CynthiaExcellent advice from the first to the last page. I especially appreciated the insight that you can't expect bilinguals to be double monolinguals and that just because there are various degrees of bilingualism, that doesn't mean that any one level is inferior - they all simply suit different needs.Bilinguals are usually also bicultural, biliterate, and sometimes binational. There is a lot to be said for it and Baker's book will help you countervail monolingual bias.Children love to learn from the day they are born. And there is no reason to let anyone talk you out of speaking two languages even to babies.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Resource on Bilingual Issues!By Ann SmithThis gives great insights into the issues!2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Written with an agendaBy Michal CierniakThe book contains a lot of

information about various aspects of raising bilingual children. However, like pretty much everything I've read about bilingualism, this book suffers from not being objective. It seems that all existing material about bilingualism has an agenda to push: bilingualism is good. This bias made the book annoying to me. Now, don't get me wrong: I am a big supporter of multilingualism. I enjoy learning languages myself and I am doing my best to raise my daughter to be trilingual. I strongly believe that knowing more languages makes your life richer in many ways. But it is irritating to read all those books and articles that brush aside obvious problems that come with multilingualism in the effort to promote it. I started the review by saying that I like this book overall and this is for one reason: it made me think more concretely about what a measure of success in being multilingual is (more about it below).

THE BIASThe basic premise that I have a problem with is repeated throughout the book. Here's one example [from section E26]: "Languages don't exist in balance: the higher the one, the lower the other". This is obviously not true at many levels. Let's first consider pure language competence in the sense of how large one's vocabulary is. We learn language from many sources but for simplicity, let's focus on reading books. There's a finite number of books I can read in a given period of time. Say, I can read 100 books in some amount of time. If I read all 100 in one language, I will acquire a better vocabulary in this language than if I read 50 books in this language and 50 in another. I think that the basic disagreement between me and the author of the book is that he is happy if an individual acquires just a basic command of language you need in your everyday life: to connect with your community, have a conversation with a stranger etc. What we're losing is the extra difference between a person with average competency in a language and someone who truly mastered it. I don't think that the trade-off is always obvious. And what's more, using language is not just about the vocabulary size. Using the language means living the culture of this language. So the vocabulary size is just one of the aspects where there will be a gap between a multilingual who knows a given language as one of a few languages and a monolingual who knows the culture related to that language in a more comprehensive way. The monolingual will have read more books, listened to more songs, watched more movies, used more web sites, talked to more friends, played more games etc in a given language than a person who lived the life of that language only part-time. Whether this is better or worse is a matter of your point of view and your values. I happen to think that even if I know fewer artifacts of a given culture, the fact that I can look at the culture both from the inside and from a perspective of another culture makes me understand this culture better. But do I expect that everyone will share my point of view? No. I realize that some people will think that knowing a single culture inside out is better than having direct experience with many cultures. And the fact that this book and everything else I've read about bilingualism doesn't give the same respect to this alternate point of view that monolingualism can be superior in some ways is what made me cringe when I was reading this book.

THE INSIGHTAll this brings me to what I think is the most valuable thing I took out of the book. What does it mean to be multilingual? Who are you comparing to and what are you comparing? Do you expect that in every of the languages a multilingual speaks, their command of that language will be as good as of a monolingual person? This is not reasonable. Is it even desirable? No one will give you the answer. You have to decide what the answer for you is.[...]

Written in a very reader-friendly style, the book is a practical introduction for parents and teachers to bilingualism. Straightforward and realistic answers are given to a comprehensive set of frequently asked questions about bilingualism and bilingual education. Areas covered include family, language, culture, identity, reading, writing, schooling and issues.