

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY IN PLURILINGUAL CONTEXTS

Edited By
Daniel W.C. So
Gary M. Jones

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Education and Society in Plurilingual Contexts

Participants from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel who took part in the international conference *Plurilingual Hubs in the New Millennium* are all members of The Centre for the Interdisciplinary Study of Brussels. Their participation was partially financed by the Fund for Scientific Research, Flanders, which is part of the framework of a major Scientific Research Network Grant for a project on 'Research into Brussels and other multilingual (capital) cities'. The project team includes members from Switzerland and Canada as well as Belgium.

Preface

Two themes thread through the 15 papers in this volume. Towards the end of his seminal *Bilingualism: Basic Principles*, Baetens Beardsmore enters a plea that individual bilingualism should be considered normal rather than exceptional (1986: 120). Twenty years later his plea has been taken as a matter of course by the authors in this volume: that societal bilingualism is a common phenomenon worldwide and that knowing or trying to know more than one language is a normal condition in human society, past and present. The other thread is the recognition that an understanding of the phenomena of individual and societal bilingualism has to take into account the socio-cultural contexts in which the phenomena are found.

These two threads are most evident in Lüdi's paper which sets the scene for the rest of the papers in this volume, first by showing how unilingualism can be understood as an exception and a handicap, then by showing why it is in the interest of all concerned to incorporate bilingual norms in language-policy making, and finally, with examples from the schools of Switzerland, by suggesting how such norms could work.

The next nine papers of the volume address the issue of achieving individual bilingualism through schooling. They cover experiences in eight countries – Belgium (mainly Brussels), Brunei, Canada (particularly Quebec), China (including Hong Kong), England, Germany, Italy, and Singapore. The programmes examined range from those designed for minority students with disadvantaged backgrounds, to those for students in the mainstream, as well as to those that cater to students from relatively privileged backgrounds, such as pupils in the European School system. While the reasons for incorporating the development of individual bilingualism as one of the major aims of education vary from country to country and from programme to programme, indications provided by these papers make it quite evident that it is a very common aspiration among people and governments worldwide. As predicted by Genesee, it is quite probable that individual bilingualism is going to be an important agenda in education of most, if not all, countries of the world in the New Millennium. The benefits that come with the success of this agenda, such as mother tongue maintenance and/or facilitation of intercultural communication, may be obvious, but the costs and the technology involved in implementing this agenda are not yet clearly understood. Also the costs may differ according to context, as shown in the papers of Gao, Jones, So and Tsou.

In recent years the application of the methodology of Content and Language Integrated Learning in schools and programmes that have individual bilingualism development as a primary goal has produced many encouraging results, as reported in the papers of Genesee, Coyle, Wolff, Gajo & Serra, and Housen. The principal feature of the methodology is the use of an additional language, which is normally the students' less familiar language, for the teaching and learning of subjects other than the language itself. From these papers it is obvious that the methodology holds a lot of promise that might develop individual bilingualism among a large percentage of the school population, rather than for a small elite, as is the normal situation today. Accordingly, these papers should be of particular interest to readers interested in the technology of additive bilingualism through schooling.

The papers of Teng, Jernudd, Saxena & Sercombe, Janssens and Witte are in various ways all about societal bilingualism, particularly languages-in-contact. The primary focus of these papers is on the importance of the sociolinguistic context in the study of linguistic developments and/or attitudes derived from these situations. Teng's analysis of the syntactic characteristics of Taiwanese Mandarin speech demonstrates the complexity of contact-induced linguistic features of a rapidly evolving language variety in a truly plurilingual community. Such a community defies simplistic classification and needs new taxonomies in language-contact studies that take into account more fully the dynamics of cross-linguistic interactions.

According to Jernudd, hubs like Hong Kong, Brunei and Brussels are 'a crucible of languages from which new linguistic species and language attitudes are fostered.' His paper discusses the impact of these contact-induced sociolinguistic changes on people and communication in hubs like Hong Kong. It appeals to sociolinguists concerned to re-think what they teach about 'the linguistically complex, plurilingual and intra-linguistically differentiated, environments of the hubs', and concludes by asking for more effort in developing textbooks and pedagogy that will open windows for students to better understand such sociolinguistic dynamics, particularly with reference to their own language experiences.

Saxena & Sercombe focus on contact-induced changes in language attitudes and language choices among the young people of Brunei, another hub that is undergoing rapid sociolinguistic change. The findings of their study should be of interest to students of social studies who have examined the reproduction theory of Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron.

The papers of Janssens and Witte are about the complexities involved in studying contact-induced language attitudes and sociolinguistic changes in a hub like Brussels. Janssens' paper discusses the inadequacy of existing theoretical resources *vis-à-vis* the study of hub bilingualism, particularly by way of sociolinguistic survey and, based on his ample field experiences, shows the reader how such inadequacies may be overcome. Whereas Witte's paper traces the sociolinguistic developments in Brussels with special reference to the vagaries of the French-speaking and Dutch-speaking communities from a historical perspective and in the course of doing so shows the reader why Brussels is such a fascinating topic for historico-sociolinguistic study. Witte also gives the reader, based on her own first-hand experience, the background to the genesis of the *Centrum voor de Interdisciplinaire Studie van de Brusselse Taaltoestanden* (Centre for Interdisciplinary Study of the Brussels Language Situation) in 1978. Since its founding, the Centre has played a significant role in fermenting multi-disciplinary studies on societal bilingualism in Brussels and in other hubs of the world, of which the present volume is a good example.

The Contributors

Georges Lüdi was born 1943 in Baden (Switzerland). He is married, has four children and has lived in Basel since 1982. He studied Philology and Linguistics at the Universities of Zürich, Madrid and Montpellier, gaining a doctorate from Zurich in 1971. He then studied French and Spanish Linguistics at Zürich, receiving his Habilitation in 1976. He first taught in Zürich and Berne before becoming a Full professor for General Linguistics at the University of Neuchâtel 1979-1982. Since 1982 he has been Full professor for French Linguistics and Director of the Institute of Romance Philology at the University of Basel. He was Dean of the Faculty of Arts (Philosophisch-Historische Fakultät) of the University of Basel 1994-1995 and has been President of the Planning Committee of Basel University since 1996. In addition, he was President of a group of experts that were mandated to propose a whole language policy for Switzerland (1997/98). He has been Counsellor of the Council of Europe for language policy since 1997; Member of the Executive Board of the International Association for Applied Linguistics since 1996 and has been nominated *Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite* (France). Professor Lüdi's main research interests include: Second language acquisition, contact linguistics (bilingualism, diglossia, code-switching), language policy, and semantics.

Fred Genesee is Professor in the Psychology Department at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. He has conducted extensive research on second language education, including foreign language immersion programmes for majority language students and bilingual education for minority language students. This research has systematically examined the long term effectiveness of immersion and bilingual education and individual student and programme variables linked to programme success. His current research interests are on children who acquire two languages simultaneously during the pre-school years. This research focuses on the phonological, syntactic, and communicative development of bilingual children with typical and impaired patterns of acquisition.

Do Coyle is Director of Learning and Teaching, and Vice-dean in the School of Education, University of Nottingham, England. Her postgraduate studies were in applied linguistics and modern language teaching methodologies. The first sixteen years of her career were spent in the field, teaching modern languages in secondary schools, before transferring to teacher education in 1990. Since then, she has been

instrumental in setting up innovative teacher education programmes – notably the joint European initial teacher education diploma (Austrian, French and British) and the only UK bilingual initial teacher education programme to train subject teachers to work through the medium of a foreign language. She participates in a variety of European Lingua Teacher Education projects and has coordinated two major studies in reflective practice and bilingual education. In 1997, she was awarded the honour of *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques* for services to French Teacher Education. Her current research supervision focuses on sociocultural and linguistic processing in FL classrooms, developing learner autonomy, second language acquisition, teacher education theory and practice and bilingual education. She is now involved in developing two major European projects for bilingual education, regularly publishes and researches in the area of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), and is active in several national and international bilingual networks. Her most recent work is in the application of new technologies to bilingual learning and teaching. Her innovative *Teaching Observatory* linking remote classrooms with the university for pre-, in-service and research purposes is receiving international acclaim.

Dieter Wolff was born in Germany in 1939 and completed his postgraduate studies at the University of Saarbrücken in 1969. Since then he has taught at the Universities of Berlin, Essen and Düsseldorf. Since 1989 he has been Full Professor (Chair) at the University of Wuppertal (Applied Psycholinguistics) where he has also held the posts of Dean of the Faculty of Philology and Pro-Vice Chancellor. From 1987-1998 he was co-editor of *Die Neueren Sprachen*. He is currently co-editor of *Neusprachliche Mitteilungen aus Wissenschaft und Praxis* and is a board member of both 'CALL' and 'Applied Linguistics'. He is also currently Vice President of AILA, advises local and regional governments on Content and Language Integrated Learning and has published and edited numerous books, articles and journals.

Laurent Gajo has a PhD in linguistics and is Lecturer and Researcher at the Universities of Lausanne and Neuchâtel. His research fields include: bilingualism, second language learning and teaching, bilingual education, classroom interaction, language policy, migration. He has been a consultant for bilingual education in the Aosta Valley, Italy (since 1998); a member of the scientific committee 'Curriculum innovation', Thematic Network Project 2 of the European Language Council since 2000 as well as Associated Member of the scientific committee 'Teaching training and bilingual education', Thematic Network Project 1, European Language

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Cecilia Serra is a Linguist, Lecturer and Researcher at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Bern (Switzerland). Her research interests include: second language acquisition, bilingual education, curriculum development and teacher training, classroom interaction, native/non native language communication and interaction, language policy, bilingual communication in migrant communities. She has consulted on various aspects of bilingual education in the Aosta Valley, Italy (since 1998); Chur, Switzerland (since 1999); and Zürich (since 1998) and in Bhutan, in October 1998. Her ongoing research in bilingual education covers: acquisition of content and of first and second language in bilingual education; improvement of an integrative bilingual teaching model connecting – in one and the same setting – content-oriented instruction with focus-on-form instruction.

Alex Housen studied Germanic Languages at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and ESL/Applied Linguistics at UCLA before obtaining his PhD. from the Vrije Universiteit Brussels in 1995. Since then he has worked at the same university as a Research Fellow of the National Fund for Scientific Research (Flanders). His research interests include language acquisition, language teaching, bilingualism, bilingual education, and applied linguistics. He has been involved in research projects on processes and outcomes in bilingual education and second/foreign language programmes funded by the Ministry of Education of the Flemish Community, the European Science Foundation, the National Fund for Scientific Research (Flanders) and the Research Council of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. He has worked as a consultant on language teaching and bilingual education for the Soros Foundation, the United Nations Development Programme and the Flemish Ministry of Education. His publications have appeared in various journals. He is co-editor of *Bilingualism – Beyond Basic Principles* (2002), *Opportunities and Challenges of Societal Bilingualism* (2002), *Current Issues in Instructed Second Language Learning* (forthcoming).

Gary M. Jones is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics at the University of Brunei Darussalam where he is also Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. His main research activity is the implementation of bilingual education in Brunei schools and the impact that this has had on the society. Related research activities and publications have included the role of gender in education and multiculturalism and language acquisition in bilingual communities. Prior to his present post he had worked in Sri Lanka, Germany, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

Gao, Yihong was born in 1959. She obtained her M.A. in Linguistics from Durham University, Ed.M. in TESL from Boston University, and PhD. in Applied Linguistics from Peking University. Her major research interests lie in sociolinguistics (especially the social psychology of language learning and language use), and intercultural communication. She is the author of *Understanding and Transcending Linguistic and Cultural Differences*, *Foreign Language Learning: '1+1>2'*, co-author of *Culture and Foreign Language Teaching*, and is principal translator of B.L. Whorf's *Language, Thought and Reality* (Chinese edition). She is currently Professor of English and Linguistics at Peking University, and Vice Secretary General of the Chinese Association of Intercultural Communication.

Benjamin K. Tsou was born in Hong Kong and received his education in Shanghai, Singapore and Hong Kong before pursuing university studies in the US, where he obtained his M.A. (Linguistics) from Harvard University and PhD (Linguistics) from UC, Berkeley. His main research interests have been focused on language variation, at the macro- and micro-level, both quantitatively and qualitatively. He has taught in the US and Australia and has lectured extensively in other parts of the world. He is currently Professor of Linguistics and Asian Languages, and Director of the Language Information Sciences Research Centre of the City University of Hong Kong, where he worked in central administration for seven years.

Daniel W.C. So was born in Hong Kong. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Hong Kong University. Between 1979 and 1984, he studied at The University of Hawaii at Manoa on an East West Center grant and his doctoral dissertation was an eco-linguistic analysis of the differential selection of Chinese-medium and English-medium schools in the secondary sector of Hong Kong between 1949 and 1983. His current research interests are in the areas of language policy in

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Shouhsin Teng received his postgraduate diploma in modern language teaching from Oxford University in 1967 and his PhD in linguistics in 1972 at the University of California, Berkeley. He held a teaching position as well as served as an administrator at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst from 1972 till 1995, when he returned to his native country to direct an M.A. programme in teaching Chinese as a second/foreign language. Since 1995, he has worked extensively and intensively on developing a pedagogical grammar of L2 Chinese.

Björn H. Jernudd is Chair Professor of Linguistics at the Hong Kong Baptist University. As of Easter 2002, he has the following in press: 'Development of national languages and management of English in East and Southeast Asia'; 'Cognition and language management'; 'Education reform and language selection in Hong Kong. Brief remarks by a linguist'; 'Managing languages at bilingual universities. Relationships between universities and their language environment'; 'Organised solutions to language problems: managing professional language in Hong Kong'; and 'Language planning on the eve of the 21st century'. Also in press are two papers of which he is the second author: 'Management of Chinese IT terminology' (first author Aman Chiu) and 'Terminological problems and terminology management for internet professionals in Hong Kong' (first author Charlotte To). He is also working on a monograph on language planning and language management organisations in Southeast and East Asia.

Mukul Saxena is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics at the University of Brunei Darussalam. Currently, he is involved in two multidisciplinary research projects on the languages and ethnic communities of Brunei and multilingual academic and non-academic literacies in Brunei. Before coming to Brunei he worked at York University, Lancaster University and the University College of Ripon & York St John in Britain. There, he taught and worked on research projects in the areas of language maintenance & shift, community-based multilingual literacies, bilingual classroom discourse and forensic linguistics.

Peter Sercombe is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Modern Languages at the University of Northumbria, UK, where he has just begun work. Previously, he worked in the Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics at the University of Brunei Darussalam for nine years. His main academic interests include language maintenance and shift, language & identity and the minority language of the Penans in Brunei (Borneo).

Rudi Janssens is a sociologist and is working as a researcher in the 'Centre for the Interdisciplinary Study of Brussels' at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. He was formerly attached to the 'Centre for Statistics and Operational Research' and 'The Centre for Women's Studies' at the same university. He has published in Belgian and international journals and books on sociometry, the integration of Islamic minorities, gender aspects in education and on different aspects of the multilingual and multicultural situation of Brussels.

Els Witte studied history at the University of Ghent, receiving her doctorate in 1970. She has been a Professor at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel since 1974 (in the departments of Contemporary History, Mass Communication, Political Sciences) as well as Rector of the University from 1994-2000. Her offices and other interests include the following: Member of the board and secretary of the *Revue belge d'histoire contemporaine* since 1969; Director of the *Interdisciplinair Centrum voor de studie van Brussel* (Centre for the Interdisciplinary Study of Brussels); Dean of the Faculty of Arts (1983-1987); President of the board of Belgian Radio and Television (1988-1994); Member of the Belgian Royal Academy (since 1988); Member of the board of several associations of contemporary history and political sciences. Professor Witte is the author of several books and of some 100 articles on the Belgian political evolution and situation in the 19th and 20th centuries (parties and party-systems, parliament, government, the socialist and Flemish movements, etc.)

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1. Bilingualism Is Not Enough! Plurilingual Repertoires for the Challenges of the 21st Century

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1. Monolingualism is curable

More than half of mankind is plurilingual and/or lives in multilingual settings. Plurilingualism and multilingualism are the normal case in most parts of the world; bilingualism must be seen as a minimal form of plurilingualism. In this sense, unilingualism can be defined as an exception. An issue of the European journal *Sociolinguistica* (No.11, 1997) uses 'Monolingualism is curable' as its title to highlight the fact that competence in only one language can result in a handicap.

Nevertheless, obstinate prejudices dominate public discussion about language diversity. Four such prejudices are briefly examined here.

Firstly, a monolingual view of the individual is widespread. At the end of the 19th century, a famous English professor could write, without being criticised, 'If it were possible for a child to live in two languages at once equally well, so much the worse. His intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled, but halved. Unity of mind and character would have great difficulty in asserting itself in such circumstances.' (Laurie 1890: 15) Bilinguals were considered as potential traitors. In fact, anyone who belongs to two or more cultures was considered not entirely reliable because human beings should be monolingual and multilingualism weighs on mankind like a divine curse since the building of the tower of Babel (1st Moses 11: 6-7). However, towards the end of the previous millennium things changed considerably. Since the early eighties, specialists agree on a 'holistic' view of a bi- or plurilingual competence and of bi- or plurilingual persons respectively. The 'additive' conception of independent monolingual competences has been replaced by the

idea of an integrated bi- or plurilingual or polylectal competence (Grosjean, 1985; Lüdi & Py, 1986; Titone, 1987; Siguan, 1987, etc.). There is plenty of evidence that, in appropriate socio-cultural conditions, plurilingual children are more creative, more intelligent, more flexible in conversation and socially more aware than monolingual children (Baker, 1996).

Secondly, monolingual representations of nations are at the base of much resistance against plurilingual language policies. As an example of this ideology we may quote a text of Phyllis Schlafly published in the home page of the American site 'Town Hall' under the title 'Bilingualism Is The Wrong Way To Go': 'For the last five years, Political Correctness has forced the academic (and much of the political) world to pay homage to the new sacred cows called multiculturalism and diversity. Those are usually used as code words to challenge the assumption that Western Civilisation is the basis of what we call the American system, and to pretend that all cultures are equal and contributed equally to the America we know.' As in the case of negative stereotypes about individual bilingualism, the roots of this attitude lie in two very ancient traditions represented, for example, by the myth of Babel and by Antonio De Nebrija's statement of 1492: *La lengua siempre es compañera del imperio*. Both claim that persons and nations are ideally monolingual – with a somewhat religious dimension (Goebl, 1989: 162ff.); they can be traced back to the Renaissance and Greek philosophers (Bronckart, 1988: 122) and developed into political maxims in the period going from the French Revolution to World War I (e. g. the concept of the *urwüchsige* Nation reflected in a common language [Schulze, 1994]). Nations should coincide 'naturally' with monolingual language territories. The massacres committed in Ex-Yugoslavia in the fourth quarter of the twentieth century are only one example of the perverse consequences of such an ideology. In reality, most nation-states have always been and still are plurilingual. Luxemburg, Singapore, Spain and Switzerland are good examples of the possibility of founding national identity on plurilingualism.

Thirdly, a mythical conception of bilingualism represents another obstacle to a policy promoting bi- or plurilingualism. Bloomfield (1933) defined bilingualism as 'native-like control of