Educational Linguistics

Durk Gorter
Victoria Zenotz
Jasone Cenoz *Editors*

Minority Languages and Multilingual Education

Bridging the Local and the Global

Springer

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Educational Linguistics

Volume 18

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Minority Language Education Facing Major Local and Global Challenges

Durk Gorter, Victoria Zenotz, and Jasone Cenoz

Abstract This introductory chapter discusses the relevance of the focus on minority languages in multilingual education from different perspectives. It argues that minority languages, although they have a strong local dimension also have an important global dimension. Multilingual education here involves the use of minority, majority and English as languages of instruction. Minority languages speakers find new solutions to the educational challenges posed by multilingualism and globalization. Education is often seen as a safeguarding force and English as a threat, but not necessarily.

Keywords Multilingualism • Minority language • Non-dominant language • Language revival • English • Globalization • Education • Instruction language

1.1 General Introduction to Common Threads

The focus on multilingual education adopted in this book highlights the dynamics of combining different languages in education. That is, the volume focuses on settings where the combination of minority languages, national state languages and

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English leads to significant educational and social changes, rather than focusing on the teaching of the minority languages per se. The book is conceived to give an account of multilingual education on five continents. We wanted to prioritize relevant case studies to demonstrate recent developments, tensions and solutions. They refer to contexts of multilingual education involving the use of minority, majority and English as languages of instruction. The chapters reflect many different situations and the relative role of the minority and majority languages as school subjects or languages of instruction. The cases included in this volume show different ways in which three or more languages, or in the case of Māori two languages, can be developed and used in one school curriculum. The educational systems present great diversity regarding the linguistic aims of the schools, the use of the languages as subjects or medium of instruction and the school year in which the different languages are introduced.

Minority language groups have a strong local dimension. Most of them are traditionally spoken in a limited area of one state or sometimes across the borders of more than one state. The spatial aspect is important for minority languages because their distribution over a specific territory is usually one of its defining characteristics. Minority languages have traditionally been ignored by speakers of majority languages and were the concern of minority language speakers themselves. Their speakers feel minority languages as part of their identity and as useful in everyday communication although its use is not always taken for granted and can be heavily contested. Multilingualism in combination with a minority language presents a great diversity. Important differences can be found regarding the demography and status of the languages. Minority languages are not per se defined by their numeric size. Of course many are smaller than the majority or dominant language, but they can also vary in size. For example, both Catalan and Quechua have over nine million speakers, more than some state languages in Europe such as Danish or Greek. These are exceptions because by far most minority languages have a much lower number of speakers, just a few hundred or at most thousands, as in the case of the Sámi languages. We continue to use here the more common term minority languages, although Benson in Chap. 2 in her conceptual discussion makes clear why she prefers the term non-dominant languages.

Today minority language groups also experience an important global dimension. Whereas in the past relative isolation in a peripheral area worked as protection for the survival of minority languages, globalization enters the life of minority speakers. Advances in telecommunication and international transport make it impossible to remain isolated from the influences of ideas and products of other cultures. The local economies are woven into a global economy and the consequences of the flow of goods, labour, capital and tourism are felt in any corner of the world. Often these forces are felt as a threat to the continued existence of minority languages.

Minority groups see education often as a safeguarding force for the revival or the development of their languages. The state usually promotes national cohesion through strong propagation of the standard majority language for general use, often at the expense of minority languages, which has an important eroding effect on minority languages. Today in their struggle for survival many minority groups aim to obtain a place in the educational system. Education is no longer about teaching only one

language. Teaching the minority language implies bilingual education because it is not about replacing the majority language completely, but to come 'alongside' or at 'equal footing'. Bilingual education is however a complex term which can cover many different formats as will also become clear from the different contributions to this volume. For certain minorities some symbolic recognition of the language inside the schools is already a boost in self-esteem. Other, stronger minority groups are well aware that even if they conquer the domain of education, the school alone cannot do it. Minority language speakers are also aware from a young age onward that they need to learn and use more than one language. Majority language speakers in a relatively monolingual context do not share that same awareness, even if they consider learning 'foreign languages', in particular English, as important.

English as the global language has a special position in the worldwide constellation of languages. English is generally held in high prestige and parents want their children to learn English. Schools have to deal with the alleged advantages and improbable ambitions for English proficiency. English as a language of international communication has created an increasing social pressure to learn this language for speakers of minority languages even for those who do not live in an English speaking county. In the many cases of minority language speakers English is not their second but their third or fourth language. The spread of English over the globe is not uniform and this has implications for the curriculum design in multilingual schools. Therefore, schools have the desire to go beyond bilingualism and to promote multilingualism as an important aim in education. English as in the case of Māori is perceived as a direct threat, but as is shown in Chap. 11 with a case study from Mexico, a specific critical approach to English can be used to support minority languages.

National state languages present huge differences in terms of demography and status and the use of English as a language of wider communication is not the same in different countries either. The majority languages covered in this book are the following: Chinese-Mandarin in China and Singapore, Amharic in Ethiopia, Sinhala in Sri Lanka, Finnish in Finland, Spanish in Mexico and Spain, French in Québec and France and English in New Zealand and Canada. A special case is Arabic, otherwise a global majority language, which is dealt with as a minority language in Israel. Some of these majority languages directly compete against English not only at a local but at a global scale. French and Spanish are examples, but more recently Chinese has come to the fore. Other state languages are dominant in the country where they are spoken, but its speakers may feel the pressure of English and see the efforts of minority language groups as contesting their position as well. So they may feel threatened from two sides.

There are several reasons to focus on minority languages in multilingual education. One reason is that although many minority languages are endangered, they do have an important extend in the world. The Ethnologue (www.ethnologue.com) catalogues 6,909 known languages in the world, even if some languages included are considered varieties or dialects in other accounts. According to the Ethnologue, almost 40 % of the world's population has one of the eight largest languages as their first language. These languages are Mandarin, Hindi, Spanish, English, Bengali,

Portuguese, Arabic and Russian. The data also indicate that over 350 million people (5.9 % of the world's population) speak a language with less than one million speakers. Most of these speakers of 'smaller' languages are speakers of minority languages and 3,800 languages even have less than 10,000 speakers. When several languages are spoken in the same state there are usually important asymmetries regarding their demography and degree of official recognition.

Another reason is the contribution of minority language speakers to multilingualism. Even if populations in Europe and North America are predominately monolingual in their dominant state language, this is not the case in many other parts of the world. Being monolingual is also exceptional for speakers of minority languages. Even in Europe, speakers of minority languages such as Basque or Sámi need to be multilingual. In cases where neither the minority nor the majority language is English, speakers feel a need to have some command of English as an additional language for international contacts, for travel or for using the internet.

The book wants to contribute to the study of multilingual education, a line of research that is developing rapidly in recent years. Research on minority languages is ordinarily not well known by scholars of 'large' languages but it is relevant to many areas. The cases presented here are of course not the only examples of multilingual education. As will become clear from this volume the constellation of languages in the world comprises a wide range of minority language contexts. The discussion of the different cases can provide useful examples of the implementation of multilingual education for other contexts. The study of school multilingualism is relevant for educational research because it implies new insights in developments in language education policy, teacher education, material development and curriculum design. The discussions are not only at a macro level of educational policy, but include the perspective of the children at the classroom level. Minority languages in education can be also of interest to researchers working on language policy and planning or language assessment. Multilingual education research deals with important questions that bear relevance on the revitalization of minority languages and the achievement of proficiency in more than one language. For example, will the teaching of the different languages have a positive or a negative effect on the development of minority languages? When should the different languages be introduced? Will pupils mix the different languages and how are those practices perceived by their teachers? How can trilingual education best be organized? The chapters included in this book are based on educational experiences that have tried to combine the maintenance and development of minority languages with the need to acquire languages of wider communication, in particular English. The cases provide different answers depending on each specific sociolinguistic and educational context.

In this book the authors treat a much larger number of minority languages than national state languages because some chapters deal with a manifold of them in large countries like China, Canada, Ethiopia or Mexico; other chapters focus on one minority language in particular such as Māori, Sámi, or Basque.

The situations discussed in this volume also have some challenges in common with other situations involving minority languages or even languages which are demographically strong but do not have a strong tradition as languages of

instruction in education. All educational contexts discussed in this volume face new challenges in society derived from new ways of communication and the development of new technologies. These are part of the effects of globalization and such changes are often felt as threatening for minority languages.

Multilingualism in the educational context of minority languages makes its speakers find novel solutions in how they adapt their resources and how they use multiple language practices. In many of the cases presented here trilingualism is seen as a solution to the educational challenges of accommodating the minority language, the national language and English. Social and educational change can also generate tensions with regards to boundaries between language groups. The complexity of the contextual variables involved, prevent that new multilingual education programs can easily be exported from one setting to the next. Even if they are examples of good practices these programs have to be adapted to the contextual and educational characteristics of another setting.

1.2 The Chapters in This Volume

This collection includes a conceptual chapter on the influences between 'the North' and 'the South' (Benson in Chap. 2) which is followed by ten case studies from different countries and regions across the world, each with its own unique socio-historical development. The common thread through these cases is a comparison and contrast of the policies, attitudes, ideologies and pedagogies involved in multilingual education and the implementation of policies. A recurring theme in this book is related to the issue of bridging the local and the global. In more specific terms, each of the chapters puts forward the following points.

In her chapter Carol Benson provides a global perspective by contrasting examples from educational contexts from the South with the North. She illustrates the essential role played by the language of instruction in improving educational access, in particular concerning non-dominant languages. In a macro-level discussion she compares research findings from low-income multilingual countries of the "South" with findings from multilingual regions of the economically developed "North" due to a large extend to the monolingual habitus. She uses examples from multilingual low-income countries such as Mozambique and Ethiopia as well as from European regional and minority languages such as Basque. She opens her chapter with a discussion of terms and principles, many of which originated in the North but have been enriched by Southern experiences. She shows how language is integral to educational access, quality and equity.

Benson demonstrates how terms and ideas developed in the North, when used in the South without adaptation, can cause unwanted repercussions, and thus reinforce the monolingual habitus even when seeking to relieve problems. An analysis of similarities and differences between the contexts provides lessons that the North can take from the South, and vice-versa. The chapter not only discusses but also offers solutions to address some current challenges in multilingual education in

low-income countries. It brings minority language education theorists and practitioners in the North and South to the same table.

In the next chapter Bob Adamson and Anwei Feng discuss the various language policies in education in the People's Republic of China (PRC) which are designed to foster trilingualism in ethnic minority groups. They demonstrate that trilingualism, if implemented effectively, can enable marginalized groups to fully engage in the social and political life of mainstream society and enjoy educational and economic benefits. Poorly conceived and ineffectively implemented policies, on the other hand, could exacerbate their marginalization and deprivation. Based on data arising from a national project, their chapter examines the reasoning and tensions behind these trilingual education policies for minority groups by comparing the implementation of such policies in Yunnan, Sichuan, Guangxi, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Jilin, Gansu, Qinghai and Guangdong. The results of the project are interesting as the chapter showcases the four policy models that are found in China. English has attained prestigious status because of the PRC's desire to play a prominent role in international affairs, and since 2002, English has become a subject to be studied from Primary 3, placing a logistical strain on ethnic minority schools in rural areas. While there appears to be consensus among key stakeholders regarding the potential benefits of trilingual education, major tensions—political, theoretical and logistic—have arisen when the policy is implemented. The chapter presents the complexities, challenges and difficulties in promoting and safeguarding the minority languages in China.

In her chapter Kathleen Heugh provides a detailed look at the implementation of multilingual education programs in Ethiopia. She shows how there is no other contemporary example in the world of implementing such an ambitious plan—8 years of primary education—in so many languages. Interviews with educators, classroom observations and student test results comprise both qualitative and quantitative data for the study. System-wide assessment demonstrates that student achievement in the more linguistically complex and decentralised setting exceeds that in the centralised and more limited bilingual system of the state capital Addis Ababa. Heugh makes important points about each of the languages involved—the mother tongue, Amharic as national language and English as international language—and how minority language education is being perceived and put into practice in the context of perceived benefits and unrealistic aspirations for English proficiency. She discusses the logistics, successes and failures of English medium education in Ethiopia. The chapter concludes with an account of the differences in the students' success in English medium education in various parts of the country. She draws attention to the influence of policy on teacher education, learning materials development and student achievement.

The city-state of Singapore is the focus of the chapter by Siew Kheng Catherine Chua. She provides a historical background on Singapore to explain the unique system of language practices in that small country. She mentions the uneven processes of globalization which have specific local sociolinguistic consequences. Language and literacy planning in Singapore becomes more complicated as Singaporeans will need to be fluent in a range of languages in order to survive in their multilingual environment. The present bilingual policy requires Singaporeans

to be proficient in English and in one of the three officially assigned Mother Tongue Languages: Mandarin (Chinese), Malay (Malay) and Tamil (Indian). Essentially, the language policy in Singapore is built on four main pillars (1) the belief that linguistic diversity will hinder the process of nation-building, (2) the belief in respect and equal treatment for the three major language groups in Singapore, (3) the belief that English proficiency is a must and Mother Tongue Languages study is necessary and (4) the belief in the ideologies of survival and pragmatism, and that is, when managing crisis the most effective and rational choices must be made. Her emphasis is on the linguistic challenges facing Singapore in the twenty-first century and she argues that a new model of bilingualism is necessary.

In their chapter Mela Sarkar and Constance Lavoie discuss similar issues, but in a rather distinct context of language education of Indigenous peoples in Canada. They depart from the given that Canada is home to several dozen different Indigenous groups. These include the Inuit, many First Nations, who speak over 50 languages of which many are moribund and the Métis, who speak their own unique French-Cree contact language, Michif. Only three languages, Cree, Ojibwe and Inuktitut are considered strong enough to be able to survive the twenty-first century. However, many of the smaller languages are undertaking language revitalization efforts. They discuss contemporary Indigenous policies, programs and pedagogical strategies around language education in the aftermath of the Indigenous struggle for self-determination and increasing mainstream awareness of Indigenous language and education issues. A surge in Indigenous population growth resulting in an increasingly youthful population profile, a pull towards urbanization, and the rise of new technologies are all factors that are affecting the landscape of language and education in Indigenous Canada. Drawing on their data from projects in the Innu and Mi'gmaq communities, the authors demonstrate the range of Indigenous responses to the challenge of not one but two colonizing languages, English and French, and place these initiatives in a wider context.

A rather different situation is analyzed by Muhammad Amara who looks at teaching English to Palestinian schoolchildren in Israel. He examines policy and teaching English in relation to a complex linguistic repertoire, the Israeli context, and English as a global language. In Palestinian schools in Israel Arabic is the language of instruction and Hebrew is learned as a second language from the third grade on. English is then added as a third language for these pupils, or rather a fourth taking the spoken variety of Arabic used at home into consideration. Language education for Palestinian pupils serves different purposes: Arabic is the language of identity of the Palestinians, Hebrew is the language for social mobility and shared citizenship, and English is the global language. There is no distinct English curriculum for the Palestinian students, and they study it like other Israelis in all streams of the Hebrew education. Similar to other Israelis, English is as important to Israeli Palestinians because of its status as the international language of science, technology, commerce and communication and its usefulness in the touristic area.

In their chapter Indika Liyanage and Suresh Canagarajah examine the teaching of the local languages Sinhala and Tamil and how it affects interethnic understanding in Sri Lanka. The chapter explores in detail ambiguities from pre-colonial times

to the present day. It provides an historical overview of language issues in Sri Lanka, encompassing pre-colonial, colonial, postcolonial and post-war times. Becoming a British colony implied the introduction of English-only instruction and centralization of administration with English as the working language. Despite the fact that Sinhala and Tamil were somehow maintained, the social division resulting from the high status attributed to the English language was still present after Sri Lanka gained independence. The authors chart the development of linguistic tensions and argue that they arise from colonial times, with the aggressive promotion of English, and from the postcolonial settlement, which exacerbated ethnic differences by privileging Sinhala. The chapter also discusses the new Ten Year Plan (2012–2021) that wants to promote trilingualism, and identifies several practical challenges. The authors point to its potential success and suggest a way forward to overcome current problems.

In their contribution Sari Pietikäinen and Anne Pitkänen-Huhta analyze how Sámi students in Northern Finland interact with their multilingual worlds. On the basis of the premise that relative fixity and fluidity of language practices is an emerging property of interaction, they present an overview of the changing situations and discourses with regard to languages in the Sámi community. They draw upon methodologies and theories from ethnography and discourse studies and apply them to a local Sámi classroom situation. Using two multimodal and literacy tasks—one involving completing a picture to illustrate their linguistic worlds and the other writing books in Sámi—they analyze how this group of pupils between 6 and 12 years interact within their worlds and how their languages influence them. Thus, they examine the strategies and practices that this group of Sámi children develop, use and modify while navigating with their linguistic and cultural resources in a multilingual context. Their conclusion is that the method of gathering data was successful at illuminating how linguistically, culturally and developmentally dynamic the lives of these children are.

In the next chapter Richard Hill and Stephen May also focus on the minority children themselves. They present a case where English is not an outside prestigious language, but the dominant language in the wider society of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The chapter describes the changing nature of the relationship between Māori and English in Māori medium education. Māori-medium education has been available for 30 years in New Zealand schools. Since its inception, it has been lauded for its success at mobilising the Māori population, and bringing back the indigenous Māori language from imminent language death. The place of English language instruction is an ongoing political and pedagogical issue. Early Māori-medium programs were typically offered 100 % in Māori in an attempt to maximize the Māori language. The authors approach their topic in an innovative way through the perceptions and competences of the students themselves. The learners are grade 8 students in three different Māori medium schools. The analysis shows that students have positive attitudes towards the learning of Māori but they mostly use English in their out-of-school activities. Their skills in Māori are equally good in all three schools but the skills of English in the school with the least exposure to English are rather poor. For this new generation of students, school is the primary

source of Māori language exposure. As such, ongoing discussions on the place of English in Māori medium education focus on the balance needed to address English language needs while not jeopardising wider Māori language attainment.

The chapter by Mario E. López-Gopar, Narcedalia Jiménez Morales and Arcadio Delgado Jiménez is based on the results of a recent critical ethnographic study carried out in Oaxaca, the most culturally and linguistically diverse state in Mexico. Two student-teachers from Indigenous backgrounds draw on developments in critical pedagogies, particularly the notion of "identity texts". Children in this context grow up in a society where English and Spanish are associated with "development" and economic success and minoritized Indigenous languages with backwardness and marginalization. The authors focus on how multilingualism and Indigenous practices can be used imaginatively and constructively in the classroom in favour of Indigenous languages and Indigenous people's way of knowing, in order to challenge widespread discourses that give a superior position to English. They present a critical analysis of materials used to teach English and relate this to classrooms practices that attempt to foster Indigenous languages, interculturalism and egalitarian societies. In this project "English" is taught in order to (re)negotiate children's identities and to challenge historical and societal ideologies that position certain languages as better than others. The themes of this chapter are developing multimodal identity texts, the children's lives as foundation of classroom practices and teachers and children as book authors. The authors argue that English can be used to promote minority languages if taught critically.

The final chapter by Durk Gorter, Victoria Zenotz, Xabier Etxague and Jasone Cenoz provides a discussion of the significant social and educational changes for the Basque language, with a focus on multilingual education. It is one of the few relatively successful cases of minority language revival in Europe. A robust language policy in the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain led to important improvements in the sociolinguistic situation of Basque. However, the revival of the minority language was less successful in the province of Navarre and in the Northern Basque Country in France. The education policy first had to face the challenge of transforming a basically monolingual Spanish system into a bilingual system and now 30 years later, to develop into a multilingual system, with English as a third language at school and an increasing number of home languages. English has a high prestige in society, similar to other cases in this volume, but its use outside the school context is limited. The authors present results for the achievement in the three languages taught, Basque, Spanish and English, and also an outline of some future directions where current challenges and shortcomings are given.

This book brings together research studies that focus on the discussion of the obligation or the choice to use different languages at school, the learning of more than two languages, language practices at school and out-of-school, and policy development in multilingual education. The cases focus on the achievements and challenges faced by minority languages in multilingual education in countries worldwide where important changes take place and we strongly believe that they can be of interest to scholars, professionals and students interested in multilingualism and education in any part of the world.

Chapter 2
Adopting a Multilingual Habitus: What North and South Can Learn from Each Other About the Essential Role of Non-dominant Languages in Education

Carol Benson

Abstract This chapter compares and contrasts research, policy and practice from low-income multilingual countries of the South with findings from bi- and multilingual regions of the North. The focus is on the essential role of non-dominant languages in teaching and learning, and opening our eyes to the monolingual habitus in our perspectives. Terms and concepts are discussed in detail and a multilingual habitus is invoked. After relevant differences between Northern and Southern contexts are distinguished and similarities noted, the discussion moves on to highlight lessons learned in each context and the role of the researcher in promoting dialogue between the two.

Keywords Monolingual habitus • Multilingual habitus • Non-dominant languages • Mother tongue-based multilingual education • Integrated language curriculum • Educational development

2.1 Introduction

This chapter takes the position that educational access, quality and equity can no longer be discussed in any part of the world without serious consideration of the languages of teaching and learning. I use the plural expression 'languages of teaching and learning' to mean the purposeful use of two or more languages, not only to promote understanding on the part of learners, but to facilitate the acquisition of multiple languages both orally and in writing.

As a witness to and occasional participant in the expansion of the field that used to be called bilingual education into what we now know as mother tongue-based multilingual education (MLE), at least in the context of developing countries of the

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South, I have been struck by how a Northern *monolingual habitus* (as identified by Gogolin 2002, based on Bourdieu's 1977 notion of *habitus*) continues to pervade both research and practice. This particular set of unquestioned dispositions toward languages in society has given us a linguistic self-conception that has made us blind to multilingual, multicultural lifeways—and worse, to aspects of human multilingualism and multiculturalism that are worthy of investigation, recognition and promotion. It is particularly disturbing that even those of us who are plurilingual, who grew up with multiple languages in our environments, and/or who work in multilingual settings have been influenced by this socially dominant monolingual manner of thinking.

From the perspective of today's global world, where growing numbers of us interact through both formal (academic, business, economic, diplomatic) and informal (e.g. social networking) channels, a public education that fails to recognize and make use of the multiple language skills that learners have—or could readily develop—seems absolutely ridiculous. Yet this still happens in high–income Northern contexts with immigrant languages, and with regional and minority languages, as discussed in this volume, as well as Southern contexts with minority or even majority languages (numerically speaking) that are different than dominant or official languages. There is a kind of tunnel vision focused on the sole aim of teaching and learning a single dominant language, even to the point of neglecting the teaching and learning of other curricular content. Fortunately, there are signs of change, and we can cite cases where multilingual education of some kind is facilitating the development and promotion of multilingual and multiliteracies practices (García et al. 2007; New London Group 1996) and competencies (Elorza and Muñoa 2008).

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how research and practice in both North and South are moving the field of MLE forward in important ways, and how cases from low- and high-income contexts can learn from each other. I end with a call for greater interaction and collaboration between all of us working in MLE, particularly those focusing on non-dominant languages and their speaker communities.

2.2 Terms and Principles

To be able to discuss what North and South have in common when it comes to multilingual education, we need to have some common terms, or at least understand each other's terms. In this section I focus on terms that come from the field of bilingual education, suggesting new ways to talk about the concepts they represent, in an effort to bridge Northern and Southern discourses. First, however, I must acknowledge that I have adopted the highly imprecise abbreviations North and South to refer to relatively high- and low-income countries, respectively, in order to make rough comparisons. My intent is not to exclude middle-income countries like Thailand, Mexico or South Africa; however, the 86 countries that the World Bank designates as middle-income are "still home to one-third of the world's poorest citizens" (World Bank 2007:iii), so in terms of multilingualism and their responses