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LINGUISTIC HUMAN RIGHTS - A PREREQUISITE FOR BILINGUALISM

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INTRODUCTION

In the title of my contribution there are two concepts, one old and well known, **bilingualism**, and one relatively new, **linguistic human rights**. In this paper, I will try to illuminate them in relation to each other. The paper consists of three parts. I shall

1. discuss concepts like mother tongue and bilingualism, also in relation to the Deaf Community and deaf individuals (1).
2. show that most minorities in the world, including the Deaf, are deprived of basic linguistic human rights, regardless of how these are defined. I shall also present the definition of linguistic genocide, and leave it to the audience to decide whether linguistic genocide has been attempted and is still attempted in relation to Sign languages. In addition, I ask what linguistic human rights there are and what I think there should be.
3. generalize about principles behind educational models which seem to succeed in making children high level multilinguals.

MOTHER TONGUE AND BILINGUALISM

In order to be able to discuss bilingualism and linguistic human rights, we have to define several concepts, and see what they mean in relation to deaf people. **Bilingualism** has to be defined, **linguistic human rights** have to be defined, and since many of these rights are in relation to a mother tongue, **mother tongue** has to be defined. We start with the **mother tongue**. I have classified mother tongue definitions according to four criteria, origin, identification (which can be **internal**, meaning the person's own identification, or **external**, identified by outsiders), competence, and function (see Table 1):

Table 1 here

According to the criterion of ORIGIN, the mother tongue is the language(s) one learned first. According to the criterion of internal IDENTIFICATION, the mother tongue is the language(s) one identifies with. According to the criterion of external IDENTIFICATION, the mother tongue is the language(s) one is identified as a native speaker of by others. According to the criterion of COMPETENCE, the mother tongue is the language(s) one knows best. And according to the criterion of FUNCTION, the mother tongue is the language(s) one uses most.

I have several theses about these mother tongue definitions, and most of them apply to deaf individuals too:

1. **The same person can have different mother tongues, depending on which definition is used.** A deaf person may, for instance, be most competent in a Sign language, but has to use mostly another language (in its written form), because she does not have a Deaf or signing community around her. Or her mother tongue by internal identification may be a Sign language, even if she has never had a chance to become very competent in it or to use it much. Or a deaf person may claim that, for instance, English is her mother tongue, while hearing outsiders may

think that a Sign language is her mother tongue.

2. **A person can have two or more mother tongues according to all criteria used.** For instance, a hearing child of one hearing and one deaf, signing parent may learn both languages from infancy on, identify with both, become extremely (and equally) competent in both, and use both fairly evenly.

3. **The mother tongue can change during the course of a person's life, even several times,** according to all other criteria except origin. This is a thesis where deaf individuals may be even more flexible than all hearing people: even their mother tongue by origin may change, as will become clear below.

4. **The definitions can be organized hierarchically, according to the extent to which they respect linguistic human rights.** The definitions by function and competence are more primitive. Most people cannot themselves decide which language or languages they use most. If there is no day-care or school in the language that the child has learned first and/or identifies with, the child cannot use this language most. And if you cannot use a language, you do not become competent in it. That means that what becomes somebody's mother tongue according to the definitions by function and competence, depends on whether the society allows everybody to use and learn the languages they learned first and identify with.

A definition using a combination of origin and internal identification shows more awareness of linguistic human rights. But this presupposes that others accept the internal identification of a person. If a deaf person says that Sign language is her mother tongue, while some people in the surrounding society say that the deaf person does not have any language, the two definitions collide. Whose definition is valid? People in powerless positions have to negotiate about the validity of their internal identification. Many countries still have laws which invalidate deaf peoples' own definition of their mother tongue. We might say, that it is the person herself who in a human rights oriented view has the right to decide about her identity, and others have to accept this. But this is naive in the real world.

We can draw a parallel with a state. If PLO or Estonia or Iraqi Kurdistan claim that they are a state (meaning they come with an internal identification), this is not enough to make them a state. Other states, whose statehood has been accepted earlier by "the international community", must accept, validate, PLOs, Estonia's or Iraqi Kurdistan's statehood, otherwise they will not be considered states, with the rights that states have in international law. And the powerful ones can decide whether new members will be allowed into the club of already accepted. Thus Estonia has been accepted and is now seen as a state by other states, whereas PLO and Iraqi Kurdistan have not been accepted, i.e. they "are" not states, despite their own wish and identification. That means that statehood is not (or at least not only) a **characteristic** of a state, it is (also) a **relation** between the definer and the defined.

Back to the mother tongue. Also a mother tongue is not (only) a characteristic that a person possesses. **A mother tongue is also a relation. And relations have to be validated by both parties in a relation,** i.e. a mother tongue needs external validation. If those whose languages are already somehow accepted as languages, do not accept that Sign language is a language (which can fulfill all the same functions as other mother tongues), Sign language is invalidated. An invalidated language cannot be a mother tongue, on a par with other mother tongues, and it does not get the same protection as other mother tongues in international law. We will look at the implications below, but first go back to the mother tongue definitions.

A deaf child can have the same mother tongue according to all the definitions, in the **best** case: if a deaf child is born to deaf parents who know a Sign language really well and who use it with the child from the very beginning, feel positive about it and give a child a strong positive identification with the Sign language, if the child gets both the day-care and a large part of her or his education through the medium of Sign language, and if the Sign language is accepted by the rest of the society, then the Sign language is the child's mother tongue, according to all the definitions. But this would be a very unusual case.

In the absolutely **worst** case a deaf person may grow up with no natural language as her mother tongue, and not knowing any language properly, ever. This would be in a society where the Deaf are seen as mentally handicapped (e.g. Argentina; see Massone, Curiel & Veinberg 1993, 23), where the deaf person either does not get any formal education at all or is submerged in an education planned for oral communities and where the deaf person therefore does not have a chance to become proficient in any written language, where the person does not meet any competent signers and where she does not know that Sign language is a fully developed minority language and the Deaf

Community a linguistically and culturally competent, self-contained minority community. This is sadly still the case with many deaf people, especially but not exclusively in underdeveloped countries (i.e. those countries whom we so called whites have consciously underdeveloped and are continuing to underdevelop).

Since most deaf children (90-95 per cent) are born to hearing parents who in most cases are not competent signers when the child is born, and where the child may not learn Sign language in infancy, Sign language may in some views not become the child's mother tongue according to the criterion of origin. But it depends completely on whether the child learns any other language, or whether Sign language, even if it comes only later, is the first natural language that the child learns properly.

Can a mother tongue be learned from other people and not from the primary caretakers? It is obvious that the situation of the Deaf community forces us to rethink the definitions.

If the primary care-takers are unable to provide the child with a full-fledged language, which all oral parents with oral children in principle can do, then the mother tongue of most deaf children is dependent on external, societal factors in relation to **every** definition of a mother tongue, whereas external factors are completely decisive for the mother tongue of oral parents and children, even minority parents and children, only in relation to competence and function. This means that deaf minority children need linguistic rights to an even higher extent than oral minority children.

We can also look at definitions of bilingualism in the same way as mother tongue definitions. I will only show you the great variety of these definitions, especially in the competence definitions (table 2), and conclude that **a definition of bilingualism as a goal for the education of deaf minority children must combine the highest degree of competence and function with a positive identification with two languages, but not necessarily an early learning of other languages except Sign language.** If the goal of schools in relation to deaf children is anything less than the highest degree of bilingualism, the schools are not doing their job.

Table 2 here

My own definition of bilingualism which in my view should be the educational goal for all minority children, including deaf children, is as follows:

A speaker/signer is bilingual who is able to function in two (or more) languages, in both monolingual and bi/multilingual communities, in accordance with the sociocultural demands made on an individual's communicative and cognitive competence by these communities and by the individual herself, at the same level as native speakers, and to identify positively with both (or all) language groups (and cultures) or parts of them.

My conclusions so far are:

1. The mother tongue definitions have to be rethought so as to allow for situations where parents and children may not have the same mother tongue, especially by origin, and for situations where the mother tongue by origin may not be learned in infancy and not taught by the primary caretakers.
2. What is accepted as somebody's mother tongue is crucially dependent on who has the right to define it. Mother tongues are relations to be negotiated, not (only) characteristics that people possess, and relations depend on who has the power.
3. High level bilingualism must be the educational goal for all deaf children.

High level bilingualism can in most cases only be achieved in education if everybody enjoys full linguistic human rights.

LINGUISTIC HUMAN RIGHTS

What, then, are linguistic human rights, and who has them? Linguistic majorities, for instance English-speakers in the United States or Swedish-speakers in Sweden, normally take it for granted that their children can be **educated through the medium of their own language.** They also take it for granted that their mother tongue, the majority language, can be **used in all (or most) official situations,** by both children and adults. They see it as self-evident

that the school supports the children in **learning the official language** (i.e. their mother tongue) as well as possible. Normally they also take it for granted that they **can identify with their mother tongue and have this identification accepted and respected by everybody, including the school and the census.**

Many of the majority members are not aware of the fact that these, for them self-evident rights are in fact denied to most linguistic minorities in the world, even when these rights should be seen as fundamental, inalienable linguistic human rights. Neither the Deaf nor other linguistic minorities, with fairly few exceptions, usually have these rights.

It may be easier to discuss linguistic human rights if we first consider their absolute opposite. The opposite of having linguistic human rights is lack of them, and the most extreme form of lack of linguistic human rights results in linguistic genocide.

When the United Nations after the Second World War discussed genocide, linguistic and cultural genocide were discussed on a par with physical genocide and all were seen as crimes against humanity. Article III in the final draft of what became THE CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE of the United Nations (E 794, 1948), included a definition of **linguistic genocide**. Article III was vetoed (and only members of the Security Council have the right to a veto), and it is thus NOT part of the final Convention. But we still have the definition, which most members of the UN in 1948 were willing to accept. Linguistic genocide is

"(1) PROHIBITING THE USE OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE GROUP IN DAILY INTERCOURSE OR IN SCHOOLS, OR THE PRINTING AND CIRCULATION OF PUBLICATIONS IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE GROUP."

My claim is that "prohibition" can be direct or indirect. For instance Turkey prohibits the use of the Kurdish language brutally and directly, by law and by killing, torturing, imprisoning and fining heavily people who want to use Kurdish (see e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas & Bucak, in press). Most countries prohibit the use of minority languages indirectly, in much more sophisticated ways. My claim is that if there are no minority teachers in the preschool/school with minority children, or if the minority language is not used as a main medium of education, the use of the language is **indirectly** prohibited in daily intercourse/in schools, i.e. it is a question of linguistic genocide.

Since education is so important in relation to linguistic rights or lack of them, educational language rights are vital. They are of course especially vital for a linguistic minority where the children mostly have to learn their main mother tongue through formal education, as most deaf children do. What linguistic human rights do minority children have, then? My husband, Robert Phillipson, and I attempted in a study of a range of relevant international covenants and national constitutions (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 1989, in press), to gauge to what extent these legal measures provide support for dominated languages. To do so, a grid on which some of the important dimensions of language rights can be captured was devised. The first dimension used, and represented in our grid on the vertical axis, is **degree of overtness**, on which one can mark the extent to which laws or covenants are explicit in relation to the rights of minority languages in education. The second dimension, represented on the horizontal axis, is **degree of promotion**, on which the extent to which a language is **prohibited, tolerated or actively promoted** can be plotted (see Figure 1). We see both dimensions as continua.

Figure 1 here

The promotion continuum starts with **prohibition** of a language, the goal of which is clearly to force the linguistic minority group to assimilate to the dominant language. It continues via **toleration** of the language, a situation where the language is not forbidden (explicitly or implicitly), to **non-discrimination prescription**, where discrimination of people on the basis of language is forbidden, either **overtly** (discrimination is made illegal in a way which is explicit enough not to cause difficulties of legal interpretation and/or where there may be sanctions of some kind) or **covertly** (as part of general legislation on countering discrimination). The next point on the continuum would be **permission** to use the minority language. At the other end of the continuum we have **promotion** of the minority language. This is obviously oriented toward maintaining it.

In the study we plotted on to the grid a range of **national constitutions: Finland**, for both the **Sámi** (No 5 on the grid) and the **Swedish** (No 4) languages); the then **Yugoslavia** (No 3); **India** (No 6) and **Turkey** vis-a-vis the **Kurds**

(No 9) and **proposals for constitutional change: English Language Amendments** to the USA Constitution (Huddleston No 1, Hayakawa No 2; see Marshall 1986, 36); **The Freedom Charter of the African National Congress (ANC) and others, South Africa** (No 7); the **Basque Normalization Law** (No 8).

We have also placed on the grid some of the results of our review of the clauses on **language rights in education** (i.e. NOT the general clauses) in some international and European conventions and decrees (see figure 1). We have only taken legally binding covenants, not recommendations, as for instance the CSCE-documents or the new UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 1992).

Many national constitutions provide more protection to minority languages in education than the international covenants which we have also placed on the grid. Conversely, none of the international covenants overtly prohibits the use of minority languages, as some national constitutions do.

Example A. THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (1945) commits its member nations in its **general** articles to promoting "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" (paragraph 6.11, 55). This can be understood as **overt non-discrimination prescription**. It has no specific article on **education** and thus **nothing on language in education**, implying only **covert toleration**.

The **general** articles in all the following covenants (B - I) can also be characterized as **overt non-discrimination prescription**. For instance, the UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS declares in paragraph 2: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."

Example B. THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (1948), in its paragraph on **education** (26), **does not refer to language**. The main thrust of the paragraph is to ensure free universal education. There are references to the "full development of the human personality" and the right of parents to "choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children". This can be considered **covert toleration**.

Example C. The INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, adopted in 1966 and in force since 1976, having mentioned language on a par with race, colour, sex, religion etc in its **general** article (2.2) again omits any reference to language in the **educational** article (13). There is an inconsistency here, because the covenant **does** explicitly refer to "racial, ethnic or religious groups" in the education article, though not "linguistic" ones. This also represents **covert toleration**.

"13.(1) ... education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace."

Example D. INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (1966) does not have any **educational** clauses (i.e. there is **covert toleration**). But Article 27 states: "In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language." This represents **overt non-discrimination prescription**, tending towards permission, but does not include educational institutions.

This article has been one of the most important international articles for the protection of linguistic minorities, as both Capotorti (1979) and more recent UN reports (Eide 1990, 1991, Palley 1984) confirm. Both the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child (1959 and 1989), and several Council of Europe and CSCE documents have approximately the same formulation.

Example E. The UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, 1989, stresses the maintenance of identity, including "nationality" and "name" (Art 7 and 8; see also Jernudd, in press). It does not mention language in its general article on **education** (28; i.e. there is **covert toleration**), though it mentions "development of respect for

the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values" (Art. 29.c), encourages "the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous" (Art. 17.d) and decrees that "due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background" (Art. 20.3) - but only when a child is temporarily or permanently deprived of the family environment. The clause obviously does not refer to daily child care or school. Article 30 is substantially the same as Art. 27 on minorities quoted above in Example D ("persons of indigenous origin" have been added, and "their" has been replaced by "his or her"). This **overt non-discrimination prescription** implicitly restricts use of the minority language to private minority community use. (This has been extended in the preamble of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (see below), which, with reference to art. 27 (see D above) considers "that the right to use a regional or minority language in private **and public** life is an inalienable right" (our emphasis)).

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (18 December 1992) goes somewhat further, in Article 2 (1), by replacing "shall not be denied" in Article 27 above by "have the right" and by adding that these rights apply "in private and in public, freely and without any form of discrimination", and in Articles 4.1 and, especially, 4.2 which prompt the states to actively promote enjoyment of the rights:

"Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (hereinafter referred to as persons belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination." (Article 2.1)

"States shall take measures to create favorable conditions to enable persons belonging to minorities to express their characteristics and to develop their culture, language, religion, traditions and customs, except where specific practices are in violation of national and contrary to international standards." (Article 4.2).

Article 4.3 declares:

"States should take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue."

Clearly such a formulation raises many questions. What constitute "appropriate measures" or "adequate opportunities"? Who is to decide what is "possible"? Does "instruction in" the mother tongue mean "through the medium of the mother tongue"? But despite being a big step forward in relation to **attitudinal changes**, the UN Declaration is only **a recommendation**, not a covenant: states do **not** need to comply, not even after the Declaration was reaffirmed by the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, 14 to 25 June 1993, in its Final Document, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (Paragraph 10).

In sum, the absence of any overt mention of language under the education clauses of those covenants which are binding, is in contrast with the general clauses on non-discrimination, which relate to the exercise of all human rights. This means that the five UN conventions (A, B, C, D and E) have **general** provisions which are apparently an **overt non-discrimination prescription** (A, B, C) or even **overt permission**, mentioning language specifically (D, E). But the **education** clauses are no stronger than **covert assimilation-oriented toleration**. Minorities are allowed to use their languages in private, but not in schools. The same is also true of the other examples from regional covenants. This means that despite many many nice phrases about linguistic rights, international or European covenants which are binding and where there is a complaint procedure, there are almost no linguistic rights.

In my view, every state should **guarantee basic linguistic human rights** to **all** children in the educational system, in day-care, schools and institutes of higher education, regardless of whether these children belong to linguistic majorities or minorities and regardless of whether the minority children represent indigenous minorities, traditional national minorities, immigrated minorities or refugee minorities. Knowing what linguistic human rights are and how to guarantee basic linguistic human rights to everybody should be an obligatory part of the training of every teacher and of school authorities.

Most school systems in Europe and Europeanized countries commit LINGUISTIC GENOCIDE vis-a-vis most immigrated and refugee minority children, and to some extent also towards indigenous and even national minority children. The Deaf community should be considered a national linguistic minority in every country in the world. When European states have started ratifying the new **European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages** (accepted 22 June 1992), not one of them has so far, to my knowledge, designated the Deaf Community as a national minority that the Charter should apply to. I leave it up to you to decide, to what extent what happens to deaf children and adults in different countries can be defined as linguistic genocide. I would also like to add, that linguistic genocide or LINGUICIDE is the extreme form of a language-based form of racism, LINGUICISM.

In order to prevent linguistic genocide and to counteract linguicism, we need a **Universal Convention of Linguistic Human** rights. Some work has in fact been done towards a Universal Declaration of Linguistic Human Rights under Unesco auspices (see Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, in press), but I am afraid we are just in the beginning, and I am not optimistic.

Which linguistic rights, then, are so basic and fundamental that everybody should have them?

In my view, a universal declaration of linguistic human rights should guarantee several rights in relation to the **mother tongue**, in relation to an **official language** (and thus in relation to bilingualism), and in relation to **drawing profit from education** as far as the language of education is concerned.

In relation to the **mother tongue(s)** a universal declaration of linguistic human rights should guarantee that

1. everybody has the right to identify with their mother tongue(s) and have this identification accepted and respected by others
2. everybody has the right to learn the mother tongue(s) fully, orally (when physiologically possible) and in writing (which presupposes that minorities are educated through the medium of their mother tongue(s)),
3. everybody has the right to use the mother tongue in most official situations (including schools).
4. any change of mother tongue is voluntary, not imposed.

In relation to an **official language** a universal declaration of linguistic human rights should guarantee that everybody whose mother tongue is not an official language in the country where s/he is resident, has the right to become a high level bilingual (or trilingual, if s/he has 2 mother tongues) in the mother tongue(s) and (one of) the official language(s) (according to her own choice).

In relation to **drawing profit from education** a universal declaration of linguistic human rights should guarantee that everybody can profit from formal education, regardless of what her mother tongue is.

Observing these linguistic human rights is a prerequisite for high levels of bilingualism, as we can see from the last part of this paper, where I shall discuss the principles behind educational models which succeed in making children high level multilinguals.

PRINCIPLES IN EDUCATIONAL MODELS WHICH SUCCEED IN MAKING CHILDREN HIGH LEVEL MULTILINGUALS

Minority children should in most cases be able to choose to have most of their education through the medium of their mother tongue (see the lists of arguments for this in Skutnabb-Kangas 1991 and in press). This is also one of the conclusions from looking at educational models which seem to succeed in helping children to become high level multilinguals and which thus grant linguistic human rights to all children.

I will summarize principles drawn from looking at four types of very successful educational models, successful in making children fairly high-level bi- or multilinguals, namely:

- minority language medium maintenance education for minorities,
- immersion programmes where majority children are mainly educated through the medium of a minority language in their own classes, with a bilingual teacher,
- two-way-programmes where minority and majority children are educated together, mainly through the medium of

a minority language, with a bilingual teacher, and

- European Community schools, which have subsections for all official European Community languages, where each subsection's own language is the main medium of education up to a fairly high level, where children study foreign languages from first grade onwards and start using a foreign language as a medium of education under carefully chosen conditions from third grade on, and where teachers are minimally bilingual (for summaries and references see Skutnabb-Kangas, in press, Baetens Beardsmore 1993).

The principles which have to a large extent been followed in most of those experiments which have reached the best results (i.e. high levels of bi- or multilingualism, a fair chance of success in relation to school achievement, and positive intercultural attitudes), can be formulated as 8 recommendations. I hope that my audience will compare them with the education given to deaf children in their own countries. To what extent are these principles followed? Would you like to modify them on the basis of your experience of good education for deaf children?

1. Support (= use as the main medium of education, at least during the first 8 years) the language which is least likely to develop up to a high formal level. This is for all minority children their own mother tongue. Majority children can be taught through the medium of a minority language. (Here the European Schools are an exception, because they teach also majority children initially through the medium of their mother tongues (e.g. Italian for Italian-speaking children in Italy).

2. In most experiments, **the children are initially grouped together with children with the same L1.** Mixed groups are not positive initially, and certainly not in cognitively demanding decontextualised subjects. (Exception: two-way programmes (50% minority, 50% majority children, all taught through the medium of the minority language initially, later through both), but this may be a relevant factor in accounting for the Spanish-speaking children's sometimes relatively less impressive gains in both languages, compared to English-speaking children in the same programmes. The mere presence of majority language children in the same classroom may be to overwhelming for minority children, despite the minority language being the medium of education).

3. **ALL children are to become high level bilinguals**, not only minority children. This seems to be especially important in contexts where majority and minority children are mixed.

4. **All children have to be equalized vis-a-vis their knowledge of the language of instruction and the status of their mother tongues.** Nice phrases about the worth of everybody's mother tongue, the value of interculturalism, etc, do not help, unless they are followed up in how the schools are organized. Equality has to show in the demands made on the children's and the teachers' competencies in the different languages involved, so that everybody has the same demands (both minority and majority children and teachers must be or become bi- or multilingual). Equality has to show in the place the languages are accorded on the schedules and in further education, in testing and evaluation, in characters given for the languages, in the physical environment (signs, forms, letters, the school's languages of administration, the languages of meetings, assemblies, etc), in the status and salaries of the teachers, in their working conditions, career patterns, etc.

It is possible to equalize the children vis-a-vis their knowledge of the language of instruction in several different ways:

A All children know the language of instruction (maintenance programmes, European Schools initially)

B No children know the language of instruction or everybody is in the process of learning it (immersion programmes, European Schools in certain subjects in a later phase)

C All children alternate between "knowing" and "not knowing" the language of instruction (two-way programmes in a later phase; alternate-days-programmes (50% minority and 50% majority children, the medium of education alternates daily)

5. **All teachers have to be bi- or multilingual.** Thus they can be good models for the children, and support them (through comparing and contrasting and being metalinguistically aware) in language learning. Every child in a school has to be able to talk to an adult with the same native language.

This demand is often experienced as extremely threatening by majority group teachers, many of whom are not bilingual. Of course all minority group teachers are not high level bilinguals either. But it is often **less** important that the teacher's competence in a majority language is at top level, for instance in relation to pronunciation, because all children have ample opportunities to hear and read native models of a majority language outside the school, whereas many of them do NOT have the same opportunities to hear/read native minority language models. High levels of competence in a minority language is thus more important for a teacher than high levels of competence in a majority language.

6. Foreign languages should be taught through the medium of the children's mother tongue and/or by teachers who know the children's mother tongue. No teaching in foreign languages as subjects should be given through the medium of **other** foreign languages (for instance, Turkish children in Germany should not be taught English through the medium of German, but in Turkish).

7. All children must study both L1 and L2 as compulsory subjects through 1-12. Both languages have to be studied in ways which reflect what they are for the children: mother tongues, or second or foreign languages. Many minority children are forced to study a majority language, their L2, as if it was their L1.

8. Both languages have to be used as media of education in some phase of the children's education, but the progression seems to be different for minority and majority children.

For MAJORITY CHILDREN the **mother tongue** must function as the medium of education at least in some cognitively demanding, decontextualized subjects, at least in grades 8-12, possibly even earlier.

MAJORITY CHILDREN can be taught **through the medium of L2** at least in some (or even all or almost all) cognitively **less** demanding context-embedded subjects from the very beginning, and L2 can also be the medium of education, at least partially, in cognitively demanding decontextualized subjects, at least in grades 8-12.

For MINORITY CHILDREN the **mother tongue** must function as the medium of education in all subjects initially. At least some subjects must be taught through L1 all the way, up to grade 12, but these subjects may vary. It seems that the following development functions well:

- transfer from the known to the unknown

- transfer from teaching in a language to teaching through the medium of that language

- transfer from teaching through the medium of L2 in cognitively less demanding, context-embedded subjects, to teaching through the medium of L2 in cognitively demanding decontextualized subjects. The progression in the European Schools for minority children seems close to ideal:

The progression IN RELATION TO THE MOTHER TONGUE is as follows:

1. **All subjects** are taught **through the medium of the mother tongue** during the first 2 years.

2. **All important cognitively demanding decontextualized subjects** are taught **through the medium of the mother tongue** during the first 7 years.

3. There is **less** teaching **through the medium of the mother tongue** in grades 8-10, and again **more** teaching **through the medium of the mother tongue** in grades 11-12, especially in the most demanding subjects, in order to ensure that the students have understood them thoroughly.

4. **The mother tongue** is taught as a **subject throughout the schooling**, from 1-12

The progression IN RELATION TO THE SECOND LANGUAGE is as follows:

1. **The second language** is taught as a **subject throughout the schooling**, from 1-12

2. **The second language** becomes **medium of education** already in grade 3, but only in **cognitively less demanding context-embedded subjects**. The teaching can be given in mixed groups, but ideally together with other children for whom the language is also an L2.

3. Teaching in **cognitively demanding decontextualized subjects** only starts **through the medium of L2** when the children have been taught that language **as a subject for 7 years** (grades 1-7) and have been taught **through the medium of that language in cognitively less demanding context-embedded subjects for 5 years** (grades 3-7). Children should not be taught demanding decontextualized subjects through L2 with other children for whom the language of instruction is their L1, before grade 8. In European Schools this is mostly not done even in grades 9-12 in compulsory subjects, only in elective courses.

CONCLUSION

At least during the last 200 years, European states have had a difficult dilemma: On the **one** hand they have wanted to, or have been forced to give ordinary people, including minorities, some **human** rights, in order to maintain legitimacy in the eyes of their citizens, and, increasingly, the international community. On the **other** hand, most of them have NOT wanted to give minorities **linguistic** human rights, because granting minorities linguistic and cultural human rights which reproduce minorities **as distinct minorities** has often been seen as leading to a disintegration of nation states. Especially the large European nation states have in fact been instrumental in preventing the acceptance of legally binding multilateral linguistic rights.

We thus know that linguistic minorities are not going to get linguistic human rights easily. In order to get them, we have to organize and work together. We have to dismantle several myths which monolingual majority populations and state representatives in many powerful countries hold. Natural multilingualism (as opposed to school-produced knowledge in some foreign languages) is often seen by them as divisive, undesirable, dangerous, uneconomical, avoidable, abnormal and in many ways negative. Myths of this kind are dangerous, not only for us minorities, but also for the majorities and for world peace.

Monolingual stupidity or monolingual naivety - believing that monolingualism, both at an individual level and at a societal level, is normal, desirable and unavoidable, is one of the most dangerous illnesses in the world, and should be eradicated as soon as possible. Since the D