

**Doris C. Ching.**  
**READING AND THE BILINGUAL CHILD.**  
**Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1976.**  
**41 pp. \$3.00.**

*Reading and the Bilingual Child* is part of the Reading Aid Series. This volume, by Doris Ching, presents an impressive variety of practical teaching techniques which can be used in any classroom situation. As a handbook for both student and classroom teachers in English of bilingual children, with particular application in inner city schools, it should prove to be extremely valuable.

The content is well organized and carefully explained. The first section defines the bilingual child as one for whom English is the second language and who can perform proficiently in both languages. It then goes on to describe his special needs and to discuss the various aspects of language development: auditory discrimination, vocabulary, grammar, and oral language, with emphasis placed on this last aspect. Finally, a number of teaching approaches are listed with the factors to be considered in selecting the particular method most likely to ensure that the child will learn to read successfully.

The emphasis throughout the text is on what is referred to as the "language experience approach", and Ching maintains that only after he has developed good speaking and listening abilities in the English language will the bilingual child succeed in learning to read English.

For precisely this reason, language skills and activities need to be integrated into every aspect of the school day. Another point made is that everything must be presented in oral form before being presented in written form, since "language is something understood and spoken before it is read or written". (p. 33)

It is important for teachers of bilingual children to make certain that a basic sight vocabulary and sufficient reading skills have been mastered before the formal reading instruction is begun. The material used should reflect the child's own experience and be of interest to him. If he is presented with meaningful and stimulating reading matter, the child will be encouraged and motivated to read independently, and will ultimately read for pleasure and enjoyment.

According to Ching, no one particular approach will guarantee that the bilingual child will learn to read. But if the teachers are well informed and knowledgeable regarding various approaches, they will of course be in a better position to select the method or procedure best suited to the needs of the child. Moreover, the author feels that teachers of bilingual children should make a special effort to understand, appreciate, and respect the cultural backgrounds of the children they work with.

Does teaching reading to the bilingual child differ significantly

from teaching the monolingual child? Ching concludes that it does not "if the child is taught the phenomonic and grammatical elements of English that differ from his mother tongue." (p. 38)

There is a need for resource material in the area of bilingual education, and Ching's contribution is indeed a worthwhile one.

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**F. W. Peacock.**  
**CONVERSATIONAL ESKIMO: A SELF GUIDE TO THE  
LANGUAGE OF THE INUIT.**  
**Portugal Cove, Newfoundland: Breakwater Books, 1977.**  
**113 pp. \$3.95.**

Inuit are in! Every month the list of books about, by, and even for the Inuit of northern Canada gets longer. There are probably more non-Inuit studying Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit) than at any time in history, as artists, educators, social scientists, linguists, politicians and (with huge financial settlements made or about to be made) even bankers become professionally interested in one of Canada's smallest minorities.

The present book is written to aid civil servants and professionals, specifically those of Newfoundland who work with the Inuit in Labrador. It is, therefore, based on the Labrador dialect; but because there are many similarities between this Inuktitut and that of Hudson Bay, Baffin Island, and especially Ungava Bay, it is equally useful to "Southerners" working in Nouveau Quebec or the Eastern Arctic. Seen as a handy, usable tool, the book is excellent. Looked at as a social document, it is frightening.

The concise introduction to this handbook is followed by a simplified but clear and quite valid pronunciation guide. The main body of the book is a compilation of useful words and phrases from the everyday life of Labrador. These phrases are classified by concept (food, seasons, wildlife, time) or by professional venue (social work, police, hospital, school). The phrases are surprisingly easy to locate, the English version being printed in clear, wide-spaced type on the left hand side of each page, followed by the Inuit version, in Roman rather than Syllabic type, on the right. A non-Inuit armed with these phrases should be able to communicate professionally, although not necessarily socially, with his clients.

If many of the phrases included in this book are typical of the relationship between Inuit and non-Inuit in Labrador, it is easy to account for the animosity felt by the Inuit towards their ruler/protectors. If we exclude emotionally neutral phrases such as "the day before yester-