Creating Synergies in Comparative Multilingualism: An Epilogue

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Introduction

Multilingualism has become a keyword in social discourse. It is often used as one of the central elements to describe rapidly changing societies, at least within those advanced liberal democracies which for so long espoused a form of nationalistic monolingualism as the state sanctioned a single and indivisible language as the sole carrier of official and authoritative statements.

In the past two generations, five features have served to further challenge the monolingual hegemony of selected states. The first is the gradual and often grudging recognition of indigenous language minorities and their rights to be respected and incorporated within the state apparatus, particularly within education, local government and the media. Thus, Welsh speakers, Basque, Catalans and Frisians have seen their languages recognised and incorporated at both state and international levels with the passage of domestic legislation and the signing of instruments such as the Council of Europe's Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The second is the increased mobility of capital and people, especially within the EU with its prized adherence to the free movement of people so as to make market capitalism a functioning reality. This has resulted in major metropolitan cores such as Frankfurt, Paris, London and Rome becoming far more attractive for investment, for mobile (often highly skilled) labour and for major infrastructural developments that often serve a global clientele as well as the state's population. The third is the increased presence of residents whose ancestral home typically would be one of the former European colonies, such as British people of West Indian, African or Asian stock or French citizens of Algerian origin, who in time situate their languages, cultures, faiths and foodways within an increasingly multicultural local context. They may also, in turn, develop access to designated classes designed to reproduce the dominant language of their forebears'

country of origin, as happens in the teaching of Urdu in Manchester Islamic Grammar School for Girls, UK. The fourth is the increased presence of dislocated people, whether as migrants, refugees or asylum seekers, fleeing war-torn locales or searching for a more secure and better quality of life. The fifth is the phenomenon of guest workers and their descendants, best represented by the arrival of Turkish guest workers in Germany some 60 years ago, two thirds of whom are not yet German citizens (Anon, 2021).

Cumulatively, these factors induce major changes to the ethnolinguistic and racial makeup of many states. This can be illustrated in the 2021 announcement that a third of pupils in the UK come from an ethnic minority background (33.9% of primary school pupils and 32.1% of secondary school pupils). While 80.3% of pupils were recorded as having a first language known or believed to be English, some 1.6 million (19.2%) were recorded as having a first language other than English (UK Government, 2021). Accordingly, the social character of many states is increasingly multilingual and multicultural as is discussed in Williams (2021a), (2021b), (2022a), (2023).

This volume was derived from the activities of the Workshop on Multilingualism (WoM) network, which had four main aims:

(1) to establish an international network of scholars and practitioners;
(2) to construct a series of comparative case studies to draw out similarities and differences in the application of aspects of multilingualism;
(3) to generate new knowledge;
(4) to establish a task force that would bring the results of the network's research to the attention to selected policy decision makers.

In analysing the contours of multilingualism through a comparative lens, one may discern a number of implicit issues that the network identified, such as:

(1) the impact of language hierarchies, especially in the realm of education;
(2) the role of English within commerce, the media and intercultural affairs;
(3) the differing varying influence generated by whether a language is being used for professional or social reasons within a multilingual context;
(4) and perhaps, most significantly, how the discourse surrounding multilingualism impacts on the public's perception and reaction to a dynamic world order.

Of the many issues discussed within the WoM network, three will feature in this chapter. The first is the conscious adoption of a comparative perspective whereby a sharp focus on the contours of multilingualism can be maintained. The second is the role that policy documents, curriculum design, reform and implementation can have in either promoting or

indeed damaging the prospects of a target language within the education system. The third is the increased salience of (metropolitan) multilingualism both for language transmission and for increased interaction within designated spaces, both open and closed.

The first feature of this volume's collection is the comparative perspective involving paired elements of case studies. The WoM participants were consciously paired with others from a markedly different sociolinguistic context so as to foreground the comparative element of their analysis, as in the case of a Swedish–Canadian (Chapter 1) or a Finnish–Cypriot focus (Chapter 5). These comparisons are in the main revealing, but can at times be stretched – both conceptually and empirically – and need to be seen essentially as heuristic devices as we together seek to understand more about the contours of multilingualism. Nevertheless, they do add new material and perspectives, since other analysts often tend to concentrate on their own or cognate societies that are rooted within one of a European, North American or Asian preoccupation, which then tends to be seen as a universal rather than a particular narrative illustration of a phenomenon. Clearly this has not prevented scholars from making generalisations from a limited basis of knowledge, especially when it relates to theory construction in language and education studies.

The second feature, the consequences for bi- and multilingualism of policy document, curriculum design, reform and implementation, is scrutinised in particular in the first three chapters of this volume, while the subsequent four chapters mainly deal with different perspectives on increased salience of multilingualism in education.

Consequences for Bi- and Multilingualism of Policy Documents, Curriculum Design, Reform and Implementation

Diachronic perspectives from Canada and Sweden

An analysis of the Canadian and Swedish experience of language learning identifies the early pioneering initiatives in the field of bilingualism and multilingualism during the 1960s and 1970s as starting points for current educational policies (Cummins & Lainio, Chapter 1). Given its commitment to an official languages regime within a multicultural framework, the Canadian experience has generated a great deal of information, research data and policy formulations.

These not only feed back into Canada's own structural reforms, but also provide proven examples of how initiatives in fields as diverse as language immersion education, employee language awareness training and the regulation of established official language rights may be evaluated and transferred to different levels in the political and administrative hierarchy.

In many ways, both the Canadian and Swedish developments have also offered best practice examples of language learning, which have been

transposed to other contexts. However, this set of practices is tempered by a tension surrounding the ideological underpinnings of educational and language reform, especially with regard to the marginalisation of heritage and indigenous languages within the system – a common enough feature in most liberal democratic states at the time of early reforms. In Sweden, Sami and Tornedalen children were the target of assimilation policies, being removed from their families and placed in 'working lodges' for their socialisation into young adults. In Canada, residential schools for indigenous peoples served the same purpose over a longer period and, despite condemnation by earlier generations, it is only recently that the full extent of the harsh and discriminatory, even abusive, nature of some of these institutions has been recognised; so much so that one could describe some of the residential school children as victims of a racist and antipathetic system.

In the decade following the end of World War II, Cummins and Lainio (Chapter 1) argue that significant changes in Swedish labour force demands as a result of industrialisation and modernisation attracted migrants from Finland and southern Europe. This first wave of migration opened up the possibility of additional languages being recognised and taught within the educational system, largely as a consequence of the Social Democrats' belief in the power of the welfare state to produce a redistributive effect based on universalism and a form of social cohesion where basic needs and a relatively equal standard of living should be guaranteed. However, equality of access to services and opportunities did not translate into an equitable approach within language policy. Indeed, and quite ironically, a form of inequality was institutionalised within the educational and language realm as double semilingualism predominated, despite the criticism that the separation of languages had received from scholars. Further evidence of structural inequality was the continued marginalisation of the Sami, which rendered the system an unsympathetic overseer of their affairs.

Under the impress of pending EU membership in 1995, Sweden took the opportunity to revise its approach to both its indigenous language speakers and resident immigrant population. Accordingly, key legislation regarding the role of Swedish as an official language was formulated as the Swedish Language Act in 2009. Together with a steady influx of EU migrants, Sweden also has sought to address the needs of the increasing number of non-EU migrants and asylum seekers, which peaked at 163,000 in 2016, who were attracted in part by relatively generous asylum laws. Thereafter, stricter legislative reforms witnessed a significant decline in numbers, to about 82,500 by 2020. Consequently, approximately one in five of today's 10 million population has Swedish as a second language.

By contrast, the Canadian experience reveals a much longer period of managing multilingualism within an official language duality. The dominant concern of many studies has been to concentrate on the Québec versus

English Canada dualism and authors have adopted terms such as a multi-national federation, an unequal partnership and a historical relationship in need of reconciliation to describe this impasse (Gibbins & Laforest, 1998).

A secondary, but increasingly significant, body of research and policy interpretation has focused on the multilingual and multicultural inheritance of the Canadian polity, with early works focusing on ethnic differentiation, immigrant language communities and how the politics of difference influences the quest for a cohesive sense of identity throughout the state (Elliott, 1979; Mackey, 2002). Early critiques of the 'cult of multiculturalism' asked hard-hitting questions about the new orthodoxy and concluded that ethnic communities had little to gain from the multicultural framework because they were more likely to be manipulated by this 'government sanctioned mentality', which was selling an illusion (Bissoondath, 1994). More recent interpretations have been more benign, largely as a result of a great deal of government investment in programmes and initiatives designed to recognise the permanent contribution of residents who do not have either English or French as their home language.

However, the old schisms persist and of great note is that Cummins and Lainio (Chapter 1) draw attention to the east–west split in the handling of multilingualism and multiculturalism, with the four western provinces engaging in several bilingual educational programmes, initially comprising a variety of European languages (e.g. German, Ukrainian, Italian, Polish and Spanish) and, more recently, Mandarin and Arabic. Several other possibilities exist for heritage language instruction outside the formal provincial system, offered by the communities themselves, particularly within metropolitan cores throughout Canada. Evaluations of both types of programmes offer positive encouragement, which is not the case for evaluations of indigenous language programmes that show a more mixed set of attainments and results.

Impacts of national curriculum reforms on the Sami and the Welsh languages

A comparative perspective on the manner in which national curriculum reforms have impacted on both the Sami and the Welsh languages reveals some fundamental similarities regarding the role of parental pressure, national ideology, political empowerment, infrastructure development and legislation, as explained by Özerk and Williams in Chapter 2. Notwithstanding the significant differences in scale, context, demography and institutionalisation, both case studies point to the centrality of formal education and curriculum reform in stimulating language revitalisation efforts. However, questions are raised as to the implication such reforms have on the preponderance of L2 students within the systems and on the degree to which minority languages are used within various socioeconomic domains (Johnson & Swain, 1994). Özerk and Williams pick out

two themes that are common in many minority language contexts. The first is the relative lack of throughput of minority language pupils from kindergarten to junior and then secondary school stages, where a significant drop in the number of pupils studying mainly through the target language of Sami or Welsh reduces the potency of the respective languages and – one would assume – the competence of the pupils to maintain their skill sets as they get older. The second theme is a concern over the long-term use of the target language outside the school setting in important socioeconomic domains, including commerce, sport and leisure. This raises questions as to the adequacy of formal schooling in stimulating a close relationship between language competence and multifunctional communication, even when such opportunities are readily available for the widespread use of the minority language. One of the chief challenges faced by language policy formulators in such contexts is to embed the default expectation of using both languages as a matter of choice in many circumstances rather than accepting that the hegemonic language is the only or predominant language available. Language promoters point to the possibilities offered by AI, IT and other media opportunities to enable the target language to be present and grow as technology develops. All the same, this requires constant investment to make the choices realisable and this in turn is dependent largely on the political deployment of public resources.

Curriculum reform in Norway had a direct impact on the number of Sami children who received Sami teaching as either L1, L2 or Sami Language and Culture classes. Curriculum documents NC-87 and NC-97-S induced a growth in the number of participants receiving Sami instruction between 1990 and 2006. The introduction of a new curriculum document in 2006/2007, which did not include Sami Language and Culture as a designated school subject, witnessed the beginning of a trend. This saw a decline in the numbers receiving Sami instruction: during the NC-06 and NC-06-S-period, far fewer children received Sami L1 or L2 teaching compared with the NC-97-S period. In 2016, this decline was partly offset by the significant improvement in distance education, which had a positive impact on the number of children who received Sami teaching as L1 or L2. Given these variations, the overall trend was a 98% increase in the number of Sami children who had access to any kind of Sami language teaching between 1990 and 2020. Curriculum reform has thus ensured the offering of the Sami language as a separate school subject with its own subject curriculum and a specified number of teaching hours per week as part of Sami students' comprehensive/compulsory/basic education. While not being entirely satisfactory, current debates surrounding the reform of the national curriculum among Sami territories are relatively settled, unlike the more urgent debate in Wales where the Welsh Government has committed itself to a wholesale reform of the curriculum within statutory education.

Driven by two considerations, the reform of the national curriculum in Wales was designed to introduce new subjects and to simultaneously achieve the strategic goal of furthering the development of a bilingual society. The latter aim was underpinned by a government commitment to produce a million Welsh speakers by 2050, largely by widening the opportunities to be taught Welsh within a range of school experiences.

In order to free up space within the national curriculum, on 14 October 2021 it was announced that the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in English Language and the GCSE in English Literature would be combined into one qualification. Similarly, physics, chemistry and biology will no longer be offered as individual subjects from 2025; they will be replaced by one integrated science award, which combines the three subjects and will be worth two GCSEs. The reformed curriculum will also see the introduction of new GCSEs in Engineering and Manufacturing and Film and Digital Media.

The impact of curriculum reform on the Welsh language is less clear cut as, such was the uncertainty surrounding the Welsh language qualification, a final decision was postponed. One of the controversial issues was the proposal to abolish the distinction between Welsh L1 and L2 levels and to create a single standard of attainment, producing a continuum reflecting varying skills. Critics have argued that this would weaken the salience of Welsh as a mother tongue qualification and lead to a dumbing down of the language standards – an accusation also levelled at the science subject reform. It should also be noted that, in order to achieve these reforms to boost the teaching of Welsh in all schools, a further 500 subject specialist teachers would be required.

In consequence, the reforms of the national curriculum, together with other policy initiatives, may indeed realise the target of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050, but at what cost to the quality, idiomatic richness and grammatical accuracy of the language when a significant portion will have been L2 learners, largely within designated English-medium schools? It does not necessarily follow that those who have acquired the skills of communicating in Welsh will automatically embrace it as their *lingua propria*.

Implications for classroom practice and ideology in Finland and Denmark

In Chapter 3, Slotte, Møller and From compare pupils' languaging and negotiation of language policies in the context of institutional education in Finland and Denmark. This offers a welcome opportunity for eliciting the voice and opinions of pupils and for weaving their contribution into a multi-level framework informed by Spolsky's (2004) notion of language policies comprising the interrelated dimensions of macro-level language management, language ideologies and micro-level language practices. The

comparative study uses interviews with pupils in a Finnish-medium school and a Swedish-medium school, video recordings from bilingual workshops in Finland and group conversations with pupils with diverse linguistic backgrounds in Denmark. The results demonstrate how language management policies and monolingual normativity ascribe language-based identities to the pupils, shape their ideas of appropriate language practices and determine the value of bilingualism in both contexts.

The comparison highlights the ideological and political influence of national culture on conceptions of bilingualism. Despite an increased awareness of living within an increasingly multilingual world, Slotte *et al.* state that 'it is probably fair to describe most of the Swedish- and the Finnish-medium schools as dominated by a strong monolingual language practice'. Pupils are sensitive to dynamic tensions between normative language policies and the actual practice of their teachers to tend to keep to one language while teaching (Sędek & McIntosh, 1998). In contrast, the Danish evidence is contextualised by the fact that people who have migrated are increasingly viewed as a cultural and economic problem for the welfare state (Padovan-Özdemir & Moldenhawer, 2016). The emphasis on switching between formal Danish and slang in informal, more private communication among pupils ties in with Spolsky's (2004) insights on how pupils attune themselves to teachers' language ideologies. However, Slotte *et al.* claim that in so doing the participants not only risk being ascribed identities as unruly pupils but also as the 'non-Danish other' when using slang. Such stigmatism reveals important social mores and informs the construction of identity. This is more acute in dealing with the relative significance of being described as 'bilingual' or *tosproget*, which – despite sincere attempts in the past generation to conceive of minority language bilingualism as a positive rather than a negative effect – still carries the connotation for many of being disadvantaged within the monolingual and monocultural school system. Such a stigma is not reflected in the Finnish data even if bilingualism is not always necessarily prized. The message from this comparison is that pupil identity constructions, whether regarding 'Finns', 'Swedes' or 'bilinguals' in Denmark are 'outcomes of the monolingual ideologies of the institutions. When monolingual regimes are enforced in educational systems, they do not only result in language policies and practices, but also in categorisations and senses of belonging' (Slotte *et al.*, Chapter 3).

Increased Salience of Multilingualism in Education

Tensions in discourses on plurilingualism among student teachers in Catalonia, Slovenia and Finland

Chapter 4, by Llompart, Dražnik and Bergroth, draws on evidence from Catalonia, Slovenia and Finland. As a part of the European project

Listiac (Linguistically Sensitive Teaching in All Classrooms), data from 173 student teachers enrolled in initial teacher education (ITE) at four universities located in Barcelona, Ljubljana, Vaasa and Jyväskylä were interpreted using reflection instruments based on a qualitative SWOT analysis. This comparative investigation identified a disjuncture between two countervailing tendencies. The first was a positive construction of student teachers accommodating as plurilingual speakers and being committed to a career as a teacher within a pluralistic context. This was the theoretical desiderata to which they aspired. However, this was juxtaposed with a negative construction of their imagined future as teachers whose identity was bound up teaching in a plurilingual context. It was a largely negative perception because they believed that they had not received enough practical training or adequate experience and relational competence with diverse people to enable them to carry out their functions in an effective manner. The authors acknowledge that others have investigated this discrepancy between ambition and perceived reality among teachers and student teachers regarding plurilingualism (Birello *et al*., 2021; Bredthauer & Engfer, 2016; Haukås, 2016). What is novel in the current context is the finding that such discrepancies may be found within several ITE institutions in Europe, prompting the authors to recommend a rethink on ITE practice so as to make the plurilingual element more manageable and attractive to trainee teachers. This concern echoes the evidence supplied by the Cyprus–Finland comparison as discussed next.

Openings for multilingualism and linguistic identity as mirrors of language aware teaching among future educators in Cyprus and Finland

Chapter 5, by Karpava, Björklund and Björklund, is concerned with identifying dominant language constellations (DLC) in Cyprus and Finland and determining to what extent the participants' multilingual contexts are mirrored in future trajectories for language awareness/multiple language use as educators. This is important because the participants' own experience of multilingualism and interculturalism enables them to be more aware of the need for inclusion of pupils with languages other than the school's designated language of instruction. In the Cyprus and Finland data, such an awareness was reported in general terms rather than as a direct reflection of the participants' acceptance of strategies for multilingual pedagogy or to any experience they may have had of such practices during their period as student teachers. This suggests that, in both contexts, additional attention to the linguistic repertoire of pupils within the teacher training programme would bode well for developing skills to manage linguistically and culturally diverse classroom situations.

Beyond the need for increased sensitivity and awareness, what other similarities could be discerned by such comparative analyses? It is evident

that the presence of English influences the language continuum in both cases, even if for markedly different reasons. In Cyprus, in addition to the prevalence of Greek (Cypriot Greek and Standard Modern Greek), there is a far wider range of L1s of minority and immigrant students, in particular Romanian, Bulgarian, Lebanese, Arabic, Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian and Armenian, which Karpava *et al*. aver reflects a complex and unique situation of bilectalism and multilingualism. This does not necessarily confer a hybrid identity. Within Finland, the DLCs and linguistic repertoires are also complex, ranging from three to five languages, including many other largely European languages such as German, Norwegian, Russian, Spanish, Danish, together with Dari, the Afghan dialect of Persian. Understandably, the degree to which individuals acquire additional language fluency depends on their interest in learning a language, personal preferences and social networks.

The student teachers in both Finland and Cyprus affirmed the need to be at ease in using and modelling multilingual language use in a classroom situation, confirming the increasing normalcy of multilingualism as a societal norm. What the case studies in this volume demonstrate is the acute need to equip teachers – in their formative years of training – with the skills, competence and raised awareness to manage increasingly diverse classroom settings. However, several case studies also emphasise the significance of national and local contexts in practising or implementing these skills. It does not necessarily follow those improvements in ITE training and processes will automatically render teachers more effective practitioners in diverse multilingual and multifaith settings, until such time as the ideology and general popular concerns validate multilingualism as a permanent, not an epiphenomenal, element of contemporary society.

Openings for multilingualism in schools in Poland, Finland and California

An investigation into the methods used to support multilingual learning in Poland, Finland and California demonstrates a variety of initiatives and approaches, driven as much by political as by educational factors. In Chapter 6, Otwinowska, Bergroth and Zyzik illustrate the mechanism of developing the cognitive consequences of bilingualism and argue that children's language knowledge is developed by both frequent use and by external institutional and familial support – nothing surprising in that. What is significant is the juridical context that produces the conditions of possibility for supporting bilingual or multilingual learning. Thus, Poland's limited exposure to contemporary multilingual education can be explained in large part by geopolitical events. In 1945 a turbulent, war-torn restructuring of Polish state boundaries saw the Oder–Neisse Line function as its western border and the Curzon Line as its eastern limit. Population exchanges of Polish and German residents witnessed the

transfer of millions of people to populate their respective new spaces. For Poland, this resulted in a previously multilingual society becoming a largely homogenous one with only 1% of the population now classed as national minority citizens. While most of the modern language teaching concerns English and German, very few opportunities exist for the formal teaching of minority language instruction, except within the community and at home as a consequence of familial transfer of selected languages.

A more structured approach to the teaching of Swedish in Finland reflects the historical geopolitical salience of Sweden in the broader region, the high status of Swedish as one of the national languages and the arrangements made to support the Swedish-speaking population. Accordingly, the registered Swedish-speaking segment of the population (5.2%) is well protected in law and the resultant educational and local authority infrastructure mitigates somewhat against systematic, historical language shift. Nevertheless, concerns about the vitality of the Swedish-speaking segment are still prevalent and are a constant source of political and social agitation. Within the Finnish education sectors, linguistic diversity has grown apace and the subject Mother Tongue and Literature now includes 12 syllabi for different languages. These are Finnish, Swedish, Sami, Roma, sign language, other mother tongue of the pupil, Finnish and Swedish as a second language, Finnish and Swedish for Sami speakers and Finnish and Swedish for sign language users.

Quite different perspectives and challenges are adduced from the California context, which illustrates a far more diverse and episodic trajectory regarding the promotion of multilingualism. The current position, it would appear, is far more promising than at earlier junctures, with the mission statement of the California Department of Education (CDE) being

> … to equip students with world language skills to better appreciate and more fully engage with the diverse mixture of cultures, heritages, and languages found in California and the world, while also preparing them to succeed in the global economy. The CDE has set specific goals in the Global California 2030 Initiative. By 2030, half of all kindergarten through grade twelve students will participate in programs leading to proficiency in two or more languages, either through a class, a program, or an experience. By 2040, three out of four students will be proficient in one or more languages, earning them a State Seal of Biliteracy. (California Department of Education, 2021)

The authors' concern with matching contextual background to the organisation of multilingual learning is a ready reminder that what happens outside the formal classroom is a key determinant of the likely success or otherwise of designated programmes depending on how they are implemented and received. One could not argue with their conclusion that supporting multilingual learning can be enhanced in everyday practices and much more attention needs to be given to the solutions for supporting

multilingual learning as derived from the perspective of teachers and teacher training. Naturally enough, Otwinowska *et al.* are keen to demonstrate that supporting various linguistic groups is consequently very well addressed in Finland at a policy level (Eurydice, 2019), but one could be forgiven for reminding the reader that, in comparison with the USA, Finnish society appears to be far more stable and regulated and less subject to political challenge as regards the primacy of educational consistency.

Self-Reported Use of Multiple Languages for Increased Awareness of Multilingualism among Adolescents in Italy and Finland

In an intriguing chapter on researching adolescent linguistic repertoires, Zanasi, Mård-Miettinen and Platzgummer pair Finland with South Tyrol (Chapter 7). Using distinct methods of research (the RepertoirePluS project in South Tyrol and the Multi-IM project for Swedish immersion students in Finland), it was observed that both samples were confident in using at least three languages, namely German, Italian and English in South Tyrol and Swedish, Finnish and English in Finland. In addition, a much wider range of linguistic resources were present in both cases.

In order to delve deeper into the linguistic repertoire construct, visual methods of representation and the elicitation of information were employed to good effect. The RepertoirePluS project used language portraits for both the questionnaire and interview stages. By contrast, the Multi-IM project used the language tree method to generate additional data about the participants. In both cases, competence in two or more languages was prized and important clues as to when and where certain languages within their repertoire were obtained. One may question to what extent this sort of visual and perceptive methodology yields sufficient fine-grained data for pedagogical and planning purposes, but when it is utilised as one of a package of investigative tools it can reveal significant insights shared by the pupils, but not necessarily fully appreciated by the teaching staff employed within such programmes.

Language biographies also yield important information about life trajectories and language choices and, although the authors do not use the term *muda*, what they are describing is akin to the findings of Pujolar and Puigdevall (2015) in terms of significant stages in the journey to becoming a new speaker of a particular language.

Conclusion

There are many strengths in this collective endeavour, not least of which is the interdisciplinary skill set of the participants in the WoM, particularly their own linguistic range and knowledge of the case studies under review. A second virtue is the adoption of a comparative approach to

multilingualism, consciously pairing specialists from different jurisdictions and thereby compelling them to address issues of commonality and divergence in their thematic explorations. We learn that there are indeed several generic traits that can be identified from such an exercise. These, in turn, can inform the transfer of good practice from one situation to another, thereby assisting in the diffusion of pragmatic solutions to the various challenges that teaching and living in a multilingual environment can produce.

We also acknowledge that ideological and political interventions and processes can severely influence the contours of multilingualism, thereby highlighting the significance of context-dependent trajectories in the life cycle of pedagogical approaches or sociolinguistic programmes of action. Obviously, the political influence and culture of the hegemonic state is most acute in the management of majority–minority relationships within bilingual and multilingual situations (Strani, 2020; Williams, 2013). As demonstrated by the diachronic aspect in Chapter 1, a common feature of many evaluations is to focus on outputs rather than outcomes and so it is pertinent to ask whether or not these reforms have had a beneficial impact. In Sweden, the few available evaluations of Sami, national minority languages and migrant languages cited by Cummins and Lainio in Chapter 1 demonstrate several weaknesses related to the operation of a multilingual curriculum, namely a tendency to collapse all non-native born pupils into a single operational category of immigrant despite their fundamental differences, all of which reduce the purchase of the pupil's mother tongue as a significant component in their linguistic trajectory. It is a moot point whether or not the mother tongue fares as well in educational circles that emphasise the two official languages together with English as the necessary requirements for earning a living and engaging with the wider world. Thus, even such apparently clearly marked identities of majority and minority are subject to qualification and do not always reflect the constituent make up of society, for they may be symbolically important but not sociologically accurate as descriptors of group membership and identity formation. A further caveat is the need to assert that multilingualism is a distinct phenomenon from multiculturalism, even though they are often used in tandem. Multilingual policies do not necessarily accord with or consciously promote cultural pluralism.

We recognise that the key concepts of multilingualism and multiculturalism are subject to quite different interpretations both between and within specific jurisdictions. However, in those societies, such as Canada, that have adopted multiculturalism as a 'national' policy, interpreters such as Gilles Paquet have cautioned against seeing such policies as an unalloyed success. While a multicultural perspective may raise the status of a state's ethnic heritage and conduce to cultural pluralism, it can also be seen both as a containment policy and as a means of reducing communal inequalities as a symbolic policy (Paquet, 2008: 59). The general public, it is claimed, is increasingly cynical about the claims of a multicultural policy and may

even grow resentful if the policy does not in fact deliver its putative prom-ises of securing heritage language survival, group solidarity, increased rep-resentation within the cultural mosaic and overall recognition of migrants of non-British and non-French stock to the commonwealth and wellbeing of Canada. Multiculturalism has been perceived as a negation of the found-ing two nations principle of statehood. A second form of opposition ema-nates from those who wish to support Canadian national unity and see the emphasis on ethnic origins as a distraction perpetuating a historical and politically charged source of division. Yet a third critique sees multicultur-alism, the granting of group rights such as linguistic transmission and edu-cation within the provincial education system, as damaging to the liberal political tradition and the differentiated discriminatory treatment of indi-viduals. A fourth interpretation sees multiculturalism as a divergence that allows the hegemonic English Canadian polity to progress largely unhin-dered, relegating ethnic marginals to the side-lines but dressing up their condition as an essential multicultural contribution to the enrichment of society, but one which can be safely marginalised from the real business of running a country (Peleg, 2007: 119–120).

Such considerations, for Canada as elsewhere, are significant as they provide the presumptive political and administrative culture within which multilingual innovations and programmes are introduced, calibrated and judged as to their relevance and efficacy.

This volume's interrogation of multilingualism offers a wide ranging, detailed and thoughtful set of interpretations. Replete with powerful insights that may not have been produced had it not been for the judicious pairing of case studies, this volume is a pioneering attempt to counter the pressing insis-tence of advocates of monolingual nationalism that a state functions best when it yields to the power of a hegemonic language in its internal affairs. It may not always succeed in convincing many that bilingualism and multilin-gualism represent a steady state or that plural identities conceived in and through language can coexist in permanent mutual harmony. Such is the nature of historical inequalities and contemporary injustices that tension will always abound unless the separate voices are managed within a flexible and accommodating structure. Here we have examples of how such accommoda-tion has been forged in several distinct societies, which together offer a rich-ness of experience and representation. It is quite a different matter to anticipate to what extent several of the key messages and good practice exemplars will be heeded, even within their own societies as progressive reform measures, let alone transferred to other jurisdictions.

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