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Introduction

Siv Björklund and Mikaela Björklund

Multilingualism should be studied and observed as a dynamic phenomenon that is constructed and reconstructed over time. Due to its dynamicity and complexity ‘multilingualism’ (e.g. Singleton & Aronin, 2019) is a phenomenon that does not lend itself to be fully described and explored in single research studies. Even though the in-built dynamicity requires individual researchers and research teams to choose approaches and positioning within the multidisciplinary research field, a growing number of studies on multilingualism worldwide clearly indicates that researchers view multilingualism *per se* as a benefit and a worthwhile aim to strive for. One consequence of this consensus within the research field is that many researchers try to reach outside the research field to normalise multilingualism as part of (monolingual) societies and point out its general benefit for different stakeholders and actors in society.

This manner of promoting multilingualism was part of a joint Finnish initiative to establish an international Workshop on Multilingualism network (see Figure 0.1 and the next section). Another consequence of the consensus on the benefits of multilingualism was more inside oriented within the network and aimed to deepen the knowledge of the realities of languages observed in different contexts. This context-dependency is closely intertwined with the notion that multilingualism itself is not neutral (Duchêne, 2020). In line with Heller (2020), who calls for new sociolinguistic priorities within sociolinguistics to answer questions about why language ‘has served, and continues to serve, as a terrain for the making of social difference and social inequality’ (Heller, 2020: 125) and ‘what emancipation and equality might look like, for whom, when, and where’ (Heller, 2020: 125), the presence of two or more languages needs an explorative perspective as to investigate how languages are operationalised and made (in)visible in different contexts. This volume is the result of an explicit attempt to go beyond single, contextualised case studies to compare and contrast two or more contexts, and thus optimally function as an eye-opener to detect general and specific conditions under which multiple languages are (un)used. The primarily intended audience of the volume consists of a rather broad range of researchers on and of multilingualism as a complex, context-related, societal and individual phenomenon. This audience should benefit from both the variety of

methodological approaches and the gained results. The secondary audience is administrators, practitioners and university students within the fields of multilingual education, sociolinguistics, youth culture and identity studies.

One of the starting points for defining dynamic multilingualism in this volume is that it develops and adjusts at different levels according to the needs of individuals, organisations/institutions and societies across different contexts, at the same time as it sets requirements and creates opportunities at all three levels. Comparisons and possible tensions between different domains and contexts are also of interest to learn from each other's experiences and from evidence-based practices and to be able to develop functioning and coherent policies and strategies for a globalising world and diversifying communities. The question of minority versus majority languages within the frame of multilingualism, the experienced status of languages and different usage domains may be offered as examples.

The Workshop on Multilingualism Network

This volume emanates from the jointly developed lines of thought throughout the international Workshop on Multilingualism network, and from the wide and diverse past and ongoing research within the field of multilingualism conducted by the participating researchers. It is one of the results of the cross-disciplinary researcher network established in 2014 and initiated by researchers from Åbo Akademi University and the University of Vaasa in Finland.

The starting point of the network was the assumption that linguistically and culturally diverse challenges of individuals, organisations and society are closely interwoven. Thus, it would be fruitful to bring related researchers together in a search for common interfaces and reflections on how the field of research can be enriched by identifying cross-disciplinary and cross-contextualised commonalities and challenges. Research-oriented discussions on planning for multilingual sustainability, language needs and multilingual patterns of behaviour from individual, societal and organisational perspectives offer new opportunities to create a shared research agenda. Consequently, the purpose of the network was to identify coherent approaches to current issues of multilingualism and to develop a holistic research perspective on multilingualism. In order to achieve that aim, an international and cross-disciplinary group of both distinguished and junior researchers on multilingualism was invited to four seminars. The seminar themes encompassed diachronic and synchronic aspects of language needs from the perspectives of individuals, business and society, professional multilingualism, policy and practice, and finally the possibilities of developing a shared research agenda on multilingualism.

The participants in the network were mainly European, but scholars from North America also participated in the workshops. The scientific fields represented among the participants cover the fields of education, linguistics, sociology, communication studies, social studies and economics. The most prominent outcomes of the network were to share ideas and develop new knowledge together, with colleagues sharing the same interest in multilingualism but from slightly different perspectives/disciplines and quite differing contexts. The widespread misconceptions about multilingualism and multilingual societies among central stakeholders and the public turned out to be a shared challenge. Some key aspects for supporting (the development of) functional multilingualism were identified and an attempt to spread these to central stakeholders and the general public in an easily accessible form was made in the form of a postcard (see Figure 0.1).

The aim was to show that limited concrete action within central domains in society, education and business can contribute to functional multilingualism. Furthermore, the shared insights on professional multilingualism, multilingual policy and practice, and the possibility of developing shared research perspectives on multilingualism led the network members to ask for the possibility of publishing some of their mutual insights together. For that purpose, a writers' workshop was organised in January 2018 and the network members were asked to pair up for joint



Figure 0.1 Awareness gives added value to stakeholders in society, business and education

(research and) writing efforts. Some of these efforts have been published in other fora but, for this volume, the editors compiled and brought together contributions that relate to education as one of the three central domains in Figure 0.1. All the contributions in this volume contain at least one author who was originally part of the Workshop on Multilingualism network to ensure the maintenance of the comparative and contrastive dimensions that the network members envisioned at the core of the network's shared research agenda. These original network authors have been given the opportunity to invite other co-authors to contribute to the individual chapters if deemed necessary, as a couple of planned studies could not be executed when members of the network could unexpectedly not gain access to schools due to the spread of Covid-19.

About This Volume

The particular add-ons of this volume are the joint efforts of the network researchers to go beyond their own context and, together with co-authors of the same chapter, compare and contrast across discipline and geographical context in the search for layers of multilingualism that, on the one hand, conform across context and, on the other, diverge context-specifically. As editors, we claim that there is added value in exploring multilingualism across contexts. For researchers on multilingualism who wish to increase their societal impact, it is necessary to consider comparisons across contexts and disciplines – that is, more holistic or ecological approaches to research (see also Björklund *et al.*, 2013). This volume is thus an attempt by the Workshop on Multilingualism network to provide such an example. Our dual role as editors and authors of a chapter in this volume confirmed that a consistent comparative perspective has brought challenges as well as enrichments to the fore in each chapter. In addition to the international and multidisciplinary nature of this volume, we thus claim that the thorough context-comparative perspective positions this volume in a unique way and we hope that the initiatives of the network will inspire similar future approaches across relevant fields.

In our search for a book series to best comply with this approach and set-up, we found that the series *Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* by Multilingual Matters expresses the ambition to be an international forum for interdisciplinary research on linguistic diversity and to facilitate the exchange of information and experience between academics and practitioners in different domains in combination with an explicit focus on multilingualism.

The choice of education as the domain of focus in this volume is based on the fact that many of the network members actively conduct research within this field. Furthermore, it is a very multilayered and dynamic domain that, according to Spolsky (2017), is one of the most important domains of language management. Education encompasses virtually every

individual, irrespective of whether individual views on multilingualism in school are based upon current experiences, retrospective associations or future expectations. It is a domain where many active agents add to the complexity of the domain and where researchers today are more oriented toward understanding underlying language management consequences and evolving socio- and psycholinguistic aspects than towards merely introducing new methods and observing actual language practices (Spolsky, 2017).

The chapters of the book are case studies and consistently include comparative elements. Thus, the volume as such does not naturally cover all possible cases but hopes to present reasonably diverse language settings to centre around perspectives on multilingual language use and the identity of individuals in different domains within educational settings. The chapters predominantly build on empirical data and include perspectives on linguistic diversity in social life and language use in several languages in educational domains. Since the individual chapters present case studies from a multitude of contexts and researchers from different disciplines, definitions and use of terminology alone would lend itself to lengthy discussions in each chapter. We have therefore chosen not to take this approach. The reader will notice that ‘multilingualism’ is used in a very broad sense, sometimes including more bilingual set-ups, and mostly covering both individual and societal multilingualism. If ‘plurilingualism’ is used, it is the individual choice of the authors and stems from projects where plurilingualism is used to make the individual dimension explicit, whereas multilingualism is limited to the societal perspective. Since there is no English spelling unanimously agreed upon, we have chosen a consequent use of ‘Sami’ for both Sami languages and cultures even though we are aware that there are arguments also for other spelling conventions.

The chapters range from contributions with a clear focus on national/state planning for the development of sustainable multilingual and intercultural educational policies to contributions that deal with multilingual practices, identities and their subsequent consequences for the maintenance of multilingual practices, language strategies and policies for multilingual and diversifying educational settings and societies. The chapters of the book present macro-, meso- and micro-level studies of educational planning and practices in several contexts and thus, via comparative perspectives, aim to generate new knowledge about the complex connectedness of the three levels and the main methods linked to investigating them.

The Individual Chapters in This Volume

The focus on the three-level internal relationships (macro-, meso- and micro-level) within the Workshop on Multilingualism network is reflected in all contributions of this volume. The three levels do not exclude each other and are often implicitly embedded within the

presented case studies. Comparative perspectives in the case studies presented in the individual chapters automatically pave the way for including a macro-level perspective, where the authors minimally present the linguistic landscape nationally, regionally or locally to contextualise their cases. This macro-level perspective is mostly accompanied by a micro-level perspective as most chapters address multilingual learners to highlight beliefs, attitudes, use, practices or identity in connection to them. In addition, a meso-level can more implicitly be identified in some of the chapters. Even though school as such can serve as a meso-level between society and individuals we, as editors, have chosen initial teacher education (ITE)/teacher training as representative for this level in the volume. Accordingly, the chapters are presented in an order where the macro-level perspective is most prevalent in the first chapters and the volume ends with chapters where the micro-level perspective is dominant. When identifying the dominant perspectives, we have also been guided by the choices of methods and theoretical frames of individual chapters.

Chapter 1 (A Comparison of Swedish and Canadian Educational Policies and Instructional Practices: The Case of Multilingual Language Learners, by Cummins and Lainio) and Chapter 2 (National Curriculum Reforms and Their Impact on Indigenous and Minority Languages: The Sami in Norway and Welsh in Wales in Comparative Perspective, by Özerk and Williams) use close readings of textual data such as educational steering documents, educational reports/guidelines and research studies to analyse and interpret the impact of and ideological underpinnings of national documents in relation to implementation in schools.

Cummins and Lainio show that there is no straightforward path for continued awareness of the multilingual realities in schools, even though their contexts are well-known for initiating an early sensitivity towards promoting bilingualism in Canada (French immersion) and the need for home language instruction for migrant language students in Sweden. In Canada, the maintenance of indigenous and heritage languages, as well as local educational support for migrant languages, have been overshadowed by the bilingualism predominantly occupied with the provincial main languages English and French. It is not until recently, and more within the western than eastern parts of Canada, that those other language groups have been made visible via bilingual programmes, and bi- and multilingual pedagogies have slowly gained ground to support language diversity in the classroom and the language identities of individual students. In Sweden, the home language (nowadays mother tongue instruction) reform was never fully completed, due to local resistance, and did not develop into bilingual programmes. Bilingual programmes are today mainly pursued by independent schools, which risks developing elitist bilingualism, while parents and students tend to leave multilingual public schools if given the choice. Lately, mother tongue instruction has had a slight increase among students and now has a critically central position alongside the recognition of the five national minority

languages (in 2009) as a means to maintain bilingualism when bilingual education is provided almost exclusively by independent schools.

In Chapter 2, Özerk and Williams focus on established minority and indigenous languages in education and scrutinise how Sami and Welsh are directly or indirectly influenced by frames given in curricula and by educational authorities. As in Chapter 1, the process Özerk and Williams describe is not linear but can be described as a pattern of backward and forward steps. They conclude that the centrality of consistent revitalisation efforts must be fully supported at all levels if the ideologies behind documents are to be overtly and transparently expressed and understood. Furthermore, local actors have to engage and raise their voices to improve and develop bi- and multilingual education in relation to central regional or state authorities and vice versa. An ongoing dialogue is vital since educational documents have a direct impact on how minority languages are used in education and on the status of students' second languages (L2s).

Overall, both chapters mention differing views on national levels as to the expected language competence among L1 and L2 students. In some contexts, L2 students are defined at beginner level and in other contexts at the near-native language level. In addition, the discourse that seems to classify students in A or B categories has negative impacts on the choice of L2 education among students, while reclassification from L2 to L1 remains static and inflexible in some contexts (also see Chapter 6 in this volume). On the other hand, if the classification of L1 and L2 students is not upheld in the curriculum, it may have consequences for minority L1 students in bilingual and multilingual education with majority students with the same language as L2, as pointed out by Williams and Özerk. Another way to deal with the multifaceted competence level among students is to develop several syllabi for different levels in the language, as exemplified in Finland (see Chapter 6).

An explicit orientation towards the macro-level perspective is also maintained in Chapter 3 (Languaging and Language Policies among Multilingual Children and Youth Groups in Finland and Denmark, by Slotte, Møller and From). Contrary to the first two chapters, Slotte, Møller and From reverse their point of departure for the analysis and use interviews with students, video/audio recordings from bilingual workshops and student group conversations to show how language management policies in Finland and Denmark are visible among the participants of the study. The results clearly indicate that language ideologies behind the two national systems are reflected in the language use of the students. The authors exemplify how students from Finnish- and Swedish-medium schools meet for bilingually arranged workshops and how they revert to the monolingual norm of their own school institution by identifying other students as either monolingual Finnish- or Swedish-speaking, neglecting the bilingual experience many of the students have. Bilingual use was

considered time-consuming and peculiar and – for the Danish participants – even a disadvantage in a classroom context, where standard Danish was associated with ‘nice’, ‘polite’ and enforced by the teachers. Furthermore, the Danish students described a division between standard Danish and what they call ‘slang’ and an awareness of how they manoeuvre between the use of polylingual practices and strategical avoidance of them.

Chapter 4 (‘I Am a Plurilingual Speaker, but Can I Teach Plurilingual Speakers?’ Contradictions in Student Teacher Discourses on Plurilingualism in Spain, Slovenia and Finland, by Llompарт, Dražnik and Bergroth) represents the meso-level perspective together with the more implicitly derived professional multilingualism deployed in Chapter 5 (In Search of Dominant Language Constellations among Multilingual Young Adults in Cyprus and Finland: The Influence of Multiple Language Use and Practices on Linguistic Identity and Trajectories as Future Teachers, by Karpava, Björklund and Björklund).

In Chapter 4, Llompарт, Dražnik and Bergroth compare ITE in three contexts (Spain, Slovenia and Finland) by investigating how multilingualism is part of student teachers’ ($n = 173$) identity and profession. The meso-level of the chapter is enhanced by a state-of-the-art description of multilingualism in ITE in each context and the choice of linguistic ideologies and teacher thinking as theoretical frames. Their data is unique for this volume as it was collected within a joint project that addresses ITE and linguistically sensitive teaching. The results show a coherent trend within all three contexts. In all contexts, ITE has taken the first steps to adapt to language diversity in classrooms but the authors call for more systematic and sensitive pedagogies to be addressed in steering documents and training to be developed for teacher educators and in-service teachers. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis performed within the project showed that participating student teachers are confident in being multilingual speakers and have an overall positive attitude towards multilingualism as a phenomenon in school institutions, whereas discourses of threats and challenges are concerned with topics such as student teachers’ own knowledge of and readiness to make use of classroom teaching practices that are linguistically sensitive and support pupils’ cultural and linguistic identity.

Student teachers are also targeted in the subsequent chapter by Karpava, Björklund and Björklund. Their analysis is based on questionnaires, group discussions and written assignments, and contains two parts. The first part focuses on the identification of dominant language constellations (DLCs) among student teachers in Cyprus and Finland who communicate daily in several languages. The second part seeks to use the DLC patterns of the participants to identify future trajectories as multilingual professionals in education. The authors conclude that the participants express hybrid, dynamic and varied linguistic identities and that there is necessarily no clear consistency between linguistic

self-identification and reported daily and frequent use of languages. In accordance with the results reported by Llopart, Dražnik and Bergroth in Chapter 4, the student teachers in this study have a positive view of multilingualism in school, which they believe they can implement in relevant multilingual pedagogies in the future. However, the student teacher groups in both Cyprus and Finland seem to strongly associate their future multilingual pedagogies with their own DLCs (i.e. the languages, in particular English as a support language, they feel comfortable using). References to strategies learned for professional multilingual pedagogies within ITE are not mentioned (cf. Chapter 4).

In the last two chapters, the micro-level dominates since individual multilingual learners are analysed as key persons of the studies. Chapter 6 (Supporting Multilingual Learning in Educational Contexts: Lessons from Poland, Finland and California, by Otwinowska, Bergroth and Zyzik) outlines childhood multilingualism as a theoretical frame, especially pointing out the risks of intellectual helplessness, cognitive overload and resentment for individual multilingual learners in linguistically non-aware schools. The analysis is backed up with excerpts that illustrate experiences from individual students, teachers and teacher educators. Otwinowska, Bergroth and Zyzik conclude that an understanding of background issues is necessary to situate educational practices, that building relationships in classes and schools must be prioritised, and that valuing learners' multilingual repertoire and identity function as a good starting point even though teachers may fear cultural clashes.

Chapter 7 (Researching Adolescents' Linguistic Repertoires in Multilingual Areas: Case Studies from South Tyrol and Finland, by Zanasi, Mård-Miettinen and Platzgummer) exemplifies two contexts with long-established bi- and multilingualism and parallel school systems where one language is the main language of instruction but is complemented with additional languages as languages of instruction to enhance individual students' bi- and multilingualism. The educational language policies in both contexts are thus built on language separation, which often results in rather complex regulations. This system is further complicated by a recent increase in the immigrant population. On the other hand, in both contexts, there is a tradition of research studies on bi- and multilingualism. This is highlighted in the chapter by the way the authors identify different theoretical approaches to their research objective, the students' linguistic repertoires and how they combine different methods to study the objective. The chapter discusses how linguistic repertoires in representation (questionnaires, language portraits, language trees, interviews) and in use (photographs, observations of interaction and trajectories, language-biographical interviews) have been investigated in the two cases and how multiple methods of data contribute to a versatile, objective and holistic understanding of individual linguistic repertoires in bi- and multilingual settings.

The volume ends with an epilogue by Williams, who reconnects to the macro-perspective on multilingualism and minority languages and highlights some of the aspects brought forth in the individual chapters. Williams also manages a necessary critical stance in relation to the contributions made and the potential limitations of the individual chapters and the volume.

All in all, our goal is that this volume will contribute to the understanding of multilingual educational contexts, further the interest to join the investigation of multilingualism across contexts and thus develop tools for a functional multilingual future.

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