Norad

Culture and Language in Education:
Tools for Development

Edited by Ingse Skattum

Artikkelsamlingen, bestilt som faglig innspill til Norad, belyser sentrale sider ved problematikken knyttet til relevans og kvalitet i utdanningen, særlig med hensyn til kultur og språk. Artiklene er også viktige innspill i forbindelse med Norads pågående arbeid med operasjonalisering av rettighetsbasert tilnærming i utdanningssamarbeidet.

Bistanden er blitt kritisert for ikke å ta tilstrekkelig hensyn til sentrale kvalitative dimensjoner i arbeidet med utdanning. I vår globaliserte tidsalder, med raske endringer, økende kontakt, migrasjon og flytting som vanlige fenomen, stiller flerkulturelle møter og flerspråklige elevgrupper utdanningssystemene overfor nye utfordringer i alle land. Den kontekst som skolen opererer innenfor i utviklingslandene, må sies å være særlig utfordrende. De tre artiklene begrenser seg til noen sentrale dimensjoner med ulike fokusområder for bidragene fra fagmiljøene.

Anders Breidlid viser til ulike definisjoner av kulturbegrepet, blant andre Geert Hofstede, som definerer kultur som "the collective programming of the mind".
Mens det er vanlig å knytte europeisk kultur til moderniteten, forbindes gjerne mange 3.verden-kulturer med tradisjon og tradisjonelle uttrykksformer. Dette er viktig i forhold til relevans og kvalitet i undervisningen.

Birgit Brock-Utnes artikkel tar utgangspunkt i språkproblematikk og stilte spørsmålet: "Utdanning for alle – i hvis språk?". Brock-Utne viser til tre ulike dimensjoner for analyse av ovennevnte spørsmål: Den pedagogiske, identitetsskapende og den pedagogiske. Forfatteren refererer til erfaringer fra sin forskning og mangeårige undervisning i afrikanske land, særlig Tanzania. Hvilke krefter arbeider for å beholde "kolonispråkene" og hvilke krefter endrer? Gode pedagogiske ideer og metoder innføres, men elevene forstår ikke undervisningen.

Liv Bøyesen tar utgangspunkt i en norsk struktur for tospråklig opplæring, kompetanseoppbygging og –spredning, samt effektiv pedagogigsk praksis innen flerspråklig og flerkulturell opplæring. Nasjonsbyggende og spesialpedagogisk tenkning er blitt anvendt på språklige minoriteter, og resultatet er da blitt kulturhomogenisering eller assimilering. Målene i styringsdokumentene blir ikke like godt realisert i norsk skole, bla fordi tilbud ikke er dekkende.

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Introduction

By Ingse Skattum, University of Oslo

The three articles in this booklet all approach the question of culture and language in education as tools for development, but from different angles.

Anders Breidlid discusses the possibility of including indigenous knowledge systems into the modern educational model. The blending of the spiritual and the temporal into a holistic world-view, so characteristic of many developing countries, stands in contrast to the science based, dualistic world-view which dominates Western society. School systems both in the West and in developing countries are however nearly exclusively based on the Western modernist science model. Building on his research experience from South Africa, Breidlid recommends that education be adapted to to local culture, including indigenous knowledge systems, in order to provide a more sustainable development.

Birgit Brock-Utne focuses on the interrelationship of language and culture, particularly in education, and like Breidlid she bases her reflections mainly on research from Africa. Brock-Utne defines four types of teaching material: A) Textbooks written and published abroad in a foreign language adopted for use without any modification; B) Direct translations of textbooks and curriculum material made abroad; C) Literature written in the ex-colonial languages by well-known authors from Africa; D) Texts taken from the local culture and written in the local language. She sees textbooks from abroad (mostly from the ex-colonial powers) as the least desirable strategy, but the one most in use, partly because books are being used as development aid. Translations of material made abroad is of course better for the children since they understand the language, but the culture content remains foreign. Brock-Utne suggests using local content like oral history and narratives instead. On the other hand, literature written by well-known African authors like Léopold Sédar Senghor and Chinua Achebe shows that it is possible to express African thoughts and features from African life in French and English. So textbooks could also be written in European languages and still reflect African culture. But the best would be if both content and language corresponded to the children's environment, to facilitate instruction and thus ensure sustainable development. This model is however seldom found.

Liv Bøyesen's approach is different from the two former in that it is based on multicultural education in Norway. Her aim is to compare the situation of immigrants and indigenous minorities in school in industrialised countries, particularly in Norway, with the situation in developing countries. She suggests that insights from multicultural education in Norway could be of use in the field of education and development, particularly as concerns first language (mother tongue)[1] instruction.

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[1] The term *mother tongue* is commonly used but imprecise. For you may speak your father's tongue, the language of your surroundings or be bilingual (with equal or varying degrees of competence in the two languages). Linguists prefer to speak of first, second and third language (L1, L2, L3, etc.) according to which language you master the best, next to the best, etc.

All three discuss the term *culture*. Anders Breidlid starts by quoting Geert Hofstede's (1991) definition of culture as "the collective programming of the mind" as well as J. Bruner's definition (1998: 98): "a toolkit of techniques and procedures for understanding and managing your world". The second definition, he feels, comes close to that of world-view, which Kearney (1984: 1) defines as "a culturally organized micro-thought". Indigenous world-view is in its turn close to indigenous knowledge systems, as defined by Crossman and Dervisch (2002: 108): "holistic and organic, non-dominating, non -manipulative, non-mechanical (social and people-centered) and relational". This line of reasoning brings Breidlid to characterise the holistic nature of the interrelationship between nature, human beings and the supernatural, as well as the role of the ancestors in people's daily lives, as typical traits of different ethnic groups across the African continent. He agrees with Chabal and Daloz (1999: 65) that "[a] crucial feature of African belief systems is the absence of a firm boundary between the religious and the temporary".

While Brock-Utne agrees with Breidlid on this interpretation of African world-view and on including local culture in the teaching material and methods, she looks in particular at the relationship between culture and language. She states that though cultures partly exist through language, culture is also expressed through other means than language. On the other hand, though language expresses cultural features and cultural identity, language is also important in communication and in education. So culture is more than language and language is more than culture. In relation to education, she shows how foreign thoughts from foreign cultures can be conveyed through local languages, but also how foreign languages implicitly convey foreign norms enshrined in Western schooling. These can supplant local knowledge and culture. It is in the recognition of these facts that Brock-Utne sets up the four models mentioned above, based on the two dichotomies foreign/local content and foreign/local language. By local content, she means familiar stories from the child's environment and a holistic epistemology which more or less corresponds to Breidlid's indigenous knowledge.

Bøyesen refers to social anthropologists' definition of culture as "ways of acting and thinking". Anthropologists do not, like many sociologists, distinguish between social structures and culture. Bøyesen raises this as one of several questions concerning the concept of culture: Does culture include social structures? Can one predict attitudes and actions by persons from different cultures? How homogenous are cultures? Where do boundaries go between attitudes, actions, values and needs that are common to mankind and those that are defined by unique cultures? We are left without answers, but the reader is given food for thought.

Bøyesen then goes on to define the term *multicultural*, which may refer both to a person and an institution or society. A multicultural person may be either a broad-minded person or someone without "a distinctive stamp", as she puts it. A multicultural institution may be one that is composed of people from different cultures or one that in addition fulfills certain criteria as to the possibilities and resources allocated to its members. Multiculturalism can be seen as inherent to the Norwegian value system, as expressed for instance in the Norwegian 'Law of Education' (*Opplæringsloven*): "Education in primary and secondary school should foster respect of human dignity and equality, freedom of thought and tolerance,

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ecological understanding and a sense of responsibility at the international level" (my translation)[2]. A school with pupils from different cultures should thus respect their pupils' cultural and linguistic differences. This value system, she suggests, could be adopted in developing countries (meaning the relationship between Western and local culture). She does not discuss the relationship between different local cultures, though we know that ethnic strife is common for instance in Africa, so that developing countries might benefit from the "multicultural value system" as well.

All three articles also take up the issue of the *language of instruction*. Breidlid considers the European medium, which is foreign to the children, as an additional barrier to learning, and recommends that local languages be used as much as possible.

Brock-Utne describes the powerful connection between language and socio-cultural identity. A child may feel a part of her/himself is being denigrated if her/his language is looked down upon, for instance as a means of instruction. Under colonial rule, Africans learnt to associate their languages with low status and humiliation, while achievements in English or French were highly appreciated. These attitudes linger on amongst Western and African people alike.

Also, a language will tell us much of the culture. For instance, Norwegian has only one word for banana, Kiswahili has about twenty, and such specialization informs us about the importance of local concepts. It follows that teaching in a language which reflects the cultural features and the world-view of the pupils produces more context relevant knowledge. Inversely, the systematic difference between the language and culture of school and that of the child's environment (a difference which is much more pronounced in sub-Saharan Africa than in any other part of the world[3]), has often resulted in teaching the pupils nothing but self-depreciation. In a class-room where the children do not understand what the teacher is saying, they learn that they are stupid and that schooling is nothing for them.

The last of the four types of teaching material (type D), defined by Brock-Utne, texts taken from the local culture written in the local language, is indeed rare but does exist. Brock-Utne mentions an educational program supported by the Swedish development agency (SIDA), where children were taught by local teachers in the local language with a content taken from the local culture. These pupils' results were far ahead of those of other learners. Also, literacy primers made in the local language were later translated into English, and the translation made their culture accessible to a wider audience.

Though language of instruction is a much debated issue amongst both linguists and educationalists, it is surprisingly absent from policy makers' documents. Brock-Utne states that for instance in the *World Declaration on Education for All* (1990), mother tongue instruction is mentioned but once, and then only as a means of strengthening

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[2] "Opplæringa i grunnskolen og den vidaregåande opplæringa skal fremje menneskeleg likeverd og likestilling, åndsfridom og toleranse, økologisk forståing og internasjonalt medansvar."

[3] In former French colonies in Asia, for instance, like Cambodia and Vietnam (which the French called *Indochine*), the independent states chose their own languages as official language and language of instruction. They were of course fortunate to have local majority languages and a culture of writing to build on. Nevertheless, this choice is one of the elements that may explain their educational and economic development.

cultural identity and heritage (Article 5). However, as she justly remarks, instruction in local languages is more than a cultural question, it is very much an educational question as well. Research both in the West and in Africa or other developing countries clearly shows that learning to read and write in a language you understand[4] facilitates both this fundamental process and all subsequent learning of subject matters. In Africa, one of the main educational problems is in fact linguistic, writes Brock-Utne, since only approximately 5 to 10% of the children master the dominating languages of instruction in most countries south of the Sahara: English, French and Portuguese.

Brock-Utne concludes her article by five recommandations: 1) support the writing down in local languages of local oral history; 2) support the translation of this local history both to larger African languages and the "imperial"[5] languages; 3) support the use of familiar African languages as means of instruction as far up in the educational system as possible and develop some of the larger African languages as languages of instruction for the whole educational system; 4) continue the harmonization of African languages which are related but have different spellings; 5) support information campaigns among parents on the advantages of using a familiar language as the language of instruction and at the same time the advantage of learning a foreign language from teachers who are experts on this teaching.

With Bøyesen's article, focus moves from Africa to Norway. Norway's multicultural education is presented as a possible solution in the field of education and development. A common problem is the lack of instruction in the first language and the violence with which the dominating language has been or is being enforced upon the minorities (indigenous or immigrated). Bøyesen quotes Hauge (2004) to describe the ideal educational system for minorities: "A multicultural school is one that integrates measures for multilingual students as a regular matter of fact. It not only accepts diversity, but encompasses and makes use of it to create a sense of community and equal opportunities". Bøyesen also regards multiculturalism and multilingualism as a resource rather than a problem, and considers that cultural knowledge broadens people's horizon, whether they come from the majority or the minority communities.

However, research shows that minorities often suffer from feelings of insecurity and ambivalence, writes Bøyesen. These feelings stem from power relations like marginalization or exclusion and conflicting value systems at home and in the society at large. A parallel can be drawn to the former colonial situation and developing countries today. School systems both in the West and in developing countries must ensure that children receive a multicultural and anti-racist instruction. To achieve this goal, the teacher's role is of the first importance, and teachers should be formed to give such instruction.

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[4] Brock-Utne takes care not to advocate "mother tongue" instruction but instruction in a "familiar" language. The complex multilingual situation which prevails in Africa, with approximately 2000 languages, does indeed make it impossible to give all pupils instruction in their L1. But most Africans understand or speak several languages, and in most regions you find *lingua franca* (interethnic means of communication) which give the child access to instruction in a language he/she understands.
[5] *I.e.* from the former colonial empires.

Another parallel is drawn between Norway's nation building in the 19th century and developing countries' nation building efforts after they obtained independance in the second part of the 20th century. In Norway, education was used to create a common culture, at the expense of for instance the Sámi minority and pupils with special educational needs. The result was one of assimilation, not integration. This has negative effects even today for linguistic minorities, who are asked to assimilate to become good Norwegians. Likewise, one may speak of an assimilation pressure into the wider international society for many pupils in developing countries, like Breidlid demonstrates for South African pupils exposed to curricula built on a Western worldview. I would like to add that one of the main arguments to choose a European and not an African language as official language in the independant African states, is to unite linguistically heterogenous groups within the country and to avoid ethnic strife.

As for the language of instruction, research has shown that in Western countries, it takes from five to ten years to attain sufficient competence in the "second" (*i.e.* the school and the official) language, and that language support programmes have given good results for minority children. Likewise, children in developing countries who do not attain sufficient proficiency in the "formal" (*i.e.* the European) language, can benefit from bilingual programmes involving first (or a familiar) language teaching.

Arguments for first/familiar language instruction include the correspondance between familiar sounds and graphic signs, the connection between school and home language, concept formation and cognitive development in general, identity building and even an economic aspect according to some researchers (Engen 2004, quoted by Bøyesen). These arguments are common to multicultural education in Norway and education in developing countries.

But some differences need to be mentioned as well "between immigrant and indigenous pupils on the one hand, and majority pupils in developing countries on the other", as Bøyesen says. Here I would like to comment on the terms *minority/ majority* languages (or pupils). In Western countries, the majority language is normally also the dominating one (Norwegian, German, etc.) In developing countries and particularly south of the Sahara, the dominating language is usually the imported, European language, which is a minority language. It is therefore more precise to speak of *dominated/ dominating* languages when talking of the relationship between European and African languages. The dichotomy minority/majority languages should be reserved for the relationship between different African languages. I take Bøyesen's term "majority pupils in developing countries" to mean "indigenous pupils" as opposed to pupils of Western origin in these countries.

The differences Bøyesen refers to between minority pupils in the West and indigenous pupils in developing countries all concern the language of instruction. The most significant of these is that minority children in the West hear the dominating language spoken around them, while indigenous children in developing countries do not. I may add that not only do they not hear it, but they do not get to practice it with native speakers. If this communication is lacking or insufficient (as it may be if the minority community does not mix with the majority), we know that school results suffer. In Africa, this lack of communication is the rule.

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The second difference concerns the amount of instruction that needs to be given in the dominated language. Research shows that the less a language is practiced, the more instruction is needed to make up for the lack of input. So in the West, the time allotted to instruction in the dominated language should be important. The situation in developing countries is quite the opposite: pupils normally speak their own languages outside and often also inside school, and get enough input to ensure their *communicative competence*. However, they still need a sufficient number of hours of first/familiar language instruction to develop concept formation and cognitive development, i.e. an *academic competence*. I will add that African children are paradoxcally left with low conceptual competence both in local (endogenous) and foreign (exogenous) languages. This is due to two circumstances: 1) what is called "early exit" programs (first/familiar language instruction stopping too early, for instance after two or three years); 2) lack of opportunity to practice the foreign/official language (in which they do not attain the communicative competence needed as a basis to develop the academic competence).

A third difference concerns the pedagocical method of teaching the European languages. In Africa, these languages have mostly been taugt as a "second language"[6]. It would be better if English, French and other imported languages were taught as foreign languages by teachers who are trained to do so, like we do in the West. Due to their special status in Africa as official languages, Bøyesen however recommends starting earlier than what is practiced in Western countries and securing a wider range of subject matters to develop a systematic, academic vocabulary.

Finally, Bøyesen mentions that multicultural schools in Norway have a more diverse pupil population[7] than do indigenous schools, whether in Western countries (like the Sámi communities in Norway) or in developing countries. This is bound to have an impact on the type and amount of mother tongue instruction and on identity formation amongst the pupils.

Despite these contextual differences, Bøyesen feels that multicultural education in Norway is grounded on values that could be transferred to education in developing countries: equity in education regardless of gender and minority status of the pupils and an enhancement of democracy, including judicial and human rights, dialogue and respect.

Multicultural education however takes several forms that can be placed on a dimension of strong to weak. The strong model is the one practiced among the Sámi in Norway today, where the aim is full oral and written bilingualism in Sámi and Norwegian. This is the model that would suit the developing countries best. The weak forms are transitional models, aimed mainly at full competence in Norwegian, but with first language competence developed to an academic level. This model is used for immigrant minorities in Norway and is less suited for developing countries, but Bøyesen suggests adopting its underlying principles: 1) the rights for students to be educated in their first/familiar language alongside an official language; 2) supportive

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[6] The term "second language" here refers to a language with a special status: official language/main language of instruction, not to the language you master next best or which you learnt after your first language.

[7] According to The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 109 minority languages are taught in Norwegian multucultural schools (personal information to IS, March 2009).

actions for linguistic and cultural needs at all levels of the educational system; 3) building of teacher competence; 4) networks in and between educational levels; 5) parental involvement.

Her description of these principles however makes clear that many of the actions she prescribes are unrealistic in developing countries and some even in Western countries integrating immigrants from the South. This goes for instance for learning to read first in the "mother tongue" while learning the official language orally, or learning academic concepts in the "mother tongue" before or parallel to those of the official language, or having family members and friends cooperate in the pupil's construction of bilingual texts. These actions presuppose well developed local languages. However, most of the world's 5000-6000 languages are not used in writing and do not (yet) have the vocabulary needed to express Western, academic or modern concepts; many parents are illiterate and so are their relatives in the country of origin, etc. Other actions proposed are using local libraries and giving special support to families of minority children. These are certainly useful strategies in Western countries, but are probably financially out of reach for most authorities in developing countries. Nevertheless, at a more general level, one should retain suggestions like building teacher competence, favouring parental participation and creating networks between different social agents (parents, teachers, civil society...). Such strategies would be welcome both in industrilised and developing countries.

We may conclude that the three articles in this booklet show in different ways the importance of integrating local values, world-view, knowledge and languages into the educational system. Western world-view and languages have long dominated educational systems in Africa and other developing countries, and the enormous gap this creates between school and home is one of the reasons for the drop-outs, repeating and poor school results even for those who come through the system, which undermine the important financial resources actually allotted to the education sector both by the countries themselves and international donors. It is a sad fact that illiteracy still prevails in these parts of the world. And as we know, illiteracy constitutes a main barrier to development in important sectors like health, the working world, economic life and not least democracy.

International development aid has long ignored the important question of integrating school into the local societies which they aim to help. There is however today a growing recognition of the importance of local values, local languages and of education on the whole, to ensure sustainable development in countries in the South.

To recognize the value of cultural and linguistic diversity is also important for countries in the North. Today's world is increasingly one of migration and at the same time of globalization and standardization. So we all stand to gain from recognizing the Other's culture and language.

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Culture, indigenous knowledge systems and sustainable development: A critical view at education in an African context

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Abstract

The article explores the relationship between culture, indigenous knowledge systems, sustainable development and education in an African context.

The article first briefly discusses some characteristic features of African (indigenous) world-views and knowledge systems, stressing the lack of distinction between the spiritual and the temporal, so common in European modernity.

The article then analyses the concept of sustainability with particular reference to education and indigenous knowledge systems. The article discusses the documents from the World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002 in particular and argues that the Summit links sustainable development to a modernist knowledge discourse with hardly any reference to indigenous knowledge.

The article proceeds to explore Curriculum 2005 launched by the ANC government and highlights the dilemmas of exclusively introducing Western-based scientific knowledge in a cultural context based on indigenous epistemology. Does an exclusion of indigenous knowledge systems hinder or facilitate learning? In what way can the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems contribute to developing a curriculum which transcends the borders of modernity and thus help to provide a broader foundation for sustainable development? By way of conclusion the article calls for more research into the viability of indigenous knowledge systems as a potential tool in sustainable development.

Introduction

The global, hegemonic role of the Western educational discourse, world-views and knowledge systems has over the last years been questioned and critiqued by a number of scholars and politicians in both Africa and Asia as well as in the West. Inspired by the African Renaissance in particular, interest in and focus on world views and indigenous cultures and knowledge systems in Africa as a supplement to what some call reductionist science and knowledge systems has led to a comprehensive exploration of "the role of the social and natural sciences in supporting the development of indigenous knowledge systems" (Odora Hoppers, 2002: vii).

Clearly, Odora Hoppers book *Indigenous Knowledge and the Integration of Knowledge Systems* (2002) has been influential in this respect in addition to a number of scholars who have done substantial research on indigenous cultures, world-views and knowledge systems (Ogunniyu, 1988; Jegede, 1995; Hountondji, 1997). The important contributions of philosophers and theologians like, for example John Mbiti (1969) and E. B. Idowo (1982), have exposed the importance of metaphysics and religion in African epistemology, whereas the Ghanaian philosopher Kwame Gyekye (1997) has analysed African world-views and cultures in terms of a tradition-modernity dichotomy.

In Geert Hofstede's view culture is "the collective programming of the mind (Hofstede 1991)," whereas Bruner refers to some anthropologists who define culture "as a toolkit of techniques and procedures for understanding and managing your world" (Bruner,1996, 98). Liv Bøyesen in this book refers to social anthropologists who define culture as encompassing both societal structures and ways of acting and thinking whereas sociologists often make a distinction between culture and structure and where various groups have different access to power and resources.

If Kearney' definition of a world-view is plausible, the line of demarcation between culture and world view is thin:

> *A culturally organized micro-thought: those dynamically interrelated assumptions of a people that determine much of their behaviour and decision making as well as organizing much of their symbolic creations...and ethno-philosophy in general* (Kearney, 1984:1).

This understanding is in line with Ogunninyi who defines a world-view as " the product of his/her culture (i.e. knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and practices) in which he/she was reared" (Ogunniyi, 2003).
Crossman and Devisch do not seem to distinguish between indigenous knowledge systems and indigenous world-views, defining indigenous knowledge systems as
a community-, site-, and role-specific epistemology governing the structures and development of the cognitive life, values and practices shared by a particular community (often demarcated by its language) and its members, in relation to a specific life-world" (Crossman & Devisch, 2002:108).

Crossman and Dervisch change the term indigenous to endogenous knowledge systems to avoid pejorative connotations. Key words to characterise indigenous knowledge systems are, according to Crossman and Devisch, holistic and organic, non-dominating, non-manipulative, non-mechanical (social and people-centered) and relational.

While Crossman and Devisch can be criticised for being normative and idealising indigenous knowledge systems, Odora Hoppers and Makhale-Mahlangu, in their definition of indigenous knowledge systems, may seem to tone down the metaphysical aspects of such systems by referring to them as

> *the combination of knowledge systems encompassing technology, social, economic and philosophical learning, or educational, legal and governance systems. It is knowledge relating to the technological, social, institutional, scientific and developmental, including those used in the liberation struggle (Odora Hoppers & Makhale-Mahlangu, 1998).*

It is, however, imperative, that African indigenous knowledge systems is understood in relation to a world-view which is realised in religious ceremonies, rituals and other practices. My field work among the Xhosas in South Africa confirms such a view (Breidlid, 2002). Even though there are aspects linked to indigenous, cultural practices other than religion, religion and religious practices are the *sine qua non* of Xhosa epistemology. In these religious practices ancestors play an important role and

are guarantors that the social and moral world will not collapse and that the solidarity of the group is still maintained.

A very similar picture is painted by both Mbiti and Idowu of other ethnic groups across the African continent (Mbiti, 1969; Idowu, 1982).

The holistic nature of the interrelationship between nature, human beings and the supernatural is foundational in the Xhosa knowledge system. As Chabal and Daloz state in an African, if not Xhosa, context: "A crucial feature of African belief systems is the absence of a firm boundary between the religious and the temporary" (Chabal & Daloz, 1999: 65).

A definition of indigenous knowledge must therefore both account for the holistic, metaphysical foundation (world-views) of indigenous knowledge systems and their various ramifications. Indigenous knowledge systems encompass therefore, I argue, world- views, cultural values and practices and knowledge systems derived from these world-views and practices and related to metaphysical, ecological, economic and scientific fields.

This holism was in Europe undermined by the Protestant reformation (Delanty, 2000: 39) which played an important role in the rise of modern science (and the separation between the secular and the spiritual) and thus in the advent of modernity (Breidlid, 2002).

P. Pitika Ntuli is therefore correct when claiming that indigenous knowledge systems are a counter-hegemonic discourse in the context of the African renaissance. This discourse is a reaction against a Western, colonial discourse that completely dismissed African indigenous knowledge systems, as they were posited in reductionist terms and relegated to the realm of insignificance.

It is in this context that the African Renaissance is important as it seeks, according to Odora Hoppers, to build "a deeper understanding of Africa, its languages and its methods of development" (Odora Hoppers, 2002: 2). Post-colonial Africa has exposed areas in which indigenous knowledge systems are relevant and useful, e.g. in agriculture, forestry and medicine.

The question is to what extent this recognition of indigenous knowledge has been taken into consideration in the various syllabi and curricula in Africa south of Sahara. And is the inclusion of indigenous (home) knowledge including world views and culture in the schools, a necessary, if not only, prerequisite in Africa's struggle for sustainable development? Moreover, when indigenous cultures and knowledge systems are ignored, in what way does it impact on power relationships in a given society?

Education, Sustainable Development and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

It is for our purposes in this article important to explore the relationship between indigenous knowledge systems, so-called modern knowledge systems and sustainable development. Hountondji is right when he asserts: " What is needed…is to help the people and their elite to capitalise and master the existing knowledge, whether

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indigenous or not, and develop new knowledge in a continual process of uninterrupted creativity, while applying the findings in a systematic and responsible way to improve their quality of life." (Hountondji, 2002: 36).

'Sustainable development' is a key concept in debates on development issues. According to Goldin and Winters, 'sustainable development' is often defined as development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. "Since the above definition may be elusive and somewhat unclear, Goldin and Winters propose to narrow the definition to" an economy in which future growth is not compromised by that of the present (Goldin & Winters, 1996: 1). Their definition is also problematic, however, in the sense that the issue of limits to growth and poverty and environmental issues are not really accounted for. *Our Common Future* (1987), the Brundtland report proposed long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond. In recent years the intimate connections between poverty and the environment have become central to any discussion of sustainable development (see e.g. Middleton & O'Keefe, 2003). The World Summit of Sustainable Development, held at the end of August 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, issued the *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* which once more reaffirmed the importance of eradicating poverty, a fair and just allocation of resources and the removal of "the deep fault line that divides human society between the rich and the poor and the ever-increasing gap between the developed and the developing world (which) pose a major threat to global prosperity and stability" (*Declaration*, # 12). *The Declaration* urges "to speedily increase access to basic requirements such as clean water, sanitation, adequate shelter, energy, health care, food security and the protection of biodiversity" (# 18). Education is not mentioned as a basic requirement, but referred to later in the same paragraph together with "technology transfer and human resource development." Threats to sustainable development are listed, among those are "chronic hunger and malnutrition, natural disasters, armed conflicts, organised crime, and corruption, intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds and communicable and chronic diseases, in particular HIV/Aids, malaria and tuberculosis" (#19).

It is noteworthy that our concern in this paper, knowledge systems and cultural practices are not included in the list, and that lack of educational opportunities is only referred in #18, and not mentioned as a threat to sustainability. These importance omissions notwithstanding it is clear that the notion of sustainable development far exceeds a mere economic perspective referred to above.

The Johannesburg Summit underlines, beside the issue of poverty reduction, the importance of environment in sustainable development. It is in this perspective indigenous knowledge systems must be seen. Odora Hoppers is right when she claims that "a major threat to the sustainability of natural resources is *the erosion of people's knowledge*, and the basic reason for this erosion is *the low value attached to it*" (Odora Hoppers, 2002: 7). While modernity and modern knowledge systems can be seen as the ideological foundation of the West and capitalism's aggressive exploitation of nature, the holistic nature of indigenous knowledge systems (the interrelationship of nature, human beings and the supernatural) has major contributions to make to the critical debate on ecology and the preservation of natural resources. The neglect and eradication of such knowledge, not the least in the school systems in the South, is a major threat to sustainable development.

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While education was marginalised in the *Declaration* from Johannesburg, the other document from Johannesburg, *the Development Plan of Implementation* (2002) refers to education in a number of paragraphs (paragraphs 116-124). The Plan underlines that

> *Education is critical for promoting sustainable development. It is therefore essential to mobilize necessary resources, including financial resources at all levels ... to complement the efforts by national governments* (#116).

The Plan also refers to the "Millennium development goal of achieving universal primary education," where by 2015, "children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling" (#116). Moreover the Plan underlines the importance of "sustaining their (the countries') educational infrastructures and programmes, including those related to environment and public health education" (#117). Both the impact of HIV/Aids on the education system (#118) and the importance of Education for All (Dakar) in achieving sustainable development (#119) are referred to. The importance of gender equity as stressed by Dakar is also underlined, and the Plan foresees the creation of a gender-sensitive educational system and the creation of a gender-sensitive educational system (#120). Additionally, the Plan suggests to integrate sustainable development into education systems at all levels of education in order to promote education as a key agent for change" (# 121) and also emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning in the promotion of sustainable development (#123). Even though all these educational goals may be seen as commendable *per se,* they are marked by a technical educational discourse, which does not ask the important questions about the relationship between education and sustainable development. Does any kind of educational input promote sustainable development? The present, Western, modernist notion of education remains uncontested even though its basic principles and ideological foundation may be said to be problematic, if not ecologically unsustainable and, although globally competitive, culturally insensitive (see Breidlid, 2003). One can only hope that the recommendation to continue to implement the work programme of the Commission on Sustainable Development on education for sustainable development will widen the understanding and scope of education in such a way that it starts exploring critically how other knowledge systems can address the issue of sustainability in a more holistic way. The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) may be seen as a step in the right direction.

A case study: Curriculum 2005 (C 2005), Culture and Indigenous Knowledge in South Africa

In the present section the new curriculum for South African schools after the new dispensation will be discussed, exploring in particular the epistemological foundation of the curriculum and its relationship to indigenous culture and knowledge systems. While the focus is on South Africa, there is little need to doubt that some of the consequences discussed in this are relevant in other parts of Africa, and indeed in other parts of the third world.

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The objectives of the new curriculum in South Africa are stated in the following way:

A prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens leading productive, self-fulfilling lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice ((DoE, 1997a: 1).

What are the values underpinning such a statement? Which knowledge systems are to be applied? On whose premises is such a new South Africa going to emerge? The curriculum's proposition that, "The curriculum be restructured to reflect the values and principles of our new democratic society, (DoE, 1997a: 1) is - probably intentionally - so vague and ambiguous that one wonders what is included and excluded from the variety of values, world views and knowledge systems in South Africa.

On closer analysis, however, it is clear that it is not indigenous knowledge systems that figure prominently in the curriculum. Even though indigenous knowledge systems are referred to in the revised version (2002), C2005 is modelled on a Western discourse, depending heavily on different international contexts, especially from New Zealand and Australia (DoE, 1995).

According to C 2005, OBE will "ensure that learners gain the skills, knowledge and values that will allow them to contribute to their own success as well as to the success of their family, community and the nation as a whole" (DoE, 1997a: 10). Concepts like "critical and creative thinking", "organise and manage themselves …responsibly and effectively," "critically evaluate information," "use science and technology effectively," "problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation" (DoE, 1997a: 10) are familiar to anyone with some knowledge of Western curricula. At the same time the special outcomes of the curriculum, in the human and social sciences, specify the importance "to demonstrate a critical understanding of how South African society has changed and developed" and to participate actively in promoting a just, democratic and equitable society" (DoE, 1997a: 56).

Other concepts of modernity like progress and development also figure prominently in the policy documents, and are to a certain extent problematised (DoE, 1997 a: 66). The stress on universalism, rationality and the compartmentalisation of knowledge (despite integrative efforts) clearly challenge traditional African values where the focus on the tribal group, the pervasiveness of spirituality and the holistic view of life appear to be at odds with modern values (Breidlid, 2002).

The linkage between education, modernity and a "competitive international economy" is underlined as the prime engine in education policy (DoE, 1997 b).

On the other hand, the contribution of traditional cultures in the economic transformation of South Africa is only vaguely referred to: "salvage elements of indigenous culture which are constitutionally aligned and therefore worthy of preservation for prosperity" (DoE, 1997a: 193).

The revised curriculum (2002) touches upon the fact that people move between different world-views and knowledge systems in a day:

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> *… the existence of different world views is important for the Natural Science Curriculum…Several times a week they cross from the culture of home, over the border into the culture of science, and then back again* (DoE, 2002, Natural Sciences: 12).

This epistemological movement is confirmed by e.g. Fakudze who states that "the African child finds him/herself having to cross the cultural border between his/her African worldview and that of school science as he/she learns scientific concepts presented to him/her in the science classroom" (Fakudze, 2003b: 132).

As our field-work exposed, many teachers, like the pupils, cross cultural and epistemological borders on the same day, teaching Western science at school and taking part in traditional practices at home. How do pupils and even teachers cope with a knowledge system in school, which is alien to their home universe? Fortunately, the revised curriculum senses a critical challenge here by asking:

> *…Is it a hindrance to teaching or is it an opportunity for more meaningful learning and a curriculum, which tries to understand both the culture of science and the cultures at home?* (DoE, 2002, Natural Sciences: 12).

The cultural border crossings have been identified by Bernstein (1971) as a big problem for working class youths in middle class schools in England. These border crossings, however, important and difficult as may be, seem of a much more limited, cultural-linguistic character than what can be observed in South African schools. Among Xhosa children it is not only a matter of linguistic code switching, but of a collision of knowledge systems which is of a far more serious and substantial character than class barriers in school   in England. The revised curriculum signals that these challenges will be dealt with in curriculum development:

> *Science curriculum development, which takes account of world-views and indigenous knowledge systems is in its early stages and will be addressed with enthusiasm by many educators. This Revised National Curriculum…is an enabling document rather than a prescriptive one* (DoE, 2002, Natural Sciences: 12).

The importance and seriousness of these challenges are underlined by Ogunniyi who states in connection with science teaching: "The concept of world view is central to science education because it is the knowledge that a learner brings into the science class. Research has shown that such knowledge has a great potential for hindering or enhancing the learning of science" (Ogunniyi, 2003: 27). The crossing of epistemological borders to accommodate the so-called modern, rational world of science means that the pupil, according to Ogunninyi, is "involved in negotiating and navigating a complex array of conflicting mental states. He must synergize these conflicts into a more comprehensive world-view capable of accommodation of the new experience within the framework of intra/intersubjective life worlds, which provide him/her a sense of social identity" (Ogunniyi, 2003: 27-28). The complexities of these negotiations and navigation should not be overlooked. Jegede (1995), for one, claims that the metaphysical, mysterious cultural baggage, which the African child carries to school, is problematic, and if care is not taken "these mysteries, usually tagged as 'superstitious', will cause a blockage to any scientific knowledge the learner might acquire as a result of schooling" (Jegede, 1995 in Fakudze, 2003 a).

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Research on world-views held by three groups of students in Form IV classes in some high schools in Swaziland confirms the complex picture described above and shows an intriguing mixture of world-views embodying magic and mysticism and a more rational outlook. Fakudze concludes her research by stating that the students, "regardless of their gender, age and interest in science, hold varying degrees of traditional as well as scientific notions about selected phenomena, that is, they hold a multiplicity of worldview presuppositions" (Fakudze, 2003 a: 61). Our research confirms such multiplicity of world views and knowledge systems, but underlines simultaneously that " there is a sense that despite the intertextuality and dialogic exchange between various value systems, the indigenous cultural values are retained, not only as a means of social cohesion, or as a kind of low-key cultural resistance, but as a fundamental element of Xhosa identity construction"(Breidlid, 2002: 43).

It is this mixture of world-views and knowledge systems that the South African schools have to take into account.

So far the revised curriculum is, even though paying lip service to indigenous knowledge systems, firmly grounded in a modern, Western epistemology. Ntuli agrees:

> *Our education system seems to move farther and farther away from indigenous knowledge…There is no attempt at any level to examine the indigenous knowledge systems awareness of the essential interrelatedness of all phenomena - physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural* (Ntuli, 2002: 64-65).

While we have seen that some attempts have been made in C2005 (revised version) to include a discussion of indigenous knowledge systems, Ntuli is therefore right in claiming that the influence of indigenous knowledge systems in education is marginal.

When indigenous culture is introduced in school it is often in terms of local cultural expressions like dancing and singing. Important as these events may be they do not really address the underlying epistemological foundation of the indigenous culture and thus become isolated from the general thrust of the curriculum.

 Even though sustainability is not a recurring concept in Curriculum 2005 (revised version), clearly education is seen as an important tool in achieving change and sustainable development. The concept of sustainability is only mentioned explicitly in the revised curriculum under the learning area "Economic and Management Sciences." The inclusion under this learning area may at first glance be seen as a concession to a mere economical understanding of sustainability, which, however, on further scrutiny is not quite justified. Outcome 2 is titled "Understanding of Sustainable Growth and Development." Here the outcome is for the learner to "demonstrate an understanding of sustainable growth, reconstruction and development and reflect critically on related processes" (DoE, 2002: 27). In grade 7 the learner is to collect "information on the influence of apartheid economic policies on ownership, poverty, wealth and quality"… and identify steps required to redress socio-economic imbalances and poverty (DoE, 2002: 38). In grade 9 the learner is to

"discuss how the national budget, regional and international agreements can be used to facilitate sustainable growth and development" and "discuss productivity and its effects on economic prosperity, growth and global competition"(DoE, 2002: 39). The curriculum insists on a critical approach to economic sustainability: "It takes the view that a 'balanced' economy is desirable. Here, a 'balanced' economy means one, which aims to achieve sustainable growth, reduce poverty and distribute wealth fairly, while still pursuing the principles of an open market and profitability. It promotes respect for the environment, human rights and responsibilities" (DoE, 2002: 5).

In many ways it is difficult to detect any discrepancy between what was decided on the summit in Johannesburg and what is written in the revised version of C2005.

While the curriculum tries to mitigate the worst excesses of an economical approach and market liberalism, it is worth noting how indigenous culture and indigenous knowledge systems are absolutely absent from the discourse on sustainability. Sustainability is more or less exclusively linked to a modernist, Western approach with a dash of poverty reduction strategies. The issue of knowledge systems in connection with sustainability is taken as something pre-given, which is not open to debate. There is, in principle, only one knowledge system operating, and indigenous knowledge systems do not belong to this discussion.

This is problematic for many reasons. One is the curricular *marginalisation* of knowledge systems that operate on a daily basis in many parts of the world. Can these knowledge systems not contribute to sustainable development? Another is the problematic nexus between modernity as understood in the West and sustainable development. The link between modernity, Western development in terms of e.g. unbridled individualism and ecological devastation is well documented and should, one would think, trigger some sort of curiosity for alternative knowledge systems where the sacredness of nature may be an important factor in the prevention of environmental destruction (see e.g. Chilesa et al,2003). The concept of 'balanced' economy in C 2005 may possibly be perceived by some to be rhetorically progressive, but does not transcend the borders of the imported, Western knowledge system.

It has already been noted how this alien knowledge system creates barriers between the learner and the school. Moreover, if one does not account for indigenous culture and indigenous knowledge systems, one is doomed to fail to communicate with those who are going to be the pillars in transforming the country. As Ntuli states: "For any development to succeed with rural people, and even with many township dwellers in South Africa, the role of divine beings, ancestors, sacred places (like *isivivane*), sacred people and sacred objects needs to be addressed. To touch on these issues is to compel our Westernised intellectuals to experience severe conceptual violence, and yet many of them secretly subscribe to these beliefs" (Ntuli, 2002: 63). But it does not imply, as already noted, that "to touch on these issues" is a *carte blanche* acceptance of these knowledge systems *in toto* as sustainable.

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Medium of Instruction and Sustainability

The seriousness of the breakdown of communication in education in South Africa is not only related to the alien knowledge systems of the various learning areas. The task of bridging the gap between knowledge systems is also related to the issue of language in the classroom. If one agrees that quality education is an important tool in creating sustainable development, the focus must be both on the negotiations between knowledge systems in class, but also on the question of the language in which these negotiations take place. The importance of the mother tongue in teaching is confirmed in many research findings (Pattanyak, 1986; Brock-Utne, 2000; Heugh, 2000), and in this book Birgit Brock-Utne argues that it is of utmost importance that learning content and texts in the schools are taken from the local culture written in the local language (see also Bøyesen, 2006).

Already in 1968 UNESCO claimed that it is

through his(her) mother tongue that every human being first learns to formulate and express his(her) ideas about himself (herself) and about the world in which he(she) lives. Every child is born into a cultural environment; the language is both a part of and an expression of, that environment. Thus, acquiring of this language, his(her) mother tongue is part of the process by which a child absorbs the cultural environment; it can, then, be said that this language plays an important part in moulding the child's early concepts. He (she) will, therefore, find it difficult to grasp any new concept which is so alien to his (her) cultural environment and that it cannot readily find expressions in his (her) mother tongue (690).

In the South African primary schools the mother tongue is supposed to be the medium of instruction during the first three years of schooling. In the later grades the provisions in C 2005 and the Language in Education in Policy document (DoE, 1997) are unclear and confusing. C 2005 states that the idea is to keep the home language ("is to be sustained") until "the learner is able to learn effectively in the language of learning and teaching. (Then) the home language should continue alongside the additional language as long as possible" (DoE, 2002: 5). Moreover, the revised curriculum underlines that "the curriculum provides strong support for those learners who will use their first additional language as a language of learning and teaching (DoE, 2002: 4). Such a statement creates an impression that the policy acknowledges that some home languages will not be used as languages of learning and teaching after third grade. Our field work from rural and township schools in Eastern and Western Cape confirms such an impression, the situation being that even in homogenous Xhosa speaking classes the official medium of instruction is English, not Xhosa. Moreover, all textbooks and all exams are in English. This does not mean that teachers use English consistently in their teaching. On the contrary, the teachers make use of code switching or code-mixing (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2003: 88) where Xhosa is most often used to explain the content matter in the learning area (in violation of the regulations from the education authorities). Clearly, this is a sensible solution in terms of the pupils' cognitive development, but causes problems when the

same pupils sit at the exam table and are forced to answer in English. The efficiency of learning under such conditions is highly questionable. As Rollnick states on the issue of science learning:

> *Language is a central factor to all learning. Its importance in the learning of science has often been underestimated, as there is a belief that the student's meaning will 'come through' despite language difficulties. The issue of language cannot be ignored as it impinges on the learning of science in important ways related both to attitude and cognition* (Rollnick, 1998: 21).

In our fieldwork we noted that the language barrier (despite code-switching or code-mixing) created huge problems, even for pupils with a talent for maths or science. As one teacher told us: "I have several Xhosa pupils who excel in maths, but who might fail because the exams are in English".

This means that many pupils, who have successfully navigated between various knowledge systems when taught in their mother tongue, still are classified as failures when the exam results are out due to the language barrier. If one subscribes to the idea previously referred to from the World Summit in Johannesburg that education is a very important tool in sustainable development, the South African school system does not seem conducive to such a development. While not enough space and time is set aside to negotiate the various cultures, world views and knowledge systems in class, the curriculum makes these negotiations and navigations even more difficult because the dominant school language is alien to the majority of primary school children in South Africa.

Conclusion

There is an urgent need to address the issue of indigenous culture, sustainable development and education in a third world context. When the thinking and acting of the majority of the people in a country (see previous definition of culture) is more or less excluded from the curriculum in the country, it does something to the self-confidence and self-esteem of the same people, besides the obvious learning challenges in school. Moreover such an exclusion has major implications for the distribution of power in the country where those with non-indigenous cultural capital are in the driving seat. The democratic problems of such a situation is obvious. The prioritisation of non-indigenous knowledge also means an underutilization of indigenous resources and knowledge in the development of a given society.

It has been noted earlier in this article that in the case of South Africa the ANC authorities are reluctant to undertake a more radical reorientation in educational policies which includes innovative educational strategies to meet the needs of the majority of South Africans. There seems to be a fear that such new strategies will leave South Africa out of the process of globalisation (see Crossman & Devisch, 2002: 107). Moreover, the authorities may worry that a more contextualised curriculum might leave the successful school leavers at a disadvantage internationally even though research has clearly shown that the present educational system under the

new regime puts the majority of school children at a disadvantage. There is therefore reason to question the sustainability of the present system.

Odora Hoppers' work (2002), as a response to the South African Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Arts, Culture, Language, Science and Technology, signals a curiosity or even willingness by the South African authorities to look into the potentials of indigenous knowledge systems. Whether her work and the work of others will influence the next revision of the curriculum remains to be seen and does not only depend on the attitude of the South African government, but even more importantly on the results of further research into the characteristic features of indigenous cultures and knowledge systems. While there is no doubt that these potentials have been grossly under-utilised in the past, these positive potentials and contributions of indigenous cultures and knowledge systems should not lead to the temptation, as Hountondji reminds us, "to overvalue our heritage", and we should bear in mind that indigenous knowledge "can be said to be less 'systematic' than scientific knowledge" (Hountondji, 2002: 25).

Extensive, critical exploration into this counter-discursive terrain of indigenous cultures and knowledge systems in the future can possibly assess more precisely their viability as a major vehicle of sustainable development and their proper role in the curriculum and in the classroom, not only in South Africa, but in other countries in the third world as well.

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Language and culture

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Abstract

This article examines the interrelationship between language and culture. Language is more than culture and culture is more than language. The article discusses especially the relationship between the language used for schooling and the content of the learning material and of school culture itself. The focus here is on education in developing countries, especially in Africa. Often textbooks for children in developing countries are written and published abroad in a foreign language and are adopted for use without any modification. Sometimes one may find learning material in local languages which is just direct translations of curriculum material made abroad, normally in ex-colonizing countries and with content from a foreign culture. The article also discusses the model whereby the content of curriculum material is local but the language used is the ex-colonial language. There are e.g. also well-known authors who write from Africa and describe African culture but in the ex-colonial languages. The best model would be to have learning content and texts taken from the local culture written in the local language. This model is, however, seldom found.

Introduction

The interrelationship between language and culture has long puzzled me[8]. Some authors claim that language *is* culture. Though cultures partly exist through language, culture is *more* than language. Language is also more than culture. We who are working in another culture, particularly in an African culture, need to reflect on the interrelationship between language and culture. We may learn the language of the people we deal with. This will help us to grasp more of their culture, but it is not synonymous with knowing the culture. Working at the University of Dar es Salaam for four years (1987 – 1992) I learnt to speak the language Kiswahili rather easily, but it was much more difficult to understand the cultural norms regulating communication between people. I had to learn that the direct and sometimes rather confrontational approach often used in western societies was regarded as impolite and insulting, a behaviour to be avoided. I had to learn to be less time conscious, to learn that the many greetings and small talk have an important function. I had to learn the importance of age in African society, the need to pay respect to older people. I had to learn to understand the role of the dead in the lives of the living.

Language as "culture expressing itself in sound"

Folklorist Crats Williams defines language as "culture expressing itself in sound" (quoted in Ovando 1990:341). It gives individuals and groups their identity. There is a powerful connection between language and socio-cultural identity. The language you learnt your first words in, the language your mother and father talked to you, the language which was used in your nearest surroundings and the language you use with your closest family and friends will always be a part of your identity as a person.

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[8] A forerunner to this article can be found as Brock-Utne (2005c)

When the language one uses in daily communication is denigrated, for instance not deemed fit as a language of instruction at higher levels of schooling, the child may feel that a part of her/himself is also being denigrated. When it comes to linguistic minority children in Norwegian schools Astri Heen Wold (1992:247) notes:

You do not accept a child when you convey a message saying that one of the central characteristics of the child, her or his language, is of no worth. When the Norwegian school enables the existence and further development of the minority child's vernacular it signals the following: Your language is important and precious and so are you. (my translation)

In this collection of essays Liv Bøyesen writes more on the situation of linguistic minority children in Norway (see also Bøyesen 2006). When you learn a new language, you also learn much about a new culture. That can be an enriching experience provided that experience does not teach you to look down on your own mother tongue and thus at part of your own identity (Gaarder 1972, Brock-Utne 1994). Edel Hætta Eriksen (2005) tells about the harm done to the self-esteem of the Saami child when s/he came to school and learnt that her or his mother tongue, the Saami language, the language s/he spoke at home was not deemed fit to be used as a language for schooling.

The concepts which have been developed in a language tell us much about the culture in which a particular language is used. It is difficult to talk about the different types of snow in English. The Norwegian language has many more words for different types of snow. The language used by the Inuits has even more words for snow than the Norwegian language has. In the areas in the north the various conditions of the snow are important. Some conditions are good for skiing, others not, some are good for building an igloo or snow-hut, others not. We need to differentiate between the different types of snow. But the Norwegian language, like English, has only one word for banana. In Kiswahili there are about twenty words for different types of bananas. In some of the other Tanzanian languages like Kichagga there are even more words for different types of bananas. When a language dies, concepts belonging to that culture die with it. The socio-linguist Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) claims that there is a causal interrelationship between linguistic diversity and bio-diversity.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) claims that during colonial times the African child learnt to associate his own language with low status, humiliation, corporal punishment, slow-footed intelligence or downright stupidity. Because any achievement in spoken or written English was highly rewarded through prizes[9], and through the prospects of climbing up the educational ladder, knowledge of English came to be associated with intelligence and prospects for success.

In the *World Declaration on Education for All* education through the mother tongue is mentioned just once and in the following sentence: "Literacy in the mother tongue strengthens cultural identity and heritage."(WDEFA 1990: Article 5)

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[9] In Tanzania the English language support project used more luring incentives like flying to the prizing centre and back home not only the successful students but also their teachers and the Head of the school. There was no such incentive for being an outstanding student of Kiswahili (Brock-Utne 2000).

In this sentence it looks like the main reason why children should learn to read their mother tongue is to maintain culture.

Language is more than culture

Enabling children to use their mother tongue to obtain literacy does not only have to do with retaining cultural identity. It also has to do with facilitating the process of learning to read and write. Language is more than culture. And culture is also more than language. Many African educationists have for many years been concerned about the fact that using African languages in education makes children learn better. In 1980 Pai Obanya, who was then the Director of the UNESCO office in West-Africa, BREDA, in Senegal noted that:
It has always been felt by African educationists that the African child's major learning problem is linguistic. Instruction is given in a language that is not normally used in his immediate environment, a language which neither the learner nor the teacher understands and uses well enough. (Obanya l980: 88)

Obanya is here not primarily using the cultural argument as an argument for retaining the African languages. He is using an educational argument. He is concerned with facilitating learning, with communication between teacher and pupils. If the African child's major learning problem is linguistic, and I tend to agree with Obanya that it is, then all the attention of African policy-makers and aid from Western donors should be devoted to a strengthening of the African languages as languages of instruction, especially in basic education. The concept "education for all" becomes a completely empty concept if the linguistic environment of the basic learners is not taken into account.

In 1982 the Ministers of Education in Africa met in Harare in Zimbabwe to discuss the use of African languages as languages of education. They stressed that:

there is an urgent and pressing need for the use of African languages as languages of education. The urgency arises when one considers the total commitment of the states to development. Development in this respect consists of the development of national unity; cultural development: and economic and social development. Cultural development is basic to the other two....Language is a living instrument of culture, so that, from this point of view, language development is paramount. But language is also an instrument of communication, in fact the only complete and the most important instrument as such. Language usage therefore is of paramount importance also for social and economic development (ED-82: lll).

As we see here the Ministers are not only concerned about retaining African languages in order to preserve culture but they are also using educational arguments. Language is more than culture.

When the most important educational question is overlooked

> *There is little doubt that the systematic but frequently ignored differences between the language and culture of the school and the language and culture of the learner's community have often resulted in educational programmes with only marginal success at teaching anything except self-depreciation (Okonkwo 1983: 377).*

The Nigerian socio-linguist Okonkwo (1983) is concerned about the fact that both the language and the culture of the school are foreign to the African child. He is concerned with the simultaneous learnings going on in such a class-room where the pupils do not understand what the teacher is trying to teach them. One always learns something in an educational situation but it may not be what the teacher had planned as intended learning outcomes. In a class-room where children do not understand what the teacher is saying they learn that they are stupid, that school learning is nothing for them, that they should stop dreaming of higher education but be satisfied with their place in life. In a seminar organised by the research group EINS[10] on the 1st of November 2006 the educator and Saami activist Edel Hætta Eriksen told how one of her great grandchildren who speaks Saami only had suffered when he, for logistical reasons, was put in class where the language of instruction was Norwegian. He tried to avoid going to school claiming that he had a stomach ache. He seemed depressed and told his parents that he felt dumb and disliked the school. When he was transferred to a class where the language of instruction was the Saami language, his stomach ache disappeared and he was again the lively boy he had been before. Parallels to this story can be easily found in Africa (see e.g. Brock-Utne 2007)
The "education for all" strategy formulated at the important educational conference in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 was meant to target the poor (Brock-Utne 2000, Brock-Utne 2005a, Brock-Utne 2005b). In an article on education for all: policy lessons from high-achieving countries Santosh Mehrotra (1998:479) draws our attention to what he sees as the most important characteristic of those developing countries that really target the poor and have the highest percentage of the population with a completed basic education:

> *The experience of the high-achievers has been unequivocal: the mother tongue was used as the medium of instruction at the primary level in all cases*

Yet in the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar there was, according to Dutcher (2004) no mention of the language issue in the plenary sessions of the conference. There is also little consideration of the language issue in the resulting documents from the Forum. There is limited reference in official documents to the fact that millions of children are entering school without knowing the language of instruction. Many of these children are in Africa. The only type of formal schooling available to these children is in a language they neither speak nor understand. Nadine Dutcher (2004:8) holds:

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[10] EINS stands for Education and Inclusion in the North and the South and is a research group at the Faculty of Education at the University of Oslo started in the fall of 2006 comprising researchers both from the Institute for Educational Research and the Department of Special Needs Education. The Norwegian name of the group is "Fellesblikk". The group aims at working together for four years.

It is shocking that the international dialogue on Education for All has not confronted the problems children face when they enter school not understanding the medium of instruction, when they are expected to *learn* a new language at the same time as they are learning *in* and *through* the new language. *The basic problem is that children cannot understand what the teacher is saying!* We believe that if international planners had faced these issues on a global scale, there would have been progress to report. However, instead of making changes that would lead to real advancement, the international community has simply repledged itself to the same goals, merely moving the target ahead from the year 2000 to 2015.

With the help of ex-patriate consultants teacher guides are being worked out and teacher training courses given to have African teachers become more "learner-centred", to help them activate their students and engage them in critical thinking and dialogue. Teachers are asked to abandon a teacher style where students just copy notes from the blackboard, learn their notes by heart and repeat them at tests. Little thought has been given to the fact that this teaching style might be the only one possible when neither the teacher nor the students command the language of instruction. Africa is called anglophone, francophone or lusophone according to the languages introduced by the colonial masters and still used as official languages. These languages are, however, not the languages spoken in Africa. They are comfortably mastered only by 5 to 10% of the people. The great majority of Africans use African languages for daily communication. Africa is afrophone.

From a socio-political aspect, the use of African national languages in the educational process represents, for those African states making the option, a sign of political sovereignty with regard to the old colonial power, as well as an assertion of their cultural identity, denied in the past by the colonialists through the harsh relegation of African languages to the inferior status of "vernaculars."

Even though educational arguments may be even stronger for using the mother tongue as the language of instruction social cultural arguments are also strong.

Culture is more than language

Will the use of an indigenous language as a language of instruction in school be a guarantee for survival of threatened cultures? Foreign thoughts from foreign cultures in an artificially created environment can be conveyed through local languages. Indigenous culture and curricular content can likewise be conveyed through foreign languages. In an article on the impact of formal education on the Huaorani of Amazonian Ecuador Laura Rival (1993) argues against those who think that the cultural heritage of children will be preserved solely by providing literacy in the mother tongue. "No culture can be reduced to its linguistic expression", she claims (Rival 1993:131). I have argued that languages should be preserved not only to retain culture. Language is more than culture. But likewise culture is not only language. Rival shows what the norms deeply enshrined in the institution of western schooling do to forest life when a school is introduced among a hunter and gatherer group like the Huaorani in the middle of the tropical forest. The institution of schooling itself

separates children from their parents, reduces the time they have to learn from the older community members, learn what is necessary and valuable in the kind of society they live. It breaks up the day in a hitherto unknown way and forces a community into a more sedentary life than what they have normally led. She is concerned not only with the foreign content children have to learn but also with all the useful local content they do not learn when time is spent in schools.

 In this article the following four models will be examined:

	Foreign language	Local language
Foreign content	A) Textbooks written and published abroad in a foreign language adopted for use without any modification	B) Direct translations of e.g. textbooks and curriculum material made abroad
Local content	C) Some well-known authors write from Africa e.g. in the ex-colonial languages	D) Texts taken from the local culture written in the local language

Examples of the four models will be given and their strengths and weaknesses as well as the frequency in which they are used in schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa will be discussed. In his article in this collection of essays Anders Breidlid uses the term "indigenous" knowledge where I have here used "local" content. We have the same type of content in mind, a content which deals with the holistic epistemology of the local culture and draws on familiar stories from the environment of the child (see also Breidlid 2004).

A) Textbooks written and published abroad in a foreign language adopted for use without any modification

This is the least desirable of the four models, but unfortunately the one most in use. This is the model we deal with when books from abroad based on a foreign environment are just adopted into another culture. In Norway in the period from 1992 to 1997 the sale of imported literature written in English increased from 150 to 200 Million Kroner. Most of this literature was used as required reading in our universities and colleges. At the same time sale accounts from Norwegian publishers showed that the sale of text-books in Norwegian had no increase at all over the same period. The number of students increased from 105.000 in 1987 to173 000 in 1997 (Brock-Utne 1999). The imported literature does not deal with Norwegian cases or research conducted in Norway. The content comes from an English-speaking environment.

When it comes to developing countries, foreign books are often given as development aid. I have experienced myself how loads of outdated American text-books have been dumped in African university libraries. In 1986 Madagascar reverted back to using French as language of instruction in secondary school after having used Malgash for

several years. In 1987 one of the headmasters in one of the secondary schools told me :"What should we do? We had no textbooks in Malgash any more. They had been worn out through long use. But the French government gave us all the textbooks as development aid. They are highly irrelevant for us as they are written in French and produced in France, but they are all we have got." Alamin Mazrui (1997) tells that a loan from the World Bank to the education sector in the Central African Republic was given with the conditionalities attached that all the textbooks and even language charts should be bought in France.

B) Direct translations of e.g. textbooks and curriculum material made abroad

Often when learning materials are produced in local languages they are just translations of learning material which have been produced abroad, in Africa often in the country of the former colonial master. Direct translations into a familiar language make learning easier for children. They can now access the learning material in a language with which they are comfortable. The culture is, however, foreign and the examples given are sometimes so unfamiliar that they are difficult to grasp even in a familiar language. Even in the LOITASA project[11] (Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa) the teaching material we are using in Kiswahili in Tanzania and in isiXhosa in South Africa is teaching material which originally was written in English and not particularly geared to the culture of the African children. It should be possible to use some of the rich oral history from Africa in African history books instead of presenting history written by the former colonial masters. The educational researcher Catherine Odora (1993) recalls how she as a young school-girl in Uganda received an award from the headmaster on a parents day for reciting by heart a whole chapter from *Rip van Winkle* and his adventures on Catskill Mountains. The parents had clapped and cheered, but none of them had ever heard of Rip van Winkle, and most of them could neither speak nor understand English, which was the language of the text. Catherine Odora (1993: 2) wonders why the teachers felt so comfortable[12] educating the children on what Rip van Winkle did in the Catskills Mountains while ignoring the fantastic narratives of the kind her father regularly told the children in the neighborhood about famous events that had occurred to the Acholi people on different mountains long ago. Like Odora I have elsewhere (Brock-Utne 2000: 114) questioned why the teachers ignored the cultural heritage of the Acholi people. I have looked at the following reasons for this:

- The narratives might not have been written down. They might therefore have belonged more to the curriculum of the indigenous education conveyed regularly to children by parents and elders by the fire-side at night than to the Western type of schooling built on written sources.

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[11] For more information on the LOITASA project see Brock-Utne, Desai and Qorro (eds.), 2003; Brock-Utne, Desai and Qorro (eds.), 2004 and Brock-Utne, Desai and Qorro (eds.), 2005. A video/DVD on the project was also produced in South Africa in 2005.

[12] Maybe they did not, but like Odora they acted out the script set for them!

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- Even if the narratives were written down, they might have been written in the indigenous language while the language of the school to which Odora went was the colonial language, English.

- The purpose of schooling in colonial times seems to have been to make children familiar with the cultural heritage of the colonial powers as a way to convince them of Europe's superiority. The cultural heritage of the African child was made invisible within the formal schools.

It is now almost fifty years since many of the African states attained political independence. It is high time the curriculum would reflect this.

C) Some well-known authors write from Africa e.g. in the ex-colonial languages

There are well-known African authors like Leopold Senghor, Chinua Achebe, Maryse Condé who write from an African environment but in ex-colonial languages. The Nigerian author Chinua Achebe (1958) is especially known for his widely read novel, *Things Fall Apart*. Leopold Senghor is known for his beautiful poetry taken out of African culture but expressed in French. Maryse Condé (1986) is known for her large novel Segu which tells the story of the Traoré-clan in Mali in the years 1790 to 1850. The novel centers around the bambara nobleman Dusika Traoré who is closely connected to the royal family. Maryse Condé wrote her novel in French but it could only be written by someone with a deep knowledge of bambara and the Malian culture. The seven delightful books[13] picturing mama Precious Ramotswe, the cheerful Botswana private investigator of "traditional build" running the No.1 Ladies Detective agency in Botswana (Smith e.g 1998 and 2004) are not only written in English but also by a white expatriate man. Still all the Africans I have spoken with claim that he has really understood the thinking and the culture of the African society and people he is writing about.

It is also possible to produce textbooks with content from Africa but in a foreign language. In Guinea I came across a series of textbooks in French where an effort had been made to situate the content within African culture. This means not only substituting European names with African names and showing pictures of Africans instead of Europeans but also describing scenes which are familiar to the African learner.

D) Texts taken from the local culture written in the local language

This variation is the one we would have liked to have seen. It is unfortunately the variation we see the least, but it does exist. In this collection of essays Anders Breidlid is especially concerned about the fact that the indigenous culture, which he sees as a wider, more encompassing concept than local culture, has not been given the

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[13] Seven books about mama Ramotswe and the life around her detective agency have appeared. They have all been reprinted many times and translated into several languages. In the list of references only no 1 and no 6 of the books are mentioned.

place it deserves in the curricula of Africa. In his concept of indigenous culture he encompasses world views and various types of tacit knowledge (see Breidlids article). An interesting educational program, known as the Village School Program, was in 1994 put in place for the Ju/'hoansi San children in the Nyae Nyae area in the northeastern part of Otjozondjupa region in Namibia (Brock-Utne, 1997a; Brock-Utne, 2000). The programme was supported by the Swedish development agency SIDA. The general aim of the Village School Project was to provide basic education in mother tongue for grades 1 to 3. The philosophy of the Village School Programme is that school facilities should be close to where the children live. The school should not divide children from parents. For four of the five village schools school buildings were constructed. In the fifth school the teacher taught under a tree (Pfaffe, 2002). The older people are integrated in these village schools, too. Religion is not taught in the schools since the learners receive their own religion instruction from home. The teachers are from the community and speak the language of the children.

The educational program is geared to the culture of the learner. The language of instruction is the local language Ju/'Hoan. The Ju/'hoansi San children are known not to attend school, but they attend the Village School Programme of the Nyae Nyae Foundation. The reason for this may be the cultural sensitivity of the programme. Part of the reason why the Ju/'hoansi San have not wanted their children to attend school is that schools in Namibia have until lately practiced corporal punishment (such punishment has now been outlawed in Namibian schools). Corporal punishment is a practice which goes completely against the Ju/'hoansi San culture. In the Village School Programme such punishment has never been practiced. When the learners get fidgety or bored, the lessons are simply stopped. They then do something else or stop completely for the day (Brock-Utne 1995, Brock-Utne 2000).

According to personal communication from the Nyae Nyae Foundation, the 220 children in the Village School Programme are far ahead of other learners because they learn in their mother tongue and are exposed to culturally sensitive teaching material and teachers whom everyone respects (Brock-Utne 1995, Brock-Utne 2000). The production of teaching material has been done within the program and great emphasis has been placed on local curriculum development. Joachim Pfaffe (2002) tells that during the course of the project literacy primers of the Ju/'hoan language were developed, based on traditional stories of the Ju/'hoan people. These were collected in the villages of Nyae Nyae by the teachers themselves. During the subsequent development process of the readers, the original stories were accompanied by illustrations and also didactically adapted for initial literacy teaching. Pfaffe (2002: 161) tells how:
Following the production of the Ju/'hoan literacy primers, their subsequent translation into English promoted the cultural richness of the Ju/'hoan people, and made it accessible to a wider audience. Moreover, the English readers are now offering possibilities for contextually appropriate teaching of English as a foreign language.

The 220 school-children get food through the World Feeding Programme and are supplied with donkeys and donkey - carts as means of transportation.[14]

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Conclusion

The fact that children learn better when they understand what the teacher is saying should be enough for educational planners to see to it that the language of education is one children in school are really familiar with. Most Africans are multilingual in African languages and frequently learn two or three African languages at the same time, at least one of them being a larger regional African language. Using a familiar language as the language of instruction is, however, not enough. Children should also be able to relate to the content. That means presenting a content drawn from the environment and culture of the child. It is a sound educational principle to go from the known to the unknown.

Recommendations

- Support the writing down in local languages of local oral history from various parts of Africa, from villages in rural areas as well as from towns and townships.

- Support the translation of this local oral history to both larger African languages and the imperial languages.

- Support the development and use of familiar African languages as languages of instruction as far up in the educational system as politically possible. The aim should be that some of the larger African languages should be used for the entire educational system.

- Continue the work on harmonization of the spelling of the African languages which have been put into writing by western missionaries

- Support information campaigns among parents on the advantages for the learning of subject matter of using a familiar language as the language of instruction and the advantages for the learning of a foreign language to be taught this language as   a subject from teachers who are experts on teaching foreign languages.

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[14]On a trip to the Kalahari desert in Botswana in the beginning of September 1997 I again met a group of children of the San people, the Basarwa, and thought how much better it would have been for them to have had the teaching the Nyae Nyae Foundation of Namibia provided (Brock-Utne 1997b). The Basarwa children were living in hostels near a school far away from their parents and were taught through languages they did not understand. The food they received was of very low quality nutritionally.

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Multicultural Education in Norway

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Abstract

A main question in this article is: To what extent can theories, insights and practise from the field of Multicultural Education in Norway be of use in the field of Education and Development? The situation of immigrants and indigenous minorities in school in industrialised countries and linguistic majorities in developing countries are hence discussed and compared. A problem in common is the lack of instruction in the first language (mother tongue). Models of instruction from Multicultural Education that could be applicable when working with education in a development context are subsequently introduced. The term culture is discussed in the introduction. The derived term "multicultural" can be connected to present value systems in the Norwegian school system. The role of the school system in Norwegian nation building and the consequences for indigenous, national and later immigrant minorities is mentioned. Different perspectives in the field are discussed and the role of the mother tongue in securing progression for linguistic minorities as well. Principles that can be considered international and should secure better participation and better results for linguistic minorities are presented and illuminated by the practise of the National center for multicultural education.

Multicultural education and culture

The term multicultural education includes the term culture, a central term in this field. The term is taken from the social sciences where social ways of thinking and acting are important objects of study and knowledge. To social anthropologists culture is a concept which encompasses both societal structure and ways of acting and thinking. Many sociologists, though, make a distinction between culture and structure. Structure is the way society is divided into special groups and classes. These groups have different access to power and resources of a society. Yet, both fields would agree that artefacts of different cultures, for instance the veils and hijabs associated with Muslim traditions, food, clothing, and the interior decoration of apartments as well as the interior look of houses of worship, can be important identity symbols. The way children are socialized and the expectations that parents and pupils from minorities bring to school can be very different from those brought by the majority. Part of multicultural education for teachers and pupils alike then, can be to acquire knowledge of different ways of thinking, acting and organising social life, education included. From this perspective knowledge creates understanding. But how well can one predict what kind of attitudes and how a person from a certain culture will act or react in different contexts? How culturally homogenous is a certain society? (be or become?) Sociologists find important differences between values, beliefs, life expectations and ways of living among various sub-groups in one single society, like the Norwegian. And how different are the majority and the various minority cultures? Where do the boundaries go between attitudes, actions, values and needs that are shared by all humans alike as a common cultural and biological heritage, and those that are defined by unique cultures (Tranøy 1998)?'

When it comes to the term *multiculturalism*, one can ask: Who and what can be characterized as multicultural? Can one talk about "a multicultural person"? Some people obviously do characterize themselves or others as such, and use the term either as a broad-minded ideal for people or as a derogative term for people without a distinctive stamp[15]. Some claim the term only gives meaning on a more abstract level i.e. as a description of institutions and societies. '

As for the content of this term - one can ask if the composition of people from different cultures is enough to deserve the characterisation multicultural, or if the term should be reserved for institutions and societies that fulfil certain criteria as to how aims, interactions, possibilities and resources are allocated among members belonging to these different cultures. Many consider multiculturalism as part of the value systems that educational practice is obliged to adhere to. *Equity in education* is one central value underpinning education in Norway. It is often defined as *equal opportunities* and measured by relative success in the system of education. The same holds for the value *adjusted* or *adapted education* as well as *tolerance* and *freedom from discrimination*[16]. Adjusted or adapted education refers to education adapted to the educational needs and life situations of the pupils (tilpasset opplæring). The last pair of values can be said to belong to the same family. Freedom from discrimination can be deduced from values connected to tolerance. To show tolerance can be understood as actively securing others from being subjected to discrimination and racism (Tranøy 1985). A multicultural school would have to adhere to all these values and have a practise that takes care of handling linguistic and cultural difference. An-Magritt Hauge (2004) has the following definition: A multicultural school is one that integrates measures for multilingual students as a regular matter of fact. It not only accepts diversity, but encompasses and makes use of it to create a sense of community and equal opportunities (Hauge 2004). Pupils from the majority will benefit from a multicultural school because it gives them a cultural competence (Engen and Kulbrandstad 2004). Even in schools that are not affected in the sense that there are no minority pupils attending it, a multicultural perspective and knowledge base is relevant (Hauge 2004).[17]

Øystein Lund Johannesen in his article discusses a dimension that goes from the local to the national or global in the case of culture. Cultures do not automatically entail equal gender rights or distribute power in a way that a more modern citizen would consider just. Thor Ola Engen has described normative stages of multiculturalism in one society. According to him; at best a multicultural society is a pluralistic one where there is room for local differences, but at the same time adherence to common values implied in democracy. To many this means that the local culture cannot claim adherence to values that override the wider human rights. Within the last view one cannot claim that discrimination of women is a cultural tradition that must be respected. Both Lund Johannesen and Engen imply a discussion of -- or adherence to

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[15] A fact that can be affirmed by a search through Google or Google scholar.

[16] This is part of the wording in the Law of Education (Opplæringsloven): "Opplæringa i grunnskolen og den vidaregåande opplæringa skal fremje menneskeleg likeverd og likestilling, åndsfridom og toleranse, økologisk forståing og internasjonalt medansvar." The education in school should foster equality, freedom of thought and tolerance, ecological understanding and international responsibility." (Author's translation)

[17] http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/initial.html

central societal values. Neither of them have a stand that all cultures are of equal worth and must be understood as such - to give a rather blunt definition of the term cultural relativism. Like many educationists Johannesen and Engen discuss society and culture within a humanistic and value oriented tradition.

Different perspectives

How does contact and upbringing within different cultures affect people's identities? Is the effect of multiculturalism positive or negative? Do the people affected have a greater arsenal of traits when they negotiate their identities, and a better starting point for understanding their fellow citizens than others? Or are they mostly lost and marginalized in or between their cultures because of conflicting demands? These are classic questions within a multicultural perspective. The author of this article places herself among those that assert that multiculturalism and multilingualism on an individual and societal basis is to be considered a resource; a stand that can be placed within a humanistic tradition as well. There is no evidence that living a life within more than one culture and language is of any harm as such. Programs of language immersion at St Lambert in Canada (Lambert and Tucker 1972) were the first ones to document and denounce the claim that bilingualism was of harm to a person's cognitive development. That these first programs were well suited to a dominant majority pupil body but not to immigrant minorities or majority pupils in developing countries was also recognized early (Skutnabb Kangas 1981).

There is furthermore little substance to claims that cultural knowledge and insights are harmful. It is usually considered a way of broadening one's horizons. Immigrants have nevertheless been portrayed as having feelings of insecurity and ambivalence. The home culture and the society at large give different signals as to what is right and wrong, and how to behave (Aasen 2003, Heggen and Øia 2005[18]). On the other hand social scientists also give reports of how pupils are creative in balancing between the different social pressures they experience (Schultz 2006). And they invent new kinds of identity (Østberg 2002, Vestel 2004), new ways of expressing it and new ways of utilizing their languages (Aarsæther 2006, Drange and Maira Johansen 2006, Lane 2006)

Along with social scientists one can explain or blame the psychological status of some immigrants by structural and not conflicting cultural or linguistic societal factors: The power relationship between the minority and majority. The position of marginalised people is usually not portrayed as one that enhances mental stability and health. To be socially excluded is a strain. People belonging to a minority have a greater risk of being discriminated against, both on an individual and social level. There are mechanisms that marginalise the minority pupils and their families in the greater society (Bakken 2003, Støren 2005, Skolverket 2005). The markets for housing and work are worth mentioning in this connection. One can also follow records of racist

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[18] P 38: Fars og mors fødested kan leses som en indikator på nærhet til det norske samfunnet og til forutsetninger for å beherske koder, krav og forventinger. "The birthplace of a pupil's father or mother can be taken as an indicator of closeness to the Norwegian society and the prerequisites for mastering the codes, demands and expectations." (Author's translation)

behaviour shown by people or organisations in the wider society. These are both portrayed by the press or by centres that are established to work against racism (Anti-rasistisk senter in Norway[19]). The long tradition of suppression of local societies that the white colonial masters brought with them is important to recognise if one is to understand the violence and discrimination that prevails in Western societies like Norway today. This factor can help explain the educational situation of many pupils from the third world, whether they stay in a developing country or the family migrates to the West. They are made invisible and their educational needs not properly met for them to succeed in the wider society.

What then is considered the most important educational measure to meet the needs in multicultural education? Is it one that eases the problem of identity and cultural difference or one that secures participation and rights in the wider society? Should the curriculum and grounds to be covered make visible different ways of living and looking at life in order to enhance the identity of every pupil? Or should multicultural education raise a consciousness of different societal interests and power relations both historically and at the present? These are classic discussions in the field (May 1999).

The first perspective has traditionally been labelled multicultural whereas the second an anti-racist one. Today educationists are advised to secure both views. And they are advised to start with their own ways of thinking and acting. The role of the teacher is considered very important according to both views. Teachers can convey to particular pupils that they are a burden that do not fit into the classroom, or give these pupils a feeling of respect and self-esteem (Lindberg and Sjøberg 1996, Hauge 2004). A teacher who tries to break the manifestations of the power relations in society that are reflected in the classroom and also engages in the wider community is also important. Classroom observations and analyses often result in a call for the building of teacher competence (Bezemer et al 2004, Hauge 2004).

The securing of identity and the changing of attitudes is not enough in order to bring about equity. If culture is defined as a concept encompassing structure, then analyses of structural issues are included in the scope of multiculturalism. To take into account a multitude of different interests, not only those between blacks and whites are then legitimate. A broad analysis where culture, societal power and educational rights are included is possible and necessary. A scrutiny of the teacher role and power relations in the classroom is likewise called for (Cummins 2000). To sum up: Broad accounts and analysis of culture, structure and the role of the teacher should be equally important in a developmental context.

Multiculturalism and nation building

Nation building and educational reform is an important theme in a developmental context. Thor Ola Engen and Lars Anders Kulbrandstad (2004) have presented and discussed conflict between the culture of the educational system and that of outsiders from the beginning of the era of nation building in Norway, around the latter part of the 18th century. The school was to become the most important instrument of the

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[19] http://www.antirasistisk-senter.no/ (Acquired: 22.10.2006)

nation building. A cultural elite gathered and presented what was to be considered Norwegian culture and heritage. A main effort was to include all social classes and unite them through this common culture. The prize for not fitting in was paid by indigenous minorities like the Sámi pupils with a different culture and pupils with special educational needs based on physical or mental disabilities. The result was one of assimilation, not integration or inclusion if the outsiders managed to get into this mainstreaming culture. National minorities like Romani populations (Roma and Romani) as well as Finns and Jews were also the targets of a harsh political effort at making the minorities culturally Norwegian (confer Minde 2003).

Such an early effort at homogenisation has had negative effects for cultural and linguistic minorities with an immigrant background presently in Norway. These pupils have not been taken into the school community with their backgrounds and qualifications. The signals have been: Assimilate and become good Norwegians. This has been so in spite of the fact that the curriculum at both higher and lower levels of the educational system and the written documents of the immigration can be interpreted as prescribing inclusion and cultural pluralism - not assimilation. One can also speak of a pressure of "assimilation" into the wider international society for many pupils in developing countries. A discrepancy between the rhetoric of inclusion and the practise of exclusion is also presented in a developmental context as Breidlid's citation illustrates in this collection of essays. The goals of inclusion are formulated in the curriculum, and the ways of the classroom is such that: "I have several Xhosa pupils who excel in maths, but who might fail because the exams are in English".

Ethnic minorities - similarities and differences

Immigrants and indigenous minorities in industrialised countries and linguistic majorities in developing countries - what do they have in common and what are the differences? These are important questions in a discussion of transfer of knowledge from multicultural education to the field of education and development. In the following similarities will be considered first. The broad societal factor will not be discussed in detail, but the discussion will be concentrated on questions of language and of instruction related to language.

Similarities when the language of instruction is not the first language (the mother tongue)

1. Linguistic minorities as a group and pupils from developing countries on average have lower scores than Western majority pupils on international assessments. The assessments very often include scores of reading, but can also include tests of mathematical knowledge and natural science. The scores can differ for first and second-generation minority pupils (Roe 2006).

2. To attain sufficient competence in the second (school and official) language takes time. The estimate varies between five and ten years in the Western

countries, all-depending on the subjects measured and the organisation of the education (Cummins 1984, Klesmer 1996, Thomas and Collier 1997, Hakuta et al 2000). A review from the OECD in 2006 highlights the fact that some countries seem to manage to help immigrant pupil in their school career by providing well-established language support programmes with relatively clearly defined goals and standards. In these countries the performance gaps for second generation pupils are significantly reduced compared to those observed for the first generation. That implied that for some Western countries that participated in PISA 2003 the second generation pupils didn't close the gap at all or attain sufficient competence. Neither do many pupils in the South attain sufficient competence in the formal language (Brock-Utne 2006, Breidlid 2006).

3. Bilingual education where mother tongue teaching is involved can help accelerate the rate of learning for pupils from linguistic minorities in the West and majority pupils in the South (Thomas and Collier 1997, 2001, Brock-Utne 2006).

To continue this latter proposition Thor Ola Engen (Engen and Kulbrandstad 2004) sums up relevant arguments for the use of the mother tongue in education on behalf of minority pupils in Norway. These arguments are relevant for majority pupils in developing countries as well (Brock-Utne and Bøyesen 2006).

A. Concept formation

Use of the mother tongue is first of all important as an instrument for acquiring knowledge of the world. Cognitive development, concept formation included, is closely knit to linguistic development. When a child has to function in a language that is not mastered, there often occurs a breach instead of continuity of concept formation. The use of the mother tongue based frame of reference to understand the words is also severed, as Breidlid discusses in detail in this collection of essays. Some parents know how to compensate for this; others do not know or do not have the opportunity to do so. If the mother tongue development stagnates and the child has to develop language and concepts in the second language simultaneously, that is more demanding. The learning will have to start at a lower level.

Reading in the mother tongue has been recommended internationally. (Hvenekilde et al 1996). Obviously to read with understanding is much easier when one has the command of the language and culture through which a text is written, than when one doesn't. To write a text is also a lot easier if one masters the necessary vocabulary. What is perhaps not obvious is the fact that to learn to decode when the letters of the alphabet corresponds to recognisable phonemes in ones own language is easier than to learn to decode in a foreign language (Hauge 2004, Bøyesen 2006). Furthermore the correspondence between word meaning and form helps develop decoding (Bøyesen 2003)

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B. Transfer

Mother tongue development can assist in acquiring the (school, official) second language, in one instance Norwegian - the other a Western official language. This assumption is connected to the fact that important concept formation goes on in the mother tongue. In many, but of course not all instances, it will be enough for the pupil to learn the new word in the second language. Insight into the whole concept will not have to be acquired. This illustrates a common paradox: The mother tongue does not displace the second language, but contributes to its development. Anne Hvenekilde (1994: 56) translated and cited a World Bank report from 1980. In it education in the mother tongue was both encouraged and described as a counter-intuitive way of thinking. One reason to support this view is that competencies can be transferred. It is quite a joy to observe a child who claims that he or she has not learnt to read in the second language, only the first, suddenly discovers that he or she is more or less able to decode and read in the second language as well. Of course the orthographic set-up of the languages in question plays an important role. Latin letters are more or less the same, yet even if the written symbols differ, there are always features of reading that transfer from one orthography to the other. The recognition of a translation of oral to written language is fundamental. As a rule, the scripts build on linguistic units. Both Chinese and Japanese orthographies, often considered "visual" are complex systems that build on both morphological and phonological units of the oral language.

Orthographies that build on Arabic have phonemes that are represented by letters just like orthographies that use Latin letters. In short; the linguistic units of the Latin system, the direction of writing and the specific and different forms of the letters in various positions must be learned for some pupils, but not all, who know how to read in their first language.

C. Socialisation and family relations

The use of the mother tongue secures communication within the family. Early in the nineties Lily Wong Fillmore (1991) reported that minority parents in the United States complained that the kindergartens and schools of the majority population estranged and "stole" their minority children. The reason was that the acquisition of the majority language was at the expense of the development of the mother tongue. Psychologists will argue that the authority of the parents will best be secured when the parents can use the language they master the best, which is usually the mother tongue. And the quality of the communication at large will also profit from parent and child sharing the language of communication. Next to parents having a so-called cultural capital in the form of education, good communication between parents and children is important in predicting a pupil's future school achievements. Obviously it is easier for the parents to support the learning of their children when they can use the language they master the best (Bøyesen 1997).

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D. Identity building

An inevitable point is that mother tongue teaching and reading and writing activities in the mother tongue can help secure identity and ethnicity. This aspect has been discussed initially in this article, and is further elaborated by Johannesen and Breidlid in this collection.

E. An economic asset

A last argument here pertains to mastery of the mother tongue as an economical asset - individually and on a societal level: People who master foreign languages can secure important contracts and relevant information from the international community. This argument is particularily relevant for minority speaking people in industrialised countries. Yet Thor Ola Engen refers to multilingual capital: Educational systems in developing countries that are based on mother tongue teaching seem to be in a better situation economically (Engen 2004). It is tempting to draw the conclusion: the pupils understand what is going on and therefore get a proper education which in the second turn give a better economic outcome. Still there are many factors that give rise to economic growth. Education can be considered an important, but hardly a sufficient factor (Brock Utne 2006).

Similarities in the linguistic situation lead to similarities in interpretation of the situation. The possibility of not understanding what is being said in class and of not being able to participate on equal terms can be seen as structural discrimination (Hauge 2004). To test pupils in a language they do not master and to evaluate school and individuals on basis of such results is also characterised as structural discrimination (Wright 2002, Pihl 2004). On the other hand: To test and compare to see if equal education is taking place can be defended. How long a pupil has been in an organised educational setting with second language instruction and thus has had an opportunity to learn the language he or she is being tested in must be taken into account when schools and researchers evaluate the results.

When it comes to more overt forms of discrimination, like racist conduct in personal and direct forms, there is ample documentation that this affects Sámi people and immigrants in Norway. Indigenous people in developing countries experience the same. For majority pupils in developing countries it is more relevant to talk about structural discrimination. The lot of belonging to lower socio-economic groups seems to be a common one: Immigrants in Norway as a group are poorer than other Norwegians. This is also true for families of immigrants in a low-income category.[20] More immigrants are among the poorest in this poverty group and fewer among those better off. More immigrants have had a low income for years. They seldom own their own dwelling and live with the worst conditions (Øya, Grødem and Krange 2006).

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[20] This sample consists of families with an income below what is considered a poverty line or limit.

Differences betweeen the linguistic situation of minority immigrant pupils and majority pupils in developing countries

There are some important differences between immigrant and indigenous pupils on the one hand, and majority pupils in developing countries on the other. The former groups have a chance to hear the language of instruction outside the classroom - when they watch television, visit shops and encounter personnel at various service institutions. For many *followers* (etterkommere) a term that covers the offspring of those who originally immigrated, the development of their mother tongue will stagnate at an early stage, whereas the oral use of the mother tongue for practical, commercial but not academic life is not threatened to the same extent for most majority pupils in a developing country.

The majority pupils in developing countries have little or no opportunity to hear or practice using the language of instruction outside the classroom. They mostly use their mother tongue in the world outside. Classical studies like the ones from Carpinteria in California USA (Cummins 1984) would probably have turned out differently with majority pupils from developing countries. The surprising result from Carpinteria was that bilingual Spanish-English minority pupils that had their preschool and early school instruction in Spanish only, became better in English than the two groups of bilinguals for whom the language of instruction was either English only or both English and Spanish. Part of the explanation was one of transfer from the mother tongue to English because the pupils were surrounded by English.

Because of the lack of input, the amount of time allotted to instruction in the minority language is very important for the output of the mother tongue competence. Skutnabb Kangas (1981: 72) reported a linear relationship between the number of hours of instruction in the mother tongue and results in French language tests for francophone pupils in Manitoba (Canada). The amount of hours allotted to attain communicative competence in the mother tongue would be important, but not to the same extent in a developing country. Subject matter teaching in the mother tongue is nevertheless needed if the pupils are to acquire an academic and high level competence.

Because of differences in linguistic input, the needed amount of time allotted to the formal or international language in a developing country probably has to be greater, start earlier and have a different methodology. A foreign language approach in the teaching of international languages like English or French should be better than a regular second language approach. What this kind of approach should have in common with a second language approach, however, would be to start early and secure systematic vocabulary for a wide range of themes and subject matters in the target language.

Another difference between the groups is that the minority pupil population in Western countries will in general be more diverse than the majority populations of developing countries and pupils from indigenous populations. The former represent a multitude of languages, cultures, school competences and individual life stories. They are also different with regard to their school backgrounds from the country of origin and the number of years they have lived in the immigrant country. They will to a greater degree belong to global networks and consider themselves as having double or multiple identities (St melding 49, 2003-2004).

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Educational models for better inclusion, participation and results?

The models of multicultural education in Norway build on the same values that under-lie Norwegian development assistance policy: Equity in education regardless of gender and minority status of the pupils, an enhancement of democracy - including judicial and human rights, communication that is characterised by dialog and respect - not manipulation of the people concerned. One can also add some kind of scientific rationale underlying the understanding of educational issues.

Engen (Engen and Kulbrandstad 2004) has placed models in the field of multicultural education on a dimension from weak to strong forms. The weak forms have assimilation and monolingualism as a result, whereas the strong forms have enrichment, bi- or multilingualism as an aim and end result with a double reading and writing competence included. The strong forms only apply to Sámi pupils in Norway. The models created for the linguistic minority group are models of transition. Strong forms should be more effective in the field of education and development. Here the mother tongue can be developed and secured to an academic level. Implementation strategies, projects and good examples derived from multicultural education for immigrant pupils should nevertheless be of interest.

They are here summed up in five factors or priciples. It is recommended that these factors from the field of Multicultural education are secured in a development context:
   I.   The rights of students to be educated in their mother tongue alongside an official language
  II.   Implementation of plans and supportive actions for linguistic and cultural needs on all levels of the educational system
 III.   Competence building, teacher competence in particular
  IV.   Creation of supportive structures - networks in and between educational levels
   V.   Parental involvement - not only as partners but also as learners

The first and second factor must be secured by central educational authorities. They will not be discussed in detail in the following. But examples from the work of NAFO, The National Center for Multicultural Education are used to shed light on the last three principles. NAFO has responsibility for building competence and trying to improve the whole educational span from kindergarten to adult education in Norway. Preschool services are now included in the Department of Education. Therefore one talks about institutions of education in Norway these days, not only schools.

The success of pupils in the educational system is inevitably not dependent on one factor alone. NAFO is therefore familiar with and encourages a whole arsenal of means in order to build competence and fulfil the aims of equal education. Networks,

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projects, lectures, counselling and special contracts with selected institutions make up central activities. The counties (fylkene) are invited to join in the competence building by being hosts to meetings of different parts of representatives from the county; the selected institutions from the field of practice; the local College - and if there is such an institution of higher education - the local University. A major aim is to have the institutions of higher education develop expertise and convey it to institutions of education - that is kindergartens and schools at various levels. As part of their contracts with NAFO these institutions have made plans for improvement in the field and are well aware of their needs of competence and knowledge.

As for the approach of the various educational institutions so called *whole approaches* are generally recommended. Parental cooperation, the securing of identity development, special emphasis on reading, writing and subject learning, care for pupils at risk as well as those with special learning disabilities are important ingredients.

Those institutions that are new at taking special measures and write their plans for competence development are nevertheless asked by NAFO to take one step at a time. To make the multicultural perspectives of the institution visible is often a first step. In the classrooms flags[21] from the country of origin of the pupils' families, various alphabets or writing systems from the languages that the pupils in the classroom can speak and written bilingual texts, as well as a world map with the countries of origin marked on it. The day starts with greetings in the various languages represented in the classroom. An ambition would be to have the multilingual perspective step-by-step entrenched in the whole institution and the responsibility placed on all employees.
Whole approaches, yes - nevertheless teacher competence is at the core of education - the "alif and yeah".[22] In a newly released report Rambøll management has found that very few teachers that give second language instruction have the competence to do so in Norway. Particularly in the city of Oslo the municipality and school authorities have discussed why the schools results of minority pupils are low and some parents feel that their children are being discriminated against. It seems obvious that if the pupils are separated into special groups with teachers that are less dedicated and competent than the regular classroom teacher, it will follow that the pupils and their parents feel segregated and excluded. This would be so in any country. If the pupils, on the other hand, either stay inside the classroom, or when invited out of the regular classroom - have a chance to be better prepared for the next session by a particularly qualified teacher, the chance that they should feel that they are included and taken care of are much higher. Getting pupils into small groups and perhaps out and into "real life" to give them a better grip of the themes and vocabulary that is going to be introduced in the second language in the regular class, is one way of giving qualified second language development.

A particular model for bilingual concept building is termed *triangular cooperation*. The bilingual teacher, the teachers of Norwegian as a second language and class teacher cooperate (Hauge 2004). Key concepts are explained in the mother tongue, then translated into Norwegian and discussed with the teacher of Norwegian as a second language and put to use in class by the classroom teacher. Parents are likewise

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[21] Flags can also be controversial. But in a developing context other symbols of belonging had to be reflected in the class. Parental support is definitely needed in such endeavours.

[22] "Alpha and omega": The author is playing with the first and last letter in the Arabic alphabet in stead of the Greek.

informed and see if they can focus on the words and concepts in question. NAFO's selected schools report good experiences with this approach[23]. Another approach is to secure identity by having pupils that speak the first language; family members, friends or neighbours cooperate in the pupil's construction of bilingual texts (Cummins 2004, 2005).

Coordination across educational levels, public services and departments is essential. NAFO encourages for instance projects where adult education institutions cooperate with kindergartens and schools. Family learning is a popular approach that entails different activities. A major aim is to make the parents feel comfortable in a learning situation. By preparing learning material for their own children, they are encouraged to improve their supporting ability vis-à-vis their own children and perhaps continue their own education.

Special support and service to families can also be coordinated within a city municipality. For various reasons some minority parents can use traditional ways of handling control for instance by using corporal punishment in ways that are considered violent by Norwegian schools and services. Corporal punishment is not at all allowed in Norway. The children can show problematic behaviour and be at risk in the educational system. Parents are guided into alternatives to violence by a combined and efficient program developed by central participants in the municipality[24].

To secure a supportive role from the parents is also essential. The parents must feel that the content and form of the education that is organised for their children is beneficial to their children's learning and educational success. More or less separate and unequal education, mother tongue education included, can have both integration and segregation as political aims. The educational system of South Africa under the apartheid regime; teaching in the mother tongue in the Bantustans was a program of segregation (Skutnabb Kangas 1981: 125). Enrichment programs on the other hand have integration into the wider society as a central aim and should have dedicated and competent teacher's implementing them (Thomas and Collier 1997, 2001).

Parents also encourage instruction in the foreign or majority language because they know that dominant language competence is instrumental to their children's future career. That is not surprising. As long as the supportive role of the mother tongue is not known to them or is counter-intuitive to their general understanding, there is no reason to expect the parents automatically to give support to teaching in the mother tongue. The teachers and schools must take the trouble to explain the relationships between the child's various languages to the parents. And of course, the teachers must be dedicated to the children, and show in practice that this kind of education works. Bilingualism and mastery of the dominant language must step-by-step prevail. Shortcuts in the form of securing the schools resources but not delivering quality education to pupils concerned will clearly defeat the purpose.

Parents can and do get involved - for instance through discussion and information groups or particular groups that are designed to develop the reading of their children.

[2323] http://skolenettet.no/moduler/templates/Module_Article.aspx?id=23245&epslanguage=NO

http://skolenettet.no/moduler/templates/Module_Article.aspx?id=24146&epslanguage=NO, acquired 21.10.2006

[24] http://skolenettet.no/moduler/templates/Module_Article.aspx?id=23297&epslanguage=NO

They can express that they are more comfortable with coming to school and take part in school activities. The children express pride at having theirs parents' participate. When parents are asked to read aloud to their children - at the language of their choice - they can often end up reading in their mother tongue and experience that the children also improve their reading in Norwegian. The local library can support reading and motivate both parents and their children to come and listen to the reading of books and to borrow books. Fjell School in the city of Drammen has given good examples of this[25].

When it comes to reading traditional advice in the field has been to have the pupils start reading in the mother tongue while oral competence is developed in the dominant language. Reading and principles for understanding texts, i.e. reading strategies, the mobilisation of knowledge and experience, the relatedness of the text to own life, the writing of so called logs and peer discussions are encouraged. After they have mastered beginning reading in the mother tongue the pupils should be helped in comparing the writing system of the mother tongue and the dominant language (Bøyesen 2000).

The field of special education has a strong position in the Norwegian educational system, but is not equally well recognised internationally. Norwegian support to the education sector in developing countries that include competency in this field has expanded. It is therefore important to recognise that special education and multicultural education have common aims and ideologies. Yet it is important to differentiate between linguistic and special educational needs. In the worst cases linguistic minority pupils are being marginalised and not given adequate education (Pihl 2004, Cummins 1984). The written texts of dyslexic pupils and bilingual pupils at a relatively early stage can have similar traits (Bøyesen 1994, 1997, 2006a, 2006b). Therefore it is essential to have insight into the various processes and adequate screening and testing material to separate the two.

A last parallel for the pupils: Allocated resources do not always follow good intentions and honourable plans. In Norway, multicultural education has been more and more decentralised in a country with a relatively strong an efficient centralised system (Skinningsrud 2006: 147). The latest move in this direction is to give the communes the extra resources for bilingual education in a general funding pot instead of giving earmarked resources. The results are not yet clear, but many practitioners fear the resources will be halved and the possibilities for enrichment education even worse. To many experts this is a paradox.

Conclusion

Securing of the five recommended factors could be better for linguistic minority students with an immigrant background in Norway. Those attained by indigenous populations like the Sámi are far better (Engen and Kulbrandstad 2004). Therefore the rights, funding, organisation and curriculum for bilingual education of Sámi pupils

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[25] http://skolenettet.no/moduler/templates/Module_Article.aspx?id=23242&epslanguage=NO

provides a better example to follow for bilingual education in a development context. There should nevertheless be enough similarities among the pupil populations discussed here to defend an effort to adjust and try out in i development context strategies of competence building, network creations, classroom work and parental participation from the field of Multicultural education exemplified and discussed here

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