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WHAT'S IN A WORD? VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS. *Norah McWilliam.* Stoke on Trent, UK: Trentham Books, 1998. Pp. xiii + 192. £14.95 paper.

This book is intended for teachers of children whose first language is not English and who are in mainstream classes in an English-speaking country. It has a strong orientation toward Great Britain.

The book provides a clear presentation of a second rather than foreign language ap-

proach to vocabulary development from the viewpoint of a teacher rather than a researcher, and, in particular, a teacher who apparently has considerable experience in teaching young native speakers of English. What is missing from the book is a controlled, goal-directed vocabulary development program that focuses on high-frequency vocabulary and uses simplified texts as a major means of vocabulary and skill development. It is made clear in the book that simplification and language control is "pernicious" (p. 86) and denies "children the expression that makes a language worth learning and worth using to share experiences and ideas" (p. 85). Children learning a second language, according to the author, should be exposed to the full richness of the language, and many of the activities that are well described in the book involve exploring polysemy, figurative language, synonyms, and idioms.

The book is full of wonderful examples of children's language use, the language of advertisements, anecdotes, and transcripts of classroom interaction. However, teachers of English as a foreign language would have difficulty in applying many of the ideas suggested here because they require learners to already have substantial usable vocabularies, and researchers in vocabulary acquisition would see problems in focusing on lexical sets and low-frequency items.

Although the book has a reasonable bibliography, it is not an academic text. It does, however, present the rich and imaginative experience of a teacher. Researchers who want to talk to teachers need to take account of the viewpoint and assumptions in the book. This book provides a clear and engaging access to them.

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