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Sommario/riassunto

The experiences of recent years have tested all public sectors, and society has faced challenges we would not have foreseen. This has transformed our society into one that is more global, resilient and sustainable, and where education emerges as a bastion to sustain the welfare state (International Commission on the Futures of Education, 2020). Multilingualism is, on the other hand, one of the most relevant characteristics of this new society, given the frequent migratory flows and work mobility (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2019; Eurostat, June 2022). Being in contact with several languages, even for monolinguals, is a daily activity. The merging of these two fields makes multilingual education a necessary and timely area of study. Within multilingual education the focus on early years seems more cutting-edge: firstly, because it is at this stages that the foundations for the child's future career are laid (Council of Europe, 2019); and secondly, because more and more children are multilingual, either by dealing directly with multilingualism at home or in the society where they live, or because they are introduced to different languages at school contexts since early years (Schwartz, 2022). Unfortunately, research on this area is scarce, and more data and experiences are to be shared among the scientific community so as to deal with the challenges educators, families, policymakers and researchers face. The aim of this book is to approach early language learning and multilingual education from different perspectives, understanding it from a broad and inclusive perspective, encompassing all kinds of sociolinguistic varieties. In doing so, the book covers multilingual education both in social and educational contexts for children from 0 up to Primary Education (10-12 years old). It contains 45 chapters, mainly in English and some of them in Spanish, organised in five different sections. Section I. Multilingual Education in Infancy. Theory and research introduces the reader with multiple research on early multilingual education that lays the theoretical framework for the following sections, as well as it provides an international portrayal of early multilingual education in different countries such as Spain, Germany, Bolivia, Slovakia, or Ireland among others. In the second section - II. Inside the Multilingual Classroom with Young Learners-, authors take a closer look into the classroom and/or family as a multilingual ecosystem in which education happens, and challenges such as global competences, translanguaging pedagogy, flipped classroom, cultural diversity, heritage languages, among others, are addressed. Similarly, Section III. Early Language Learning in School Setting brings the focus back to the classroom but this time in contexts where children are mainly monolingual and where multilingualism is promoted in the school context through the introduction of the foreign language in the Preschool stage, the use of synthetic phonics, being English as a foreign language, or the use of theatre as a didactic strategy. Chapters in Section IV. Materials and Resources in the Early Multilingual Classroom give practical and tested examples on how to promote multilingualism with young learners using different materials and resources such as picturebooks, audiobooks, multicultural children's literature, silent books and robots. Finally, the last section of this book -V. Teacher Education for Multilingualism- examines the key topic of

the education teachers receive to deal with early multilingual learners collecting research and experiences in different parts of the world that reflect on the critical role teachers play in the success of education. All in all, this book aims to address the challenges early language learning and early multilingual education face, providing solid research and good practices that hopefully will illuminate others in the far-reaching task of educating children in today's society.
