

Rights and Multilingualism

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In this paper, the author focuses on educational values and second language learners' experiences from education. She is using a life story approach. Overarching aim of the presentation is to discuss second language teacher students' encountering with Swedish school, mother tongue tuition, second language and multilingualism. The goal was achieved by examining an empirical context. The analysis was carried out in a spiral of understanding by means of deconstruction and reconstruction. The analysis showed that learning Swedish is important and mother tongue is positive for continued and lifelong learning and linguistic development. Being good at Swedish means opportunities to cooperate with others in school. The opportunity to take part in tuition and teaching in mother tongue in school is positive for the continued linguistic and literacy development. Mother tongue was very important for their development of multilingualism. Through lifelong linguistic learning and development, it becomes possible to build up an identity as multilingual persons with lingual capital and literacy skills.

Keywords: multilingual, mother tongue, second language, linguistic, literacy

Introduction

If one has immigration or foreign background experiences from school and different understanding of school compared with those without immigration background, this term of "immigration" or "foreign background" refers to those with parents born abroad. In the Swedish pre-school education and the nine-year compulsory school system, about 20% of the pupils have foreign background. Their skills in one or more first languages are already developed when they come in contact with the Swedish language. Some of these pupils meet the Swedish language as a second language when they enter school.

Children with a first language other than Swedish have a situation in school which can be described as a race against time. They are supposed to learn the new language and at the same time learn all other subjects with the help of the new language, Swedish. Swedish occupies a key position in school work. Communication takes place by means of language and through co-operation with others. In order to be able to benefit from an education within the Swedish system and be able to develop into multilingual individuals with multicultural backgrounds, they need to acquire knowledge and skills in both their first language(s) and their second language. Because of this, pupils with a first language other than Swedish have the right to get tuition in mother tongue and in Swedish as a second language.

Teachers have to meet this learning and educational situation with carefully prepared teaching. Research has shown, however, that teachers are uncertain about pupils' right to get tuition and schooling in the subjects of mother tongue and Swedish as a second language. Teachers are uncertain about what these subjects should include. Furthermore, teachers are uncertain about pupils' right to follow instructions in mother tongue and

Swedish as a second language. Besides, teachers are uncertain about how they should grade skills in Swedish as a second language and in mother tongue. Other studies have shown that pupils with a foreign background are less successful than those with a Swedish background at achieving goals both in the nine-year compulsory school and the upper-secondary school. Pupils with a foreign background are underrepresented in higher education.

In the author's research, she focuses on teacher education and the school situation when pupils' first language is not Swedish. In her dissertation, she focuses on those experiences of second-language pupils which involve linguistic encounters, education and learning. The starting point was in social and educational areas which involve the compulsory school. The overarching aim was to analyze second-language pupils' encountering with Swedish as a second language and the Swedish school. The goal was achieved by examining two empirical contexts.

In the first context, an analysis was consist of what education is, and the school subject Swedish as a second language offers second-language pupils in terms of learning. The purpose of this part was to analyze the formulated and concretized educational ideals in syllabi and curricula for Swedish as a second language. The author used a curriculum theory approach and made a curriculum-historical idea analysis of the contents of the compulsory school's syllabi and curricula for Swedish as a second language over a period of time.

In the second context, the way second-language pupils have experienced education and the learning process in their encounters with Swedish as a second language was interpreted. The purpose of this part was to investigate experienced curriculum and syllabus by interpreting written and oral life stories concerning pupils' encounters with Swedish as a second language and the Swedish school. The author used a life story approach and made a narrative analysis of what second-language pupils said about their encountering with the second language and the school.

In the author's thesis, she highlighted that an overarching educational ideal is the equality of standards in education. It has been formulated in all the compulsory school's curricula from 1962 to 2011. The social goals relating to equality, cooperation and choice in maintaining and developing the first and the second language, as well as the culture, are stipulated in the texts of curricula Lgr80 (Ministry of Education and Science, 1980) and Lpo94 (Ministry of Education and Science, 1994), Lgr11 (Ministry of Education and Science, 2011), in the syllabus supplement from 1985 and in the syllabi from 1995 (Ministry of Education and Science, 1995). The social values, which, since 1975, have linked both curricula and syllabi can be summarized as equality, choice and cooperation. This is a part of the compulsory school's fundamental value system, which, in addition to these, includes the value of an education in democracy.

The educational ideals which place the compulsory education in an educational ideological context over years can be summarized as equality of educational standards in a school for each child. The analyzed documents can be understood as a part of a context where ideas of equality, everybody having the same worth and the same access to schools and jobs, are important. The pupils' right to maintain and develop both their first language/languages and their culture is emphasized as an important social and educational value to pass on in a school for all young citizens.

But, educational ideals expressed in curricula and syllabi have changed with time. What can be called breaks, areas of tension and contradictory ideals can be discerned. Over a period of time, the steering documents express the movements towards restricted participation, compensation and uniformity. But, movements towards full participation, complementation and differences are articulated as well. In the

syllabus from 1995 (Ministry of Education and Science, 1995), a contradiction can be brought to light. The contradiction is that both mono-cultural and multi-cultural ways of looking at culture, what is crucial for success and what is important to pass on to the coming generations of second-language pupils are expressed.

Aim and Research Process

In this paper, the author focuses on educational values and second language learners' experiences from education. She used a life story approach. Overarching aim of the presentation is to discuss second language teacher students' encountering with Swedish school, mother tongue tuition, second language and multilingualism. The goal was achieved by examining and analyzing an empirical context that one can call experienced learning. An analysis is carried out of life stories by word of mouth and in writing. The life stories are given by former second language pupils. Trainee teacher students with Swedish as a second language have told their learning memories as aspects of their life stories. They were encountered the Swedish compulsory school in the 1990s and were told their compulsory school memories as life stories in 2007.

The life stories were collected in the form of three letters and three in-depth group discussions in which the author acted as the group leader. Three future teachers have learnt Swedish as a second language in the Swedish compulsory school participations. Their stories are studied, interpreted, presented and discussed in different stages with the help of theoretical starting points and an interpretation of framework's theoretical prisms. An analysis is carried out in a spiral of understanding by means of deconstruction and reconstruction. In this presentation, the author thematically highlighted some parts of what those teacher students have told her in terms of their experienced learning when encountering Swedish school.

Theoretical Starting Points

The author's theoretical starting point in this interpretation is life stories as social constructions. She understands life stories as social construction which influence and are influenced by their context. In this context, life world, life story, knowledge and understanding of another Persons experiences in life are parts of the author's theoretical starting point. Bengtsson's (2001; 2005), Dominicé's (2000) and Merleau-Ponty's (1997) ideas and discussions about stories of life events and construction of life were fundamental. Foucault's (1993; 2002; 2003) discussion concerning meaning, power, normality, deviation and social constructions are other starting points in the author's understanding of the trainee teacher students' life world and their experiences in life. In order to interpret, visualize and understand texts, Torpsten (2008) constructed two theoretical prisms. With the help of these prisms, the collected oral and written life stories are examined, and the results are have been highlighted. This interpretation lead to an examination in terms of language and creation of meaning, culture, cultural capital, similarities/differences, compensating/completing, limited participation/full participation and active citizenship.

Interpretation Results

The analysis showed demands of becoming a good Swede and longing for togetherness. It showed the balance between new and old. It highlighted earlier experiences and old skills as useful and valuable. Using earlier experiences leads to the pupils understanding. Other results were linguistic and literacy development, which widened linguistic horizons awareness, senses of belonging, balance and competence in switching

languages. Difference and different mother tongues were in the Swedish school, seen as something inadequate and quite different. However, difference and different mother tongues were seen as much and regarded as a resource in the Swedish school as well.

Becoming a Good Swede

By learning Swedish as a second language in compulsory school, the teacher students tried to adjust to the demands of becoming good Swedes. When they encountered the Swedish compulsory school, they did not understand the spoken and written language and other communicative signals. Because of that, a great pressure was put on them to learn Swedish. They wanted to understand others and be understood by others in the classroom. They wanted to cooperate with others. In order to understand and create a sense of belonging and cooperation, they tried hard to learn Swedish as a second language. The Swedish language seemed to be the key to success and be important for feelings of togetherness with others in the school.

Being good at Swedish means opportunities to cooperate with others and togetherness and communication. The students wanted to establish themselves according to the prevailing language norms quickly by acquiring Swedish in the compulsory school's social context. In this way, they would be able to display both their new and old knowledge. To be able to express themselves in Swedish, in the same way, others meant that they could assert themselves and be heard. In this way, it became possible for them, in accordance with Foucault's (1993) reasoning, to fit into the standard of normality in school and find balance between the new and the old. It meant that possibilities are not seen as deviants.

But, to learn Swedish as a second language quickly had a disadvantage. The teacher student's memories make their experiences visible. It pointed out that their skills in the second language had been improved at the cost of their mother tongue. The interpretation showed that this led to an imbalance between the old and the new.

Linguistic and Literacy Development

In the Swedish school, the students received tuition and teaching both in Swedish as a second language and in their mother tongues. They told that the opportunity to take part in tuition and teaching in their mother tongue in school was positive for continued linguistic and literacy (Janks, 2010) development. It became much easier to continue to develop their second language, when the skills in their mother tongue had been improved. In accordance with Bengtsson (2001; 2005) and Merleau-Ponty (1997), this can be understood in terms of an increase in their total language awareness. It means widened, literate awareness and empowerment. When their knowledge's in mother tongue and Swedish as a second language increased, their total linguistic awareness increased. They became aware of their multilingualism. In the tuition and teaching in mother tongue, the teacher students met both teachers and other pupils with the same mother tongue. They were not otherized. Their earlier experiences were made use of. They could understand others and be understood by others.

Widened Language and Literate Horizons

Good skills in the mother tongue are transferred to the second language. Students' acquisition of the second language becomes easier. In accordance with Cummins and Schecter (2003), good skills in mother tongue had a positive effect on cognitive and literate (Janks, 2010) development. According to Bengtsson (2001; 2005), Merleau-Ponty (1997) and Cummins and Schecter (2003), widened language horizons and good skills in languages meant positive effects on learning and knowing other subjects in school. For the students, developing

and using the mother tongue became both a way of preserving old skills and a way of feeling a sense of belonging to what was close at hand. In accordance with Foucault (2002) and in a relationship of togetherness which was not otherized, the teacher students could find balance with the past.

Differences and Different Mother Tongue

The students' mother tongue was very important for the development of bilingualism or multilingualism. But not to have Swedish as a mother tongue and to leave the class to take part in mother-tongue tuition made them feel as not belonging, as aliens and the others who do not fit in. They were looked at those who were different from their classmates and the norm. In accordance with Foucault (2002), what is outside the framework for what is usual, and therefore, normal in school is considered inadequate and deviant. In school, a different mother tongue was seen as something inadequate. However, in the encountering with the Swedish school, having a different mother tongue can also be described as a resource, as something which is complementary. In accordance with Bengtsson (2001; 2005) and Merleau-Ponty (1997), the students' linguistic awareness resulted in widened linguistic horizons. When the students' skills in their mother tongue increased, they became aware of the fact that they could switch between their languages dependent on situations. In accordance with Peterson and Åhlund (2007), they could perform in different areas and scenes.

Summary and Conclusions

Teacher students speaking Swedish as a second language have been asked to tell their life stories based on their immigrant experiences and learning memories. By telling their own life stories as written narratives and in oral group interviews, the teacher students have been learning about their own lives and their learning. Maybe, they have learnt something about life and learning in general as well. Maybe, they have widened their learning and literacy horizons as well. Hopefully, they have been more prepared to meet and understand their future pupils.

By quoting the students' written life stories, the author highlighted one important part of the results. "The feeling of not belonging anywhere hurts" and "I am the multicultural society... because I know how to live it".

Equality of standards in education has been formulated in all the compulsory school's curricula and syllabi as well as the social goals concerning equality, cooperation and choice in maintaining and developing the first and the second language, as well as the culture. The compulsory school's fundamental value system includes the value of an education in democracy. These documents and the analyzed life stories can be understood as a part of a context where ideas of equality, everybody having the same worth and the same access to schools and jobs, are important. The pupils' right to maintain and develop both their first language/languages and their culture is emphasized, as an important social and educational value to pass on in a school for all young citizens.

The author's interpretation highlighted balance, identity, code changing, differences, otherness and resource. Those teacher students were not monolingual and did not speak Swedish as their mother tongue. They received tuition and teaching in Swedish as a second language and in their mother tongues when they encountered Swedish School. Within the education, they were offered a chance to maintain and develop their first language.

Mother tongue in school was positive for their continued and lifelong learning, literacy and linguistic development. Good skills in the mother tongue were transferred to the second language, and it became much easier to continue developing a second language, when skills in their mother tongue have been improved. The

teacher students' mother tongue was very important in terms of equality and for the development of bilingualism in terms of multilingualism. It becomes possible to develop identity as multilingual and literate persons with communicative competence. Good skills in the mother tongue and the second language are helpful for active citizenship in a multicultural society. When the skills in mother tongue were increased, the trainee teacher students became aware of the fact that they could switch between their languages. They became aware of their identities as multi-lingual citizens and their possibilities of being active multicultural literate citizens. Their opportunities in future schooling and job were increased.

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