

***194. Linguistic human rights and teachers of English**

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Introduction

Languages are today being killed at a much faster pace than ever before in human history. Linguistic diversity is disappearing relatively faster than biodiversity. There is at least a correlational and possibly also a causal relationship between linguistic and cultural diversity on the one hand and biodiversity on the other hand. The fate of languages is thus vital for the future of the planet.

Legally binding linguistic human rights, especially in education, might be one of the necessary (but not sufficient) ways of counteracting language murder and therefore a prerequisite for the maintenance of linguistic diversity.

Violations of linguistic human rights, especially in education, may lead to reduction of linguistic and cultural diversity on our planet.

The article describes what linguistic human rights (LHRs) are and what LHRs, especially in education, international law contains, regionally and globally. It discusses to what extent present linguistic human rights, especially in education, are sufficient to protect and maintain linguistic diversity, to prevent ethnically articulated conflict, and to function as the necessary corrective to the 'free' market. It analyses what the consequences are of violations of LHRs, especially in education. It describes what is being done to try to struggle for basic LHRs in different parts of the world, including spelling out present problems and challenges. It discusses the consequences for education of some recent and draft human rights instruments concerning specifically language rights in education. Finally, it concentrates on The Hague Recommendations Regarding Minority Education Rights.

The existing language rights provisions will then be related to English language teaching in several parts of the world. This will first be done more generally, in terms of the organisation of the teaching, comparing models which do and models which do not lead to high levels of multilingualism and which do or do not respect LHRs. Then ESL teacher competencies will be discussed in terms of the Hague Recommendations. Some of the research arguments for bilingual teachers who are NOT native speakers (NS) but second (SLS) or foreign (FLS) language speakers of English will be presented. The basic tenets which have guided ESL will be discussed as fallacies. Finally, teaching of English will be related to two paradigms, The Diffusion of English Paradigm and The Ecology of Language Paradigm. It will be claimed that most ESL today, internally and globally, is a reflection of the Diffusion of English Paradigm. For linguistic and cultural diversity to be maintained, for the planet to have a future, an Ecology of Languages Paradigm (which also respects linguistic human rights) is a necessary (but not sufficient) prerequisite.

The state of the world's languages

No linguistic definitions of the difference between what is a language and what is a dialect are valid. A language is a dialect promoted by the elites, a dialect with an army or with state borders. There are probably something between 6.500 and 10.000 **spoken (oral) languages** in the world, and a number of **sign languages** which can be equally large. Europe and the Middle East together have only around 4% of them and all the Americas (North, South and Central) together around 15%. The rest, 81%, are in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. There are nine countries in the world with more than 200 languages each, the two megadiversity countries, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia (850 and 670 respectively) and seven others. They account for more than half the world's languages. Another 13 countries have more than 100 languages each: Phillippines, Russia, USA, Malaysia, China, Sudan, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Chad, Vanuatu, Central African Republic, Myanmar (Burma), and Nepal. These top 22 countries, just over 10 percent of the world's countries, probably account for some 75 percent (over 5.000) of the world's oral languages.

The **top 10 oral languages** in the world, in terms of **number of mother tongue speakers** are Chinese, English, Hindi/Urdu, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Bengali, Japanese, German. All have more than or very close to 100 million speakers.

But these 10 languages take half the pie: they comprise only 0,10 - 0,15% of the world's oral languages but account for close to 50% of the speakers, i.e. the world's oral population. Another 30 languages have between 35 and 100 million speakers. A very small group of the world's languages, certainly numbering less than 300 are spoken by communities of 1 million speakers and above.

Demographically these less than 300 languages account for a total of over 5 billion speakers or close to 95% of

the world's population. On the other hand, the 95% of the world's population accounts for much less than 5% of the world's languages, probably only 3 percent. This means that some 95-97% of the world's languages have fewer than 1 million speakers each. Probably around 45% of the world's languages are spoken by between 1 million and 10,000 speakers each. Somewhat over half of the world's (oral) languages and most of the sign languages are spoken by communities of 10,000 speakers or less. But half of these, in turn, meaning around a quarter of the world's languages, are spoken by communities of 1,000 speakers or less. Demographically, their speakers account for only 0.15% of the world's population. These minimal-sized and therefore endangered languages are the most vulnerable oral languages of the world (and all sign languages are threatened). Most languages in the world (84%) are spoken in one country only. The **median** number of speakers for oral languages is probably some 5-6,000 people.

Linguists agree that many languages face extinction. Michael Krauss from Alaska is one of the linguists who has worked hard to make the world aware of the threat to languages. He divides the (oral) languages into three groups, the **moribund**, the **endangered** and the **safe** languages.

The **moribund** languages, between 20 and 50 percent of the world's oral languages, are the ones which are no longer being learned by children, meaning they are 'beyond endangerment, they are living dead and will disappear in the next century'.

The **endangered** languages are the ones 'which, though now still being learned by children, will - if the present conditions continue - cease to be learned by children during the coming century'.

The **safe** languages are the ones which are neither moribund nor endangered.

Starting with seeing languages with more than one million speakers as 'safe' (200-250 languages), Krauss first goes down to half a million (which raises the numbers with some 50 languages) and then all the way down to 100,000. This gives around 600 'safe' languages.

This means that during the next hundred years, 90% of today's languages are going to disappear, if we continue.

What kills languages? Some of the direct main agents for this linguistic (and cultural) genocide are parts of what we call the **consciousness industry: formal education** and the **mass media** (including television, 'cultural nerve gas' as Michael Krauss has called it). Today it is formal education that makes an indigenous or minority child, who comes to school speaking her own language and possibly knowing a bit of the dominant language, leave school dominant or sometimes virtually monolingual in the dominant language, often believing that her language is not as useful or developed as the dominant language, and believing that she herself helps her future children best by speaking the dominant language to them. And often believing in the ideology of monolingual stupidity: believing that monolingualism is normal, sufficient, inevitable and desirable, and that it is necessary to choose between the languages, learn the dominant language subtractively, at the cost of her own, rather than additively, in addition to her own. When linguistic diversity disappears through linguistic genocide (meaning languages **are killed**; they do NOT disappear through any kind of natural death, but are murdered), the speakers are assimilated into the realms of other languages.

The top languages in terms of number of speakers are the **big killer languages**, and English is the foremost among them. These are the languages whose speakers have arrogated to themselves and to their languages more structural power and (material) resources than their numbers would justify, at the cost of speakers of other languages.

If you are an ESL teacher and/or if you teach minority children through the medium of a dominant language, **at the cost of their mother tongue**, you are participating in linguistic genocide. You are killing the necessary diversity and the prerequisites for life on our planet. Even if you feel shocked and angry at this accusation, it is your duty to know, and to find out about alternatives. One tool in counteracting linguistic genocide might be linguistic human rights, especially in education.

Linguistic human rights

Transmission of languages from the parent generation to children is **the** most vital factor for the maintenance of languages. Children must have the opportunity of learning their parents' idiom fully and properly so that they become (at least) as proficient as the parents. Language learning in this sense has to continue at least into young adulthood, for many functions throughout life. When more and more children get access to formal education, much of their more formal language learning which earlier happened in the community, happens in schools. If an alien language is used in schools, i.e. if children do not have the right to learn and use their language in schools as the main medium of education, the language is not going to survive because children educated through the medium of an alien language are not likely to pass their own language on to their children and grandchildren. "Modernization" has accelerated the death/murder of languages which without formal education had survived for centuries or millennia. One of the main agents in killing languages is thus the linguistic genocide which happens in formal education, every time indigenous or minority children or dominated group children even if they are a majority in terms of numbers are educated in a

dominant language.

Linguistic genocide sounds drastic. We need to define it. When the United Nations worked on the final draft of what was to become The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (E 794, 1948), a definition of **linguistic genocide** was included in Article III.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.

In the final vote in General Assembly, Art. III was voted down, and is NOT part of the final Convention. Still, the definition can be used. If we accept the claim that "prohibition" can be direct or indirect, it follows that if the minority language is not used as a medium of education in the preschool/school and if there are no minority teachers in the school, the use of the language is **indirectly** prohibited in daily intercourse/in schools, i.e. it is a question of linguistic genocide.

For maintenance and development of languages, educational linguistic rights, including the right to mother tongue medium education, are thus absolutely vital. I would not hesitate in calling **educational language rights the most important linguistic human rights** if we are interested in maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity on our planet. One possible tool in maintaining and developing languages is to refer to linguistic human rights, when demanding mother tongue medium education. This of course presupposes that mother tongue medium education in fact IS a human right.

In many of the post-WW2 human rights documents, language is mentioned in the preambles and in general clauses, as one of the characteristics on the basis of which individuals are not to be discriminated against in their enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The original and basic four characteristics (in the United Nations Charter, Art.13) are "**race, sex, language, or religion**". This shows that language has been seen as one of the most important characteristics of humans in terms of their human rights.

But when we move from the lofty non-duty-inducing phrases in the preambles of the human rights instruments, to the real business, namely the binding clauses, and especially to the educational clauses, something very strange happens. There is a change of position. All or most of the **non-linguistic** human characteristics (race, sex, religion, etc) are still there and get positive rights accorded to them: the clauses or articles about them create obligations and contain demanding formulations, where the states are firm dutyholders and are obliged to ('shall') act in order to ensure the specified rights (i.e. positive rather than negative rights). Here modifications, opt-out clauses and sliding-scale alternatives are rare.

In binding educational clauses, however, one of two things can often be noted. Firstly, often language disappears completely, as, for instance, in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (1948) where the paragraph on education (26) does not refer to language at all. Similarly, 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), does explicitly refer to 'racial, ethnic or religious groups' in its educational Article (13). However, it omits here reference to language or linguistic groups:

... 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...

The European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms from 1950 is equally silent on not only language rights in education but even more general minority rights. Several new Declarations and Conventions to protect minorities and/or minority languages have been passed in the 1990s. But even in the new instruments language has been omitted in education clauses and, for instance, in racism definitions.

If language-related rights **are** included and specified, the Article dealing with these rights, in contrast to the demanding formulations and the few opt-outs and alternatives in the articles dealing with other characteristics, is typically so weak and unsatisfactory that it is virtually meaningless. All or many of the other human characteristics are still there and get proper treatment and detailed, positive rights. The clauses about them create obligations and contain demanding formulations, where the states are firm dutyholders and '**shall**' do something positive in order to ensure the rights; there are few modifications, few opt-out clauses and few alternatives on a gliding scale. But not so for language, especially in education.

For example, in the **UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities**, adopted by the General Assembly in December 1992, most of the Articles use the obligating formulation 'shall' and have few let-out modifications or alternatives - except where linguistic rights in education are concerned. Compare, for example, the unconditional formulation in Article 1 (with only one modification) with the education Article 4.3 (with many opt-outs and modifications and few obligating formulations):

1.1. States *shall protect* the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories, and *shall encourage* conditions for the *promotion* of that identity.

1.2. States *shall* adopt **appropriate** legislative *and other* measures to *achieve those ends*.

4.3. 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. (emphases added, '*obligating*' in italics, '**opt-outs**' etc. in bold).

Clearly the formulation in Art. 4.3 raises many questions. What constitutes 'appropriate measures', or 'adequate opportunities', and who is to decide what is 'possible'? Does 'instruction in their mother tongue' mean through the medium of the mother tongue or does it only mean instruction in the mother tongue as a subject?

We can see the same phenomenon in the **European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages** (22 June 1992). A state can choose which paragraphs or subparagraphs it wants to apply (a minimum of 35 is required). Again, the formulations in the education Article 8 include a range of modifications, including 'as far as possible', 'relevant', 'appropriate', 'where necessary', 'pupils who so wish in a number considered sufficient', 'if the number of users of a regional or minority language justifies it', as well as a number of alternatives, as in 'to allow, encourage **or** provide teaching in **or** of the regional or minority language at all the appropriate stages of education' (emphasis added).

While the Charter demonstrates the unquestionably real problems of writing binding formulations which are sensitive to local conditions, just as in the UN Declaration above, its opt-outs and alternatives permit a reluctant state to meet the requirements in a minimalist way, which it can legitimate by claiming that a provision was not 'possible' or 'appropriate', or that numbers were not 'sufficient' or did not 'justify' a provision, or that it 'allowed' the minority to organise teaching of their language as a subject, at their own cost.

A new Council of Europe **Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities** was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 10 November 1994. We again find that the Article covering medium of education is so heavily qualified that the minority is completely at the mercy of the state:

In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if there is sufficient demand, the parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible and within the framework of their education systems, that persons belonging to those minorities have adequate opportunities for being taught in the minority language or for receiving instruction in this language (emphases added).

The Framework Convention has been criticized by both politicians and even international lawyers who are normally very careful in their comments.

A still more recent attempt to promote language rights, a Draft Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, accepted in Barcelona in June 1996 and handed over to UNESCO, also suffers from similar shortcomings even if it for several beneficiaries (**language communities** and, to some extent, **language groups**) represents great progress in relation to the other instruments described. Still, indirectly its education section forces all others except those defined as members of **language communities** (which roughly correspond to national territorially based minorities) to assimilate. For all others, only education in the language of the territory is a positive right, i.e. not education in their own language. There is no mention of bilingual or multilingual territories in the Declaration. Every territory seems to have only one "language specific to the territory", i.e. territories are seen as monolingual. This means that for those who speak a language other than the language of the territory, education in their own language is not a positive right. In addition, the Declaration grants members of language communities the right to "the most extensive possible command" of any **foreign** language in the world, whereas the rights granted to "everyone" include only the right to "oral and written knowledge" of one's **own** language. This is clear in a comparison of the formulations at the end of Article 26 on language communities with Article 29 which spells out the (negative) right of "everyone":

All language communities are entitled to an education which will enable their members to acquire a full command of their own language, including the different abilities relating to all the usual spheres of use, as well as **the most extensive possible command of any other language** they may wish to know (Art. 26 on rights of language communities).

1. Everyone is entitled to receive an education **in the language specific to the territory where s/he resides**.
2. This right does not exclude the right to acquire **oral and written knowledge of any language** which may be of use to him/her as an instrument of communication with other **language communities**. (Art. 29 on rights of "everyone", my emphases).

Besides, Art. 29.2 is formulated so as to suggest that "everyone's" own language can be learned only if it is a useful instrument when communicating with other language communities. This means that it could in principle be excluded if it is not known by any entity defined as a language community, or if it is not used as a **lingua franca** between people where some represent language communities. If it is 'only' known and/or used by language groups or by individuals representing "everybody" it can be excluded from any provision in Article 26. It is likely that the lack of rights in the education section will force all those not defined as members of language communities to assimilate. The Declaration gives language communities very extensive rights but leaves "everyone" with very few rights. This makes the Declaration vulnerable in several respects. As mentioned earlier, there are many states which claim that they do not have minority language communities, or which do not want to give these communities any rights. This makes these communities completely dependent on the acceptance of their existence by states, an acceptance that many states are not willing to grant. This makes individual rights enormously important in the Declaration. But these individual rights are the weakest part of the Declaration. In addition, the new Declaration seems to be in many ways completely unrealistic - few if any states in the world would be willing to accept it in its present form.

The new Draft Universal Declaration, even if it were accepted, does not give any positive **educational** language rights to **all** individuals, regardless of which category they belong to - and this is exactly what individual human rights are supposed to do. If something is to be seen as an individual **human right**, it means, per definition, a right which **every individual** in the world has, simply because that individual is a human being. It means an unconditional, fundamental right that no state is allowed to take away. Thus the situation has not improved despite new instruments in which language rights are mentioned, or even treated in detail.

There is a hierarchy in human rights instruments, with different rights for different groups. Dominant majority language speakers have all the rights. Traditional/territorial/autochthonous/national minorities have more language rights than other minority groups and most human rights instruments pertain to them. **Immigrant/guest worker/refugee minorities** have practically no language rights in education in relation to their own language, and only few in relation to learning the official language. The UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, from December 1990 but not yet in force because of lack of signatures, in its assimilation-oriented educational language Article (45) accords minimal rights to the mother tongues and is even more vague than the instruments mentioned before. **Indigenous peoples** have on paper some rights and more are suggested in the UN **Draft Universal Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, but many of them may disappear in the revision process.

The conclusion is that we are still to see the right to education through the medium of the mother tongue become a human right. We are still living with basic language wrongs in human rights law, especially in education policy. Denial of linguistic human rights, linguistic and cultural genocide and forced assimilation through education are still characteristic of many states, notably in Europe and Neo-Europes (USA, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, where the first two have killed more languages during the last couple of centuries than most other countries in the world, and are continuing). Despite the small recent improvements (see below), it seems to me to be clear that the Western states do not respect what should be basic linguistic human rights, especially in education, and that they do little to prevent linguistic and cultural genocide.

Recent positive developments

One of the difficulties in earlier provisions has been that states can claim that they have no minorities, and that there thus are no beneficiaries for provisions. This has been, for instance, the stance of France and Turkey - they claim that they have no minorities. We can look at the **UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, ICCPR, Article 27 which still grants the best legally binding protection to languages:

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 practise their own religion, or to use their own language.

In the customary reading of Art. 27, rights were only granted to individuals, not collectivities. And 'persons belonging to ... minorities' only had these rights in states which accepted their existence. This has not helped immigrant minorities because they have not been seen as minorities in the legal sense by the states in which they live.

The customary reading of Art. 27 interpreted it as

- excluding groups (even if they are citizens) which are not recognised as minorities by the state;
- excluding (im)migrants (who have not been seen as minorities);

- only conferring some protection from discrimination (= "negative rights") but not a positive right to maintain or even use one's language.
- not imposing any obligations on the states.

More recently (6 April 1994), the **UN Human Rights Committee** adopted a **General Comment on Article 27** which interprets it in a substantially broader and more positive way than earlier. The Committee sees the Article as

- stating that the existence of a minority does not depend on a decision by the State but requires to be established by objective criteria;
- protecting all individuals on the State's territory or under its jurisdiction (i.e. also immigrants and refugees), irrespective of whether they belong to the minorities specified in the Article or not;
- recognizing the existence of a 'right', and
- imposing positive obligations on the States.

This would mean, for instance for the United States, that those group which fulfill the 'objective criteria' for being minorities (and most immigrant minority groups do), **have** to be treated as minorities, who have rights. So do undocumented migrants. Thus the state has obligations, duties, towards them. Let's see what these duties might be. But first I would also like to remind you of the fact that even using terms like "linguistically diverse students" and other nice euphemisms which are in the process of replacing the degrading, outrageous terms like LEP and NEP in the United States about minority students, actually robs these children of the only protection they have in international human rights law. Objectively they ARE minority students and you are harming them by refusing to use the term. "Linguistically diverse students" have no protection in international law; minority students do.

OSCE, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, has 55 member states, including the USA and Canada. In 1992 OSCE created the position of a High Commissioner on National Minorities 'as an instrument of conflict prevention in situations of ethnic tension'. The High Commissioner, Max van der Stoep, is a former Foreign Minister of the Netherlands. In order to prevent ethnic conflict, the High Commissioner recently published authoritative guidelines for minority education for the member states, including the United States. These guidelines, The Hague Recommendations, were worked out by a small group of experts on human rights and education (including the author of this article). The guidelines are an interpretation and concretisation of what international human rights law says about minority education. Even if the term used is "national minority", the guidelines also apply to immigrated minorities, and one does NOT need to be a citizen in order to be protected by the guidelines.

In the section 'The spirit of international instruments', bilingualism is seen as a right and responsibility for persons belonging to national minorities (Art. 1), and states are reminded not to interpret their obligations in a restrictive manner (Art. 3). In the section on "Minority education at primary and secondary levels", mother tongue medium education is recommended at all levels, including bilingual teachers in the dominant language as a second language (Articles 11-13). Teacher training is made a duty on the state (Art. 14). I will quote some of the central articles.

11) The first years of education are of pivotal importance in a child's development. Educational research suggests that the medium of teaching at pre-school and kindergarten levels should ideally be the child's language. Wherever possible, States should create conditions enabling parents to avail themselves of this option.

12) Research also indicates that in primary school the curriculum should ideally be taught in the minority language. The minority language should be taught as a subject on a regular basis. The State language should also be taught as a subject on a regular basis preferably by bilingual teachers who have a good understanding of the children's cultural and linguistic background. Towards the end of this period, a few practical or non-theoretical subjects should be taught through the medium of the State language. Wherever possible, States should create conditions enabling parents to avail themselves of this option.

13) In secondary school a substantial part of the curriculum should be taught through the medium of the minority language. The minority language should be taught as a subject on a regular basis. The State language should also be taught as a subject on a regular basis preferably by bilingual teachers who have a good understanding of the children's cultural and linguistic background. Throughout this period, the number of subjects taught in the State language, should gradually be increased. Research findings suggest that the more gradual the increase, the better for the child.

14) The maintenance of the primary and secondary levels of minority education depends a great deal on the availability of teachers trained in all disciplines in the mother tongue. Therefore, ensuing from the obligation to provide adequate opportunities for minority language education, States should provide adequate facilities for the appropriate training of teachers and should facilitate access to such training.

Finally, the Explanatory Note states that

[S]ubmersion-type approaches whereby the curriculum is taught exclusively through the medium of the State language and minority children are entirely integrated into classes with children of the majority are not in line with international standards (p. 5).

Now compare these human rights standards to what you know of the education of minorities in your own country. Does your country or school live up to the standards? Even in California, the state which has, at least until the Proposition 227 was voted through, had more 'bilingual' education than other states in the US, over 70% of linguistic minority children were in submersion, even if it has been labelled something else. A **submersion** or **sink-or-swim** model is a programme where linguistic minority children with a low-status mother tongue are forced to accept instruction through the medium of a foreign majority language with high status, in classes where some children are native speakers of the language of instruction, where the teacher does not understand the mother tongue of the minority children, and where the majority language constitutes a threat to the minority children's mother tongue (MT), which runs the risk of being displaced or replaced (MT is not being learned (properly); MT is "forgotten"; MT does not develop because the children are forbidden to use it or are made to feel ashamed of it) - a SUBTRACTIVE language learning situation. In the US, 'immersion' ('structured' or 'sheltered' or not) is often used falsely and indiscriminately, regardless of context, about education in a language which is not the students L1, meaning also about submersion. Let me remind you that immersion programmes are programmes where linguistic majority children with a high-status mother tongue voluntarily choose (among existing alternatives) to be instructed through the medium of a foreign (minority) language, in classes with majority children with the same mother tongue only, where the teacher is bilingual so that the children at the beginning can use their own language, and where their mother tongue is in no danger of not developing or of being replaced by the language of instruction -an ADDITIVE language learning situation. Neither early exit nor even late exit bilingual programmes qualify for how minority children should be educated according the Hague Recommendations, which are an authoritative interpretation of human rights standard. Even late exit transitional programmes prohibit the use of minority languages in schools later on. It would be only two-way programmes which last from K to 12 that would qualify as programmes which do NOT commit linguistic genocide. How many of them are there in the USA today? None, according to the expert who is responsible for describing them at the Center for Applied Linguistics, Donna Christian (personal communication, March 1998). I heard in San Diego (March 1998) about **plans** for two such programmes in Texas...

Most of Europe is no better. But the maintenance programmes we have struggled to get in a few minority schools, are another positive recent development. Private but partially state-financed ethnic minority schools, with the minority language as the main medium of education, are showing excellent results in terms of high levels of multilingualism and multiculturalism and academic success. For instance the 11 Finnish-medium schools for Finnish labour migrant minority children in Sweden show that after 9 years of mostly Finnish-medium education, with good teaching of Swedish as a second language, mostly given by bilingual teachers, the children's Swedish is at the same level of better than that of Swedish middle-class children, and their Finnish is excellent. They know other, additional languages, and their school achievement is at grade level. This is what human rights-respecting maintenance programmes can do, and this is what the Hague Recommendations strive to achieve.

But what about segregation? The Swedish government suspected that ethnic minority schools could contribute to increased social, cultural and economic segregation, and asked a Swedish research group to investigate the schools. The official report, published by the National Board of Education in October 1997 concludes that there is no reason to suspect that the schools lead to segregation. There is criticism in the report of some Muslim schools - most of which do **not** use Arabic as the main medium of education - in terms of the very traditional content of the education and sometimes of low teacher qualifications. But the minority language medium maintenance schools (which the Swedes call "the linguistically oriented schools" in the report) get high praise for the levels of knowledge and bilingualism attained, the enthusiasm and active engagement of parents, children and teachers, and the social, linguistic and cultural integration of the students. The Swedish team was looking for problems in these schools, in order to be able to suggest solutions. But they claim, with surprise, that they found no problems - and therefore there is no reason to suggest any solutions. Instead, they

have to agree with a student we interviewed who claimed that his school gave him as much as any [Swedish-medium] public school could give - plus some more! (my translation).

We know what we should do, pedagogically, and in terms of linguistic human rights - but it is not done. To me it is clear that the education offered by human-rights-loving United States to most of the minority children is "not in line with international standards". Likewise, some of the attempts in California to delimit the already almost non-existing rights to bilingual education are not only against solid research evidence but they are outrageous attempts

to violate central educational linguistic human rights. A question to ask US educators, then, is: Why is it that the United States can run around the world policing human rights in **other** countries when you are seriously violating central human rights of children in your own country? When your schools are committing linguistic genocide every day?

English language teaching

If we want to relate the existing language rights provisions to English language teaching, also in other parts of the world, the next question could be: Why is it that the people running around the world, posing as ESL- and EFL-experts on how to teach English as an **additional** language to the world, i.e. teaching them how to become high level multilingual, mostly come from the two countries, namely the USA and UK, which are notoriously among the most unsuccessful ones in the world in making their **own majority population** high level bilingual, not to speak of high level multilingual? How can they be the best experts in the world in something they have never tried out or succeeded with at home?

What is needed is more contributions from educational situations where learning additional languages is both successful and NORMAL, and not subtractive. Additive language learners, and researchers supporting them, should unite against the pervasive spread of MacDonaldised globalised subtractive uncritically anglophile ESL/EFL. If we think of where good results have been achieved in EFL, many smaller European countries which do not have a big language in international use as an official language, have a lot to offer. The Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Hungary, just to mention a few, need to give everybody a good grounding in several languages other than the mother tongues. Given some exposure outside school later on, many people from these countries manage extremely well in several languages, while also developing their own languages and mostly using them for their university studies (even if they of course read widely in English and other languages during their studies). When we compare their course of learning foreign languages with the five key tenets of ESL/EFL which according to Robert Phillipson's analysis in his book **Linguistic imperialism** have guided English teaching, we can see that the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and Hungary (NNH) have not followed any of these. These are the five tenets, with comments on NNH English teaching in parentheses:

- English is best taught monolingually (the mother tongues are used extensively for explanations in NNH);
- the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker (English is normally taught by NNH teachers for whom it is a foreign language);
- the earlier English is introduced, the better the results (English is usually started as a subject at the earliest in 3rd grade in NNH, often later; studies show that results with early starts are not better);
- the more English is taught, the better the results (in ordinary NNH schools English is taught only as a subject; it is not used as a medium in schools except in some experiments);
- if other languages are used much, standards of English will drop (all subjects are normally taught in local languages from K to 12 in NNH).

As Robert Phillipson (along with many others) has shown, all five tenets are in fact scientifically false, and can be better labelled as

- the monolingual fallacy,
- the native speaker fallacy,
- the early start fallacy,
- the maximum exposure fallacy,
- the subtractive fallacy.

Teaching English as a second language according to the tenets would also at every point violate the Hague Recommendations. We shall only discuss one of the subpoints in terms of teacher competencies.

The Hague Recommendations suggest that everybody who teaches minority children should be bilingual and 'have a good understanding of the children's cultural and linguistic background'. It is specifically suggested that this is true for teachers of the dominant language too, for example ESL teachers. To me, a monolingual ESL-teacher is per definition incompetent to teach ESL; s/he simply lacks several of the capacities or proficiencies that a learner needs and can reasonably expect from the teacher. Having a teacher who is a native speaker of English can enhance some aspects of the learner's competence, especially in EFL situations, but in an ESL situation where the learners can hear, read and often also interact with native models every day if they desire this, nativeness is a characteristic that is peripheral when assessing teacher competence. Other aspects are much more central. We can compare native-speaker (NS) teachers with teachers who are NOT native speakers but second (SLS) or foreign (FLS) language speakers of English, in terms of some of the capacities/proficiencies that learners need in order to achieve high levels of English in an additive learning situation. These include the following:

1. High levels of functional competence in the target language.

Both NS and SLS/FLS can have that. It is likely that NS has a higher competence in idiomatic pronunciation and some semantic nuances - but in second language situations this is not important because the teacher is not the only source of exposure to the target language.

2. High levels of analytical competence in the target language.

Both NS and SLS/FLS can have that, but it is more likely that a trained SLS/FLS teacher has that. Often NS have 'blind spots' in relation to their own language and have not needed to analyse how their own language functions, what the rules are, etc. (When I started writing in Danish, soon after I had immigrated to Denmark, I had to give up asking Danish colleagues - even linguists - about rules for Danish; they could not answer my questions, whereas German and British linguist colleagues who had learned Danish as a foreign language could).

3. Insight into the linguistic and cultural background and needs of their learners (compare the Hague Recommendations).

It is (much) more likely that SLS/FLS has that, if s/he teaches her own group.

4. A detailed awareness of how mother tongue and target language differ and what is difficult for learners.

It is important to know what one already knows (i.e. what is similar in both languages) and what one needs to learn. It is (MUCH) more likely that SLS/FLS has the awareness needed, if s/he teaches her own group, because s/he has compared the languages in her own learning process.

5. First-hand experience of having learned and using a second or foreign language

SLSs/FLs always have it; NS can have it but it is more unusual. A bilingual or multilingual NS is thus better able to understand what the learners experience than a monolingual one.

It seems clear, then, that SLS/FL ESL teachers, second or foreign language speakers of English, have more of the capacities/proficiencies which learners need than most native speakers of English, provided, of course, that their competence in the target language is high. Their pronunciation does not need to be anywhere near native pronunciation. As several studies have shown, the sometimes negative evaluations of SLS/FL teachers competence often have more to do with the prejudiced attitudes of the evaluators than the competence of the SLS/FL speaker. This is also an aspect where ESL teachers have a duty to enlighten colleagues, students and even parents, and to work in their professional organisations to have SLS/FL competencies acknowledged. But a starting point for all ESL teachers is to eradicate monolingualism among themselves.

To conclude

Both globally and in Europe, there is an increasing awareness about the necessity of high levels of multilingual competence in the future if one wants to have a high-level job, in administration or business. Big multinationals, like the British BP Oil International, demand trilingualism from all their new career-service appointees, with English as one of the three languages. Recent studies by François Grin and others in Switzerland show, predictably, that high level knowledge of English gives a higher salary.

But Grin also shows supply and demand curves for future development. When more and more people in the world learn English - which is today's tendency - competence in English will be the self-evident norm. There will very soon be an over-supply which lowers the price. Knowing English only will take you nowhere, especially in business. It will be knowledge of other additional languages that gives you the career possibilities and high salary. Already now knowledge of English AND French AND German is starting to be a standard requirement for all young people in Europe who strive high. A fourth and fifth language is part of tomorrow's qualifications - and these languages need increasingly be more 'unusual' languages.

Americans need to think of it, instead of killing your linguistic and cultural potential. The Chinese and the Russians are rapidly learning English, and many will soon have a high level of competence. Soon some Americans may be the only ones in the world suffering from the curable illness of monolingual stupidity, and in hundred years' time we multilinguals may be showing some of you in pathological museums, namely those who are still voluntarily monolingual. And this is NOT a joke.

Education has here been presented as the big culprit. But behind education and other types of direct agents we have those structural agents which are decisive for what alternatives exist in the educational system and in other market places where languages are allocated certain values, both economic values and partially but not completely through this, market values. Languages are validated or invalidated. Their standing on the market for linguistic capital is assessed. This is where languages compete with each other, and this is where the linguistic hierarchisation of languages takes place. Both when languages are killed and when monolingual English-speaking (ESL) teachers teach minority children, linguicism is involved. I have defined linguicism as

ideologies, structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language.

The Japanese scholar Yukio Tsuda (1994) analyses the spread of English in terms of a 'diffusion of English' paradigm where he sees several other factors related to this diffusion. As an alternative he proposes an 'ecology of languages' paradigm which includes minimally bilingualism but hopefully multilingualism for all. Robert Phillipson and I have worked further on Tsuda's suggestions (see the discussion in Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas 1996). Below I present both paradigms in my latest version.

The diffusion of English paradigm

1. monolingualism and linguistic genocide
2. promotion of subtractive learning of dominant languages
3. linguistic, cultural and media imperialism
4. Americanisation and homogenisation of world culture
5. ideological globalisation and internationalisation
6. capitalism, hierarchisation
7. rationalisation based on science and technology
8. modernisation and economic efficiency
9. transnationalisation
10. growing polarisation and gaps between haves and never-to-haves

Ecology of languages paradigm

1. multilingualism, and linguistic diversity
2. promotion of additive foreign/second language learning
3. equality in communication
4. maintenance and exchange of cultures
5. ideological localisation and exchange
6. economic democratisation
7. human rights perspective, holistic integrative values
8. sustainability through promotion of diversity
9. protection of local production and national sovereignties
10. redistribution of the world's material resources.

The consequences for linguistic diversity of choosing the Diffusion of English paradigm, the 'free market' response, are disastrous. Most English as a Second Language teaching today, internally and globally, is a reflection of the Diffusion of English Paradigm. Another response could be through diversity, through the Ecology of Languages Paradigm, including implementing linguistic human rights. For linguistic and cultural diversity to be maintained, for the planet to have a future, an Ecology of Languages Paradigm (which also respects linguistic human rights) is a necessary (but not sufficient) prerequisite.

The year 1995 was the United Nations Year of Tolerance. Many plans of action and resolutions about tolerance were passed by international and regional organisations. But what were people asked to tolerate? There has been all over the Western world an 'increase in acts of violence, notably against migrants and people of immigrant origin' (from a Council of Europe Declaration and a Plan of Action on combating Racism, Xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Intolerance. "Tolerance" here seems to mean "counteracting the intolerance of majority populations in Europe and Europeanised countries towards some of their fellow citizens". The majority populations in western countries are thus pleaded in the UN/UNESCO International Year of Tolerance to show tolerance towards diversity and difference.

Even if some of the resolutions and texts mention mutuality and the need for **everybody** to be tolerant, after reading the bulk of them, one was left with a strong impression that those who should be "tolerated" are minorities (national, immigrant and refugee) and indigenous peoples, those who are "different" in relation to an unspecified mainstream. Those who are asked to do this tolerating are the majority populations, the so called "mainstream".

In parallel, in "promoting linguistic tolerance", also a goal, speakers of dominant languages are then presumably asked to tolerate linguistic diversity, the existence of smaller languages and maybe also the ways the speakers of other languages (and other varieties) use the dominant languages, in ways which do not completely tally with how the speakers of these dominant languages (or rather the formally educated middle class sections) themselves use them. Again, it is the linguistically dominant groups who are asked to tolerate that the dominated languages and groups using them exist, and are different from the dominant ones.

During the Year of Tolerance I was asked to talk about "promoting linguistic tolerance and development" at a

UN conference. It made me ask myself what the "development" and "promoting development" or "promoting linguistic development" in the title was? Was it the development reflected in the terms "the developed countries" and "the developing countries", where the evolutionary paradigm, with the West on top, is the set scene, where only **some** are presented as needing to develop or be developed because they are still "deficient" in relation to the norm, and where this norm is clear: it is the "modern", technological, post-industrial information society, overconsuming, ruining the environment, producing and trading in symbols; a norm which is environmentally impossible and unsustainable for planet in any case. But if we question it, and admit that we really feel angst in the face of the solid threat we ourselves pose to our own future, we are told that we are preventing 'development' and do not fit in a post-modern society. Is it the promotion of the kind of development which demands structural adjustment programmes to be pressed down on African and Eastern European countries by the World Bank and the IMF, programmes which do not work and make the poor still poorer?

Does it imply from a language point of view, that we also have "developed languages" and "developing languages" (or developing dialects or vernaculars), and that we by "promoting linguistic development" can develop these developing languages so that they might be able to fulfil more important roles in education and administration? Is it the "already developed", standardized languages which are the norm for these aspiring languages - i.e. does a 'dialect' really need to have an army, state borders and the codified standards that usually accompany these, in order to be considered a developed language? Does "promotion of linguistic development" mean spreading the linguistic homogenisation of the world that has been sold together with the subtractive spread of English, at the cost of the development of other languages? Does it mean the spread of the prevailing monolingualism of the "real" English-speaking Brits or Americans or Australians or the monolingualism of the "real" monolingual French or Germans? Do we all have to become monolinguals (with a sprinkling of Japanese or other languages, good for trade, learned in school), in order to become linguistically developed? Do we all have to "suffer from monolingual stupidity" in order to be considered linguistically developed, instead of being "blessed with multilingual brains"? (Both these are modifications of slogans on T-shirts. Many Californian teachers used to give T-shirts to their high-level bilingual students, with "BLESSED WITH BILINGUAL BRAINS". I have a T-shirt (given by Portuguese-American friends) with the text "I DO NOT SUFFER FROM MONOLINGUAL STUPIDITY").

In my view it is high time to start properly reversing the questions and start asking who should tolerate whom or what, and who or what should be developed, towards which goals.

I will take a few examples of the reversal. A research report, called "Culture of tolerance and silence" (1992) tells about peasant women in Giza, 20 km from Cairo in Egypt. Many of the women have been married off at the age of 9 or 10. They have many miscarriages and bear many children. They are afraid that the husband will take another wife unless they produce enough children. They labour in the fields and the house from early morning til late in the evening, and they tolerate these conditions in silence. The report discusses how to support the women in **overcoming** the "culture of tolerance and silence" which is theirs. Maybe the women rather need to learn how to **stop** being tolerant and silent? Maybe these women, and other oppressed groups, rather need a UN Year of Intolerance or Zero Tolerance?

The Sᄁᄁ are the indigenous peoples in northern Scandinavia and Russia, so called Lapps in colonial language. A Sᄁᄁ friend, Liv ʝ stmo, talked one night about the culture of tolerance. She described the situation of the ignorance, ethnocentrism and often unintended racism that majority group representatives often display towards the Sᄁᄁ. She said that she is tired of always having to be the tolerant teacher, patiently trying to develop some awareness in the majority representatives, always needing to smile and to try and explain to the clumsy intruder, stepping on her toes, that this person really is standing on the toes of the indigenous person, and if the majority representative tried to imagine herself in the same situation, she might understand that it hurts, and might consider moving a bit - instead of Liv pushing the intruder and screaming: "get off my toes, you bloody bastard!", as she **sometimes** feels like doing. Liv claims that she does not have as much tolerance left as she used to - her people have tolerated racism long enough for some to get accustomed to it. She thinks they need to unlearn toleration, and to start treating the majority population as adults who should be responsible for their own learning rather than rely on indigenous peoples and minorities continuing to be their tolerant teachers, patiently waiting for a little development, decade after decade. Maybe we multilingual minorities all over the world can learn from Liv?

What has been promoted especially by some of the powerful Western states so far during this century has been their own linguistic and cultural lack of awareness, their intolerance of linguistic and cultural diversity, and their conscious underdevelopment and killing off of the world's linguistic and cultural (along with biological) resources and diversity. So far, those representing the bulk of this underdeveloped diversity have been much too patient, and much too tolerant of the ignorance, of the attempts at linguistic and cultural genocide and its concomitant economic and political consequences. What we need, after the UN Year of Tolerance, is Zero Tolerance of the prevailing ideologies of monolingual reductionism, the illness that many powerful majority populations suffer from.

We also need to develop two kinds of support system. One support system is for these patients who suffer from monolingual reductionism, so that they can be helped to diversify, to get rid of their illness. Monolingual stupidity or

monolingual naivety or monolingual reductionism is one of the most dangerous illnesses on our planet, dangerous for world peace. The only reconciliatory fact about this illness is that it is curable. Education can play a major role in the cure. The second support system needed is to protect and support those who are healthy, the multilinguals, so that we are not infected by the illness virus; so that we can stay healthy and can see clearly that we are the healthy ones. Legally binding guarantees in international and national laws, protecting basic linguistic human rights, especially in education, are part of this support system. ESL teachers can be part of the support system - or continue to be part of the problem.

Discussion questions:

1. How do you feel after reading the article? If you feel furious, remember what Edward Said says about the duty of an intellectual.

It is

publicly to raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma (rather than to produce them), to be someone who cannot be easily co-opted by governments or corporations ... Least of all should an intellectual be there to make his/her audience feel good: the whole point is to be embarrassing, contrary, even unpleasant.

An intellectual is

neither a pacifier nor a consensus-builder, but someone whose whole being is staked on a critical sense, a sense of being unwilling to accept easy formulas, or ready-made clichés or the smooth, ever-so-accommodating confirmations of what the powerful or conventional have to say, and what they do. Not just passively unwilling, but actively willing to say so in public.

Said's 'modern intellectual's role' is truly 'that of disputing the prevailing norms' (Said 1994, 27). I am not accusing you or any other individual, I am accusing a system which allows killing of diversity and eventually the planet. Reflect together on what your own role is in that? What do you want it to be? Remember, you can not say: 'I did not know', when your grandchildren ask difficult questions.

2. Find out which 7 countries, in addition to Papua and New Guinea, have more than 100 languages each. Start with the **Ethnologue**, 13th edition. Teach your students how to use it! The address is <http://www.sil.org/ethnologue>). Discuss what might explain the number of languages.

3. Languages, like all biological species, get thicker on the ground as you approach the equator, and likewise, there are both fewer biological species and fewer languages when you approach the poles. There are also remarkable overlaps between global mappings of the world's areas of biological megadiversity and areas of high linguistic diversity', and likewise a 'correlation between low-diversity cultural systems and low biodiversity'. When one takes the top 25 countries for endemic (= found in one country only) languages and endemic mammals, birds and reptiles, 16 of the countries are on both lists, a concurrence of 64%. It is not accidental. Discuss why this would be? Why are there many languages where there are lots of different animals and plants?

4. If there, as researchers now start thinking, has been a long-lasting coevolution between humans and their environments so that biological diversity enhances cultural and linguistic diversity and vice versa, what are the likely consequences of today's sudden disruptions in that relationship? If languages are killed, the knowledge about details in the environment where it has developed is also killed. When we need new medicines... knowledge about sustainable development...

5. Of the 4.400 known mammal species, 326, 7.4% are on Unesco's 'red list' for endangered or threatened species, of the 8.600 birds 231, 2.7%, are. Of the ca 6.700 oral languages over 6.000, 90% are moribund or endangered/threatened. For ALL biological species, the realistic estimates for the yearly extinction rate vary between 0.02%-0.2%. Even with the most pessimistic figure 20% of the species would be extinct in hundred years' time - as compared to 90% of languages. The threat in relation to languages is far more serious. Discuss why you have not heard much about it! Again, discuss your own role. If you need to find out more, use Terralingua's Web-page (<http://cougar.ucdavis.edu/nas/terralin/home.html>) and follow the links in it. Terralingua is an international organisation working to support linguistic diversity and study the relationship between biological, linguistic and cultural diversity.

6. Read my and Ofelia Garcia's article (see 'further reading') about principles to follow if one wants the school to support high levels of bilingualism. Discuss to what extent you agree or disagree with them and why. What would you suggest instead? Which of the principles does your school follow? Would you like to follow more of them? What are you going to do? How? Together with whom?

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- Skutnabb-Kangas, Tove & Garcia, Ofelia. 1995. Multilingualism for All - General Principles? In Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (Ed.). **Multilingualism for All**, Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger, Amsterdam, Series European Studies on Multilingualism, 221-256.
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