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Additive language pedagogy

From minority education in Canada to a general strategy of teaching and learning in European schools

An educational perspective on students' learning

Additive or subtractive learning situations for minority students in Canadian schools (Cummins 2000)

Students learning a new language in addition to language(s) already learnt and used instead of a new language substituting previously learned languages

To view students' languages as a source of personal, social and cultural identity and to support that students draw on their linguistic repertoire when interacting with others and understanding the world around them

A practical guide for Ontario educators, 2008

Students who see their previously developed language skills acknowledged by their teachers and parents are more likely to feel confident and take the risks involved in learning a new language. They are able to view English as an addition to their first language, rather than as a substitution for it.

Respect and use of the first language contribute both to the building of a confident learner and to the efficient learning of additional languages and academic achievement

Students who are able to communicate and are literate in more than one language are better prepared to participate in a global society. Though this has benefits for the individual, Canadian society also stands to gain from having a multilingual workforce. The children now entering Ontario schools are a valuable resource for Canada

Particular focus on language minority students

Integrate their first language(s) as instruments for academic learning

While they are learning the language of schooling (English or French in Canada, Danish in Denmark), foreign languages and other school subjects

Abandon the widespread deficit view on minority students as primarily English/Danish learners

Centre for research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE 2008)

5 standards of effective teaching of students at risk of educational failure due to cultural, language, racial, geographic or economic factors:

1. Teachers and students working together
2. Developing language and literacy skills across all curriculum
3. Connecting lessons to students' lives: Contextualize teaching and curriculum in students' experiences at home, in the community and at school
4. Engaging students with challenging lessons
5. Emphasizing dialogue over lectures

Ad 3. Learning seen as recontextualization of knowledge



Bilingualism and third language learning

One conclusion in Clearinghouse nr. 28 (2015): *A systematic review of the impact of multiple language teaching, prior language experience and acquisition order on students' language proficiency in primary and secondary school*

Bilingualism may in general facilitate students' learning of an L3. As an explanation for these findings, several studies point to the fact that bilinguals could have an advantage in terms of a higher level of metalinguistic awareness and the ability to use two other linguistic systems when learning a third language

In alignment with Danish teaching guidelines

Teaching of English, grades 1-4

Based on the students' competence, knowledge and experience regarding communication, language and language use, learning strategies and understanding of their immediate context

Language learning strategies: ... Students must learn to identify differences and similarities between their own and other languages... Teaching must be based on the students' curiosity and language awareness plus their language background from their Danish classes

Development of a child-centered approach

Documents on Danish primary school:

1958: students as objects of learning

“introduce” students to a specific set of knowledge
“train” their reading and writing skills in specific ways

1976: students as active agents in learning

2003: “experience” language and strengthen their
“motivation” to use this with others

From reports on teaching Danish to majority students in primary school

“The purpose of teaching Danish is exclusively linked to the student. Development of the students’ experience, motivation, awareness and pleasure is in focus. Thus the main purpose is not to provide the students with pregiven knowledge or competence, but to develop already existing potentials in the student”

(Elf & Østerlund 2003, in Holmen 2011)

“A rephrasing of the language dimension in school must - as in modern teaching of literature - take its starting point in the experience, curiosity and knowledge which the students bring with them. They are experienced language users”

(Haugsted 2000, in Holmen 2011)

Ideal vs. practice

Traditionally, Danish is seen as the most important school subject for creating unity in students' development

Through a child-centred, individualized approach to learning which respects resources brought to school

But which, however, often develops into "a nurturing classroom which naturalizes development as a place of covert evaluation, which produces learners at different levels of competence" (Bernstein 1981, in Bourne 1988)

Hiba El-Mohbi (2002): "I will only appear stupid "

As bilingual students we have a hard time in class, especially in Danish. E.g. the teacher talks about a "wellknown" Danish writer as common knowledge ...

Many are afraid to ask. They think: "I will only appear stupid. I have just started getting along with the other students and the teacher and a stupid question will ruin that"

El-Mohbi

Discussions in class and in groups can really scare off bilingual students like us. In classes where the students' level of expressing themselves is high, most bilingual students remain completely silent under discussions ...

I think that the teacher should interfere. But how? I find it very important that the teacher pays attention to language differences, that the teacher supports the students instead of only making negative comments.



Personal development (also referred to as the Bildung goal of "Danish") (Vejledning 2009)

"Almost everyone grows up with a language which carries a special meaning as one's mother tongue, linked to sets of experience, memories and sensory input during one's childhood. This language has to a wider extent than languages acquired later the possibility of creating a unity in the children's development as it offers aesthetic as well as intellectual depth, an emotional, mental sounding board for the many functions which every language can fulfill. You can talk about the world in all languages, but the mother tongue links the individual with the world"

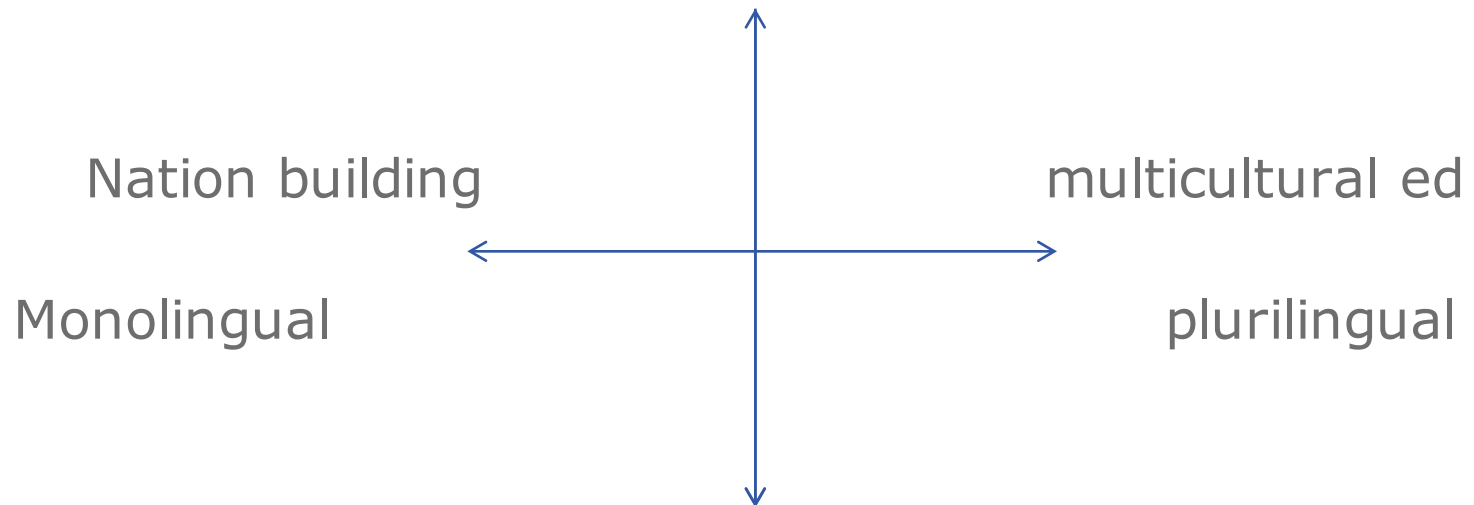
"For students who do not have Danish as their mother tongue, Danish is their second language, the language of the society in which they live and will unfold. Therefore, the basic skills and competences of Danish are relevant to all students in their personal, social and cultural life"



The philosophy of education in Danish schools

Child-centered position

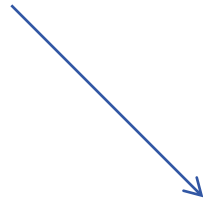
Social development, personal skills and reflection



Subject based position,
transmitting given knowledge and skills

Shelley Taylor (2009)

Right pedagogy – wrong language?



Right pedagogy = approach to learning and thus to the role of children's resources

wrong concept of language and culture and the link between them = implicit, too limited, too closely linked to nation building

Teaching foreign languages to minority students (Bjorholm 2003: 54)

[It is obvious] “that foreign language teaching for bilingual students must take as its starting point the resources which these students bring to the classroom – to a far wider extent than we see today. In general, it is important that the bilingual students’ identity and culture are included in the foreign language classroom – not least when it comes to teaching material. Furthermore, a dialogic approach and a focus on language awareness must be underlined”

Bjorholm cont.

“However, these are elements of every good foreign language teaching – to take each student’s background and potential as the starting point while actively including him/her in his/her learning process”.



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