DIVERSITY
a challenge for educators

**Edited by
Mirja-Tytti Talib**

The challenge for most European countries is to educate second generation immigrants in particular in order to fulfill their parents' dreams, but above all, to create a situation where students have hope of finding a meaningful life in serving their new country in different workplaces. Effective education is a vital source of personal opportunity as well as means to support the economic development of young people in any society. Diversity must be viewed as a valuable learning source for all students in any classroom. In working and doing things together, students can develop a sense of respect for, and tolerance towards, different cultural and ethnic groups in our societies. Only through intercultural awareness and sensitivity can we ensure the realization of our interdependence on each other both locally and globally.

This publication discusses the position of multiculturalism and intercultural education in Sweden, Norway, Ireland and Finland. It will help researchers, educators and general public to understand the complex interactions and negotiations that take place in a multicultural classroom and society as such.

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– A CHALLENGE FOR EDUCATORS

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Mirja–Tytti Talib (Ed.)

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Why diversity?

It is estimated that every third young person under 30 years old living in Europe has an immigrant background. Many second-generation immigrants feel a part neither of the country of their birth, nor of their parents' heritage. Rootlessness is compounded by economic struggle. For example, Muslims in Europe are far more likely to be unemployed than non-Muslims. Tough economic times and racial discrimination are age-old triggers of anger and disillusionment. No wonder many European cities have experienced the frustration and actions of "home grown terrorists". In order to be able to solve some of the problems facing the global world, we must abandon many traditional ways of thinking, for example, about multiculturalism, identities, or societies as such.

Neal Ascherson (2004) stresses that western urban multiculturalism is not a destination but rather a way-station on the road to something else. According to him, conservative multiculturalism is assumed to be what happened to nations once their essential purity was challenged by the influx of ethnical others. Ideally, multiculturalism would facilitate the dream of an ideal city where many ethnic communities would live peacefully side by side and even celebrate each other's traditions. In most European cities, both the majority and minority tend to keep to the status quo with traditional elements in ethnic groups, and usually the older generation wants to enforce religious and cultural orthodoxy. However, cultural fusion is irresistibly taking place in the context of continuing immigration. What lies ahead is what is known as "hybridity". In this kind of new urban society, there is neither a collection of contrasting cultures nor the adoption of the patterns of the old indigenous majority, but a fresh synthesis.

In their place may come politics without boundaries and ethnic symbols. People would choose whatever they want to keep, or celebrate Somali, Kosova, or Russian traditions, but as citizens they would meet face to face without qualifications, in a common human nature.

We should also realize that individual identity formation is understood differently than before. There is a strong connection between globalization, reflective modernity, and identities. Modernity creates a particular kind of self with shared characteristics everywhere (Giddens 1991). Zygmunt Bauman (2001, 129) argues that instead of discussing identities, inherited or acquired, it would be better to discuss identification, which is a never ending, always incomplete, unfinished, and open-ended activity in which we are all engaged. Identification is relational, situational, and flexible, and each person carries a number of potential identities of which a few become socially significant. In that respect, ethnicity is a relational aspect rather than eternal essences, and can as such occur together with other aspects of identification.

Globalization changes our understanding of the world. It creates new experiences of being lost or of finding oneself again without place or locality (Robins 1991). According to Stuart Hall (2003), diaspora is another way to understand the new relationship of culture, space, and identity. The new concept of diaspora refers to people who are dispersed from their original places and to which they can never return. They have to make peace with the new, perhaps oppressive, cultures they encounter. They also create new kinds of cultural identities by using, either consciously or unconsciously, one or several repertoires. In this connection diaspora offers an alterative way to think about "imaginary communities" that exceeds the traditional borders of the nation-state, and presents connections that blur and dismantle the fixed ideas of culture space and identity.

In order to facilitate human-rights culture, and individual life-choices, we must create opportunities for young people to partake in quality education. Evidence from different studies of multiethnic schools has demonstrated that the school, which an immigrant or ethnic minority child attends, makes far more difference to his or her educational achievement than does his or her ethnic background (Tomlinson 1990). Schools are places where immigrant children come into systematic contact with the new culture. Adaptation to school and staying in school are important predictors of a student's future well-being, and contribution to society (also Suaréz-Orozco & Suaréz-Orozco 2001). The challenge for most European countries is to educate second generation

immigrants in particular in order to fulfill their parents' dreams, but above all, to create a situation where students have hope of finding a meaningful life in serving their new country in different workplaces.

Effective education is a vital source of personal opportunity as well as a means to support the economic development of young people in any society. Access to work will depend primarily on individual skills and abilities, for example, at digital literacy, one's ability to successfully engage in critical decision making and problem solving, and one's ability to organize flexible life and career contexts. School education needs to introduce and enhance lifelong learning. Also, more than ever before, teachers are responsible for to the social development of students in an environment where traditional values and cultures are challenged. Effective education will ensure a socially just society, based on economic opportunities, equality of opportunities, and access to available recourses for all its citizens. A true human-rights society is realized through quality education for all students, irrespective of their social or cultural background. In reality, this is much easier said than done.

The contemporary world is often a place of conflicts, violence, and of very little hope. It is also a highly competitive world in which those who have the skills or cultural capital to offer will perform better than those who have very little to offer. Thus people are divided into winners or losers in the educational marketplace very early in their lives. In the field of conservative multiculturalism, dominant assumptions are that everyone has an equal chance to reach excellence if only they are willing to work hard. Some immigrant students or students with a minority background, not only experience cumulative failure in school, but must also face negative social mirroring from their peers and teachers. The individuality of students is deeply entwined with their ethnicity and cultural socialization. Ignorance of people different from us often breeds negative attitudes, anxiety, and fear. Fear as such is a powerful emotional tool that guides our thoughts and actions. Making both students and adults aware of existing culturally based prejudices may, at least, lessen or minimize them. Diversity must be viewed as a valuable learning source for all students in any classroom. In working and doing things together, students can develop a sense of respect for, and tolerance towards, different cultural and ethnic groups in our societies. Only through intercultural awareness and sensitivity can we ensure the realization of our interdependence on each other both locally and globally.

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In this book, the articles are organized so that the more general and international topics appear first, and then proceeds from general moral issues of education, and to the privacy of a classroom. The last article deals with the difficulties encountering diversity.

In her article *Multiculturalism: identity and equality,* Tuula Sakaranaho uses a descriptive, normative, and critical approach in defining multiculturalism, and provides a comparative view of multiculturalism in Finland and Ireland. According to her, the development of a multicultural society almost inevitably involves some sort of conflict. There is the interplay between justifications of monoculturalism and multiculturalism, or that of unity and diversity, or that of sameness and difference. Without a doubt, striking a balance between identity and equality in a multicultural society is a crucial topic in need of negotiation.

The article raises an interesting argument about private and public domain in a multicultural society. It questions whether an ideal society should be organised so that the public domain (i.e. law, politics, and economy) should be unitary, whereas the private domain (i.e. family, morality, and religion) would be marked by diversity. In other words, multiculturalism would be characteristic of the private, but not of the public domain. This idea comes very close to Ascherson's view of chosen private ethnicity, which fits the laws of a common human society. In the model, the public domain is marked by universal principles of unity so that the differences in the private domain would have no structural consequences. However, in reality, this is not the case because some groups usually experience greater access in the public domain than do others. In fairly homogeneous cultures, such as Finland and Ireland, this group is bound to consist of members belonging to the majority: the native Finns and Irish.

Sakaranaho continues to argue, however, that separation between the public and private domains should be problematized and attention should be paid to areas of society, such as education, which intrude into both domains. These are also areas where conflicts might occur and where compromise must be found. This is the task of multicultural policies, which, instead of reinforcing divisions and inequalities in society, should find ways to integrate as a mutual process of accommodation in which both the wider society and minorities aim at an agreement on basic principles and practices acceptable in the society they share.

Marie Louise Seeberg discusses the position of multiculturalism in the Norwegian school context in her article *The flip side of equality: difference evasion in*

the Norwegian curriculum and classroom. If we read carefully the recorded dialogs taking place at school, we will understand the different angles or viewpoints from which everyone examines things. The article is based on her extensive comparative field study of Norwegian and Dutch schools. In her doctoral thesis *Dealing with difference: two classrooms, two countries* (2003), Seeberg concentrated on the processes of alterity and identity. According to her, one may argue that plural states, where people with varying consequences believe that they are different from each other, are the norm. In that respect, the homogeneous nation-state (such as Norway) appears to be the exception. This was an ideological project that was never fully realized, in spite of attempts to assimilate, or sometimes to annihilate, those who are singled out as different.

Seeberg reminds us that, regardless of individual intentions in the majority, assimilatory and discriminatory intentions exist and are often widespread, and have deeply-felt consequences for the lives of minority individuals. Her observations in two countries have made her conclude that equality and multiculturalism are sometimes difficult to fit together. When equality is understood as sameness, it becomes an instrument of power, where sameness is a norm from which the others deviate. The Norwegian brand of equality as sameness seems difficult, according to Seeberg (2003), to combine with ideas of multiculturalism. The Dutch pluralistic and pragmatic tradition may seem to pave the way for multiculturalism as a contemporary version of pluralism. Both ideas relate closely to concepts and practices of difference: equality as sameness, suppressing the difference, and multiculturalism presupposing it.

In Sweden, fairly many multiethnic or multicultural schools (i.e. schools with students with varied cultural backgrounds) are multicultural because of the multiethnic students. However, these schools usually function as ordinary Swedish schools without defining themselves as, or functioning as, multicultural or multiethnic schools. In Pirjo Lahdenperä's article *From a monocultural to an intercultural approach in education,* which is based on her study (1997), teachers were very aware of the multicultural students, but often described holding a class with many immigrant students. This perspective assumes a monocultural perspective in which the "Swedishness" forms the basis, norm, and goal of the teaching. This article reviews the results of Lahdenperä's study on Swedish teachers' thinking about immigrant students and their difficulties at school. It also discusses the much-needed change in the research tradition from monocultural to intercultural educational research.

Jukka Husu, in his article *Teacher ethics and the educative importance of school values,* deals with morality, and especially with teachers' moral decision making at school. Teaching as such is a moral activity and is best actualized in interaction. Professional ethics concern the norms, values, and the principals that should guide the conduct of educational professionals. Previous research on ethical judgements on teaching reveals that most teachers are not always aware of the impact of their decisions and actions. Furthermore, teachers cannot separate their own moral character from their professional self. Teachers, as Husu points out, are often ill-prepared for dealing with ethical dilemmas they encounter in their work, and the grounds on which pedagogical decisions are made are often uncertain as well. Because teachers work in public institutions, they require professional skills to enhance their decision making. Any time a teacher makes an ethical decision, it is no longer a descriptive consideration, but becomes normative at the very moment of decision making. In this respect, teachers must take stands and evaluate their professional practices. This is sometimes even more imperative when teachers are dealing with multicultural issues.

Because there are no secure formulas that would work in challenging situations, teachers must learn to use their reflective skills to solve educational problems. An important task is to learn to analyze pedagogical dilemmas from different points of view in a way that allows the dilemmas to become objects of conscious reflection. Such dialogical competence requires the creation of workable means by which teachers can discuss value issues together with their colleagues. Therefore, what is required are forums that emphasize the conscious analysis and articulation of ethical and value dilemmas. The article stresses the importance of collective reflection as well as the reflection that takes place in the wider social context. It is important to note that failure to ensure such professional reflection easily leaves the field open to common sense and truths, often taken for granted, that guide educational decision making. The following article deals with attribution on gender issues taken for granted, which are also part of the multicultural educational agenda.

In multicultural education, the other is defined as a person who does not represent the majority in a given society. Those who are different (from others) in their ability, social class, gender, ethnicity, language, religion or sexual orientation may be labeled, and thus receive negative attention. Gender also creates special kinds of expectations for girls and boys. Elina Lahelma, in her article *School grades and other resources: the failing boys discourse revisited,* seeks to

challenge two assumptions on gender taken for granted: that girls are successful and that boys underachieve. Moreover, attributing boys' lack of success to working methods and to the feminization of the school is a frequent topic in the media and in popular discussion. Such a historically produced "system of truth" tends to guide the thinking about gender and education. Instead of asking weather girls as a group or boys as a group is educationally more disadvantaged, one questions which girls or which boys are underachieving. We must remember that schools always fail some of their students, and these failures include both girls and boys. On the whole, girls seem to fail quietly while boys' failures are more noticeable, or noisier as Lahelma puts it. An important question would be why boys' poor achievement is regarded as an educational problem and why girls' failing at school is ignored?

Multiculturalism as such asks us to reconsider our old traditions and customs: are they still valid in a global world? Margaret Trotta Tuomi is pursuing something that everyone in diverse schools could share and be part of. She points out that schools need to be based on principles rather than on traditions. Schools often work on "we have always done it that way" customs, which may become important for their own sake, but may also easily lose sight of the valuable principles behind them. In cross-cultural contacts, the ability to recognize common principles expressed in a variety of ways is a valuable skill. Rather than basing what is done on tradition, an examination of why it is done and what principles can be found behind them will help to identify and recognize a diverse expression of the same principle. In a diversity-positive school, all the children should be able to see that the principles on which their schools' environment is based are recognizable as the same values that their own society holds dear. With this understanding, children and staff can more readily recognize those same values reflected in a different way by those from other cultures.

World Citizenship Education, which stresses the rights and obligations of all toward all others, is not only a global level endeavour, but is even more important at the grassroots because it is at the grassroots level that children learn in practice how to function with others. It is only with this type of experience that young people can gain the skills that they will need in the future, and to work at both the local and global level. More concretely, how can we uphold and advance World Citizenship Education in our schools and include our fellow classmates regardless of their land of birth? In order to create a

meaningful learning situation for every student in a multicultural classroom would also require the collective as well as individual reflection of teachers.

Mirja-Tytti Talib attempts to understand why meeting diversity seems difficult for us in the article *Why is it so hard to encounter diversity?* She reminds us that teachers teach as themselves, which is connected to the ideas of self and of one's professional self. One of the basic requirements for a teacher to encounter challenging moments with diversity is that he or she is in some kind of harmony with him- or herself. When discussing multicultural encounters at school, a teacher should become more conscious of his or her own positionality and how life experiences influence any given situation. Multicultural professionalism would in that respect require us to be willing to reflect upon the encountered conflicts and culture shocks from a new and different perspective. An interpretation grounded on empathy can be reached if a teacher is willing to test his or her own ideas against how our likes, dislikes, and fears affect his or her interpretations of a student.

In Espoo 12.9. 2006

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Every man is in certain respect
> a) like all other men,
> b) like some other men,
> c) like no other man
>> (Kluckhorn and Murray 1948)

Tuula Sakaranaho

Multiculturalism: Identity and equality: A comparative view on Finland and Ireland

Contradictory assessments

Multiculturalism attracts contradictory assessments. On the one hand, it is said to have gained some kind of a hegemonic stance as 'the true paradigm for postmodern global age' (see Samad 1997, p. 240), while, on the other hand, it is accused of being 'a much used, and abused, concept, despite the fact that it is an imprecise concept that raises a number of theoretical questions' (see Wahlbeck 1999, 15). In this essay, multiculturalism is understood simply as cultural diversity, which, admittedly, can and has been approached very differently. The amount of literature produced on multiculturalism during four decades or so is so abundant that it is quite impossible to give a coherent account of its contents. A much more economical approach will be adopted here and, hence, the aim in the following discussion is simply to name some basic conceptual lenses which help to pin down different meanings invested in multiculturalism. What is important to note is that the usages of multiculturalism vary according to context, and these contexts can roughly be divided into global, national, and local frameworks (Samad 1997, pp. 240-1). However, it is also argued here that, in each of these contexts, multiculturalism can be approached from descriptive, normative, and critical points of view, which entail particular rhetoric of

identification, justification, or criticism respectively. In the following discussion on multiculturalism, the main emphasis will be on the national context in general and those of Finland and Ireland in particular. Moreover, it must be noted that this essay is a part of a comparative study on Muslims in these two respective countries (Sakaranaho 2006).

Descriptive approach: Identifications

In everyday language multiculturalism is mainly used in a descriptive sense to refer to the cultural pluralism that prevails in a country because its geographical area is shared by people speaking different languages or having different ethnic and cultural backgrounds (cf. Samad 1997, p. 241; Goldberg 1995, p. 1). It is not an exaggeration to say that nearly all societies have been and are, at least to some extent, multicultural (see Nielsen 1995, p. 152; Wahlbeck 1999, p. 16; Sakaranaho 2000). However, it is only in recent decades that the multiculturalism of different societies has been acknowledged and new terminology developed for an inquiry of this phenomenon. Thus, one can argue that, multiculturalism in descriptive sense aims *to identify* the existence of cultural pluralism in a society. Moreover, it is obvious that the identification process can be directed differently depending on what are seen as the main sites of pluralisation and therefore conceived as important objects of research.

First, a description of the multicultural situation is often evidenced by the use of statistics that demonstrate the growing number of foreigners in a country as a result of inward migration. In both Finland and Ireland the number of foreigners has more or less quadrupled in the 1990s. Thus, in Finland the growth of foreign nationals in the country grew from 26,255 in 1990 to 103,628 in 2002, while in Ireland 'the number of foreign-born usual residents from countries other than the EU and USA' has grown from 26,100 in 1991 to 97,200 in 2002. (Statistics Finland 2003, 7; CSO 2003, 24.) Consequently, both countries have experienced a sudden change from the position of a country largely perceived as homogeneous to that of a country inhabited with people of different cultures, languages and religions.

Second, one can also argue that it is not only the inward migration which fosters multiculturalism. Until recently both Finland and Ireland have been countries of emigration rather than immigration. Therefore, the study on

migration in these two countries has naturally centred on movement of people out of these countries, and on their lives in different parts of the world. Thus, over the past 130 years nearly 1.3 million Finns have emigrated to neighbouring Sweden, or further afield, namely to the United States, Canada and Australia (see Koivukangas 2002). The numbers involved in Finnish emigration, however, are rather small compared with those of Ireland: it is estimated that until the beginning of the twentieth century altogether seven million Irish people had left Ireland as emigrants. Not without cause is Ireland called an "emigrant nursery" (Mac Laughlin 1994). As a consequence of these flows of migration, both the Finns and the Irish have long-established contacts abroad. These contacts made them aware of the world outside their home countries but also, to some extent at least, fashioned their lives at home. However, another question that can be asked is how much the emigration experiences of the Finns and Irish have been utilised especially when these respective societies are to trying to come to terms with recent immigration to Finland and Ireland. In light of recent research on Finnish and Irish attitudes towards the newcomers, the answer is: not very much. In this respect, the collective memory of both peoples seems to be very short.

Traditional and cultural minorities

However, in addition to labour migration, one should not forget that 'multicultural influences' have seeped into these countries also through the agency of religion. For instance, one can mention the young Catholic men who travelled to the Continent in order to study for the priesthood during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Culligan & Cherici 2000, p. 115ff). In addition, different religious Catholic orders operate internationally, educating and recruiting members in various countries. Thus, some Irish members of these would have been educated abroad, while other foreign members would have come to Ireland to live and work in Irish religious houses. For over a century, moreover, Christian missions have taken a considerable number of people abroad. Irish Catholics have been active in creating their 'spiritual empire' around the world (see Flanagan 2002; Hogan 1990); likewise the Finns, already since the beginning of the nineteenth century, have engaged in missionary work in both Africa and Asia (see Helander 2001). Thus, returning missionaries, or their letters home, have surely constituted one of the earliest educators in

multicultural encounters for people who perhaps never stepped outside of their own villages or towns, not to mention their native land. However, these sorts of religious influences on the development of multiculturalism in these respective countries are as yet largely unexplored.

Third, it seems that the identification of cultural pluralism in a country also leads to novel ways of categorising people, speaking different languages or having different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. For instance in Finland, a division is made between 'the indigenous older cultural minorities', also referred to as 'traditional minorities', and the newer cultural minorities. Moreover, the third group consists of returning emigrants, who, in addition to Finnish emigrants, also includes the Ingrians, living in Russia. The minorities in Finland with respect to language and ethnicity include the Swedish-Finns (around 300,000), the Sami people (around 6,000), the Romany (around 7,000), the Russians (around 30,000), the Jews (around 1,300), and the Tatars (around 800). (See Pentikäinen & Hiltunen 1995; Koivukangas 2002, p. 25.)

Thus, the Swedish speakers, consisting of around six percent of the Finnish population, are the largest of these minority groups. In spite of its minority position, the Swedish language is formally equal in legal status with the Finnish language: according to the Finnish constitution, 'the national languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish' (Section 17). This no doubt is due to historical reasons. Finland was part of the Swedish empire until 1809, and even though the country thereafter was annexed to Russia until its independence (1917), the Swedish language remained in a dominant position until the latter half of the nineteenth century (see Briody 1997). In independent Finland, the Swedish-Finns have enjoyed strong institutional support, and presently their socio-economic status is more or less equivalent with that of the majority. The Finnish state provides Swedish-medium education for Swedish-speakers from primary school to university level, and there is also a separate Swedish language unit within the Finnish Broadcasting Corporation. In respect of religion, there are separate Swedish-speaking parishes within the Lutheran Church, which are united under an independent Swedish bishopric. Swedish speakers constitute their own communities also within other religious groups, such as the free churches. (Liebkind, Broo & Finnäs 1995.) In comparison with the Swedish speakers, the other groups – with the exception of the growing number of Russian speakers – constitute rather 'minuscule minorities', which suffer from declining numbers and face the threat of assimilation. (See Tolvanen 1994, p. 67.)

In Ireland, the studies on multicultural issues make a distinction between 'indigenous and foreign minority groups' (MacLachlan & O'Connell 2000, p. 11). The 'foreign' minority groups consist of recent immigrants and refugees, such as Africans, Bosnians, Romanians and Arabs, whereas an 'indigenous' ethnic minority consists of the Travellers. Due to their two-hundred-year hiatus in Ireland, the Jews could be seen as a 'traditional minority' in Ireland, in similar fashion to that of the Protestants, such as the Church of Ireland community. With respect to the Travellers (representing 0.6 % of the total population), a question concerning their membership was included, for the first time, in the Irish Census in 2002. The discrimination experienced by the Traveller community is quite extensively documented in recent research on racism in Ireland (see Mac Laughlin 1995; MacLachlan & O'Connell 2000; Lentin & McVeigh 2002). It suffices to note here that, even if the Travellers are quite distinct from Romany, the Travellers in Ireland have, in similar fashion to the Romany in Finland, suffered from the prioritisation of settlement over the nomadic lifestyle, and, in contemporary times, both of these groups seem to have similar problems while living at the margins of these respective societies. Admittedly, the Jews and Tatars, who previously earned their living as pedlars in Finland, also suffered from similar prejudice.

What we can learn from the observations above is that different minorities can vary a great deal regarding their status in society. For instance, the Swedish speakers in Finland and the Church of Ireland community in Ireland are historically well-established, institutionally supported, and, to some extent at least, also wealthy minorities, who, therefore, are well-positioned to defend their rights in these respective countries. To a large extent, the same could be said also about the Jewish communities in Finland and Ireland, as well as about that of the Tatar Muslims in Finland. With respect to linguistic minorities in Ireland, one can observe a curious situation, whereby the Irish language is recognised as the first official language of the state, but, nonetheless, only a small minority of the Irish speaks it as a mother tongue. It seems that the state recognition of the Irish language works not for but against the preservation of the Irish language, because it glosses over the particular needs that the Irish speakers as a linguistic minority, inhabiting the Irish -speaking *Gaeltacht* areas, might presently have. Cross-reading Finland and Ireland one can note that, even if there is, with respect to the law, equivalence between the Swedish speakers in Finland and the Irish speakers in Ireland, in practice, the Irish speakers seem

to suffer the same fate of social and geographic marginalisation as the Sami people in Finland. Perhaps the official recognition of the Irish language is also the reason why the Irish-speaking minority is literally non-existent in the studies on multicultural and racial issues in Ireland, where, for all practical purposes, it surely should belong.

In conclusion, one can observe that the identification of multiculturalism in a country is far from being an objective process. On the contrary, it entails a heavy historical load and carries strong political undercurrents. Therefore, multiculturalism in a descriptive sense is not enough; one needs to look also into the entanglement of multiculturalism with the state and the power structure of a society.

Normative approach: Justifications

Pluralism is usually seen as a feature of civil society, which consists of different interest groups and associations. Concerning the state, however, pluralism can be evaluated differently depending on the political culture of a country. In consequence, there are different national variations of multiculturalism (see Soysal 1994; Modood and Werbner 1997). This is understandable because, for all practical purposes, it is necessary for a state to define what is meant by multiculturalism in its political usage and as a social policy. In other words, a state needs some sort of *normative* definition of multiculturalism that it can work with. In some countries, this normative approach has been written down in explicit terms as in the multicultural programmes of Sweden, Canada, and Australia. In others, it is implicit in policies concerning immigrants and minorities. Whatever the case may be, multiculturalism in its normative sense entails argumentation that aims to give reasons for the necessity of cultural encounter and hence *to justify* multiculturalism in a society.

Equal coexistence – reciprocal respect in Finland?

The national aims concerning multiculturalism in Finland and Ireland are most clearly articulated in different programmes and action plans with respect to immigrants, refugees and minorities created in these respective countries. In both of these countries, the term which encapsulates the normative stand of

the state towards multiculturalism is 'integration'. In Finland in 1997, the Ministry of the Interior introduced the first governmental report on the immigration and refugee policy. In this report, integration entails the recognition of the legitimate place that refugees and immigrants have in Finnish society, involving the right to keep their own language and culture. In 2004, the working group set by the Ministry of Labour prepared a working paper of the second immigration-policy programme for the government. *(Ehdotus maahanmuuttopoliittiseksi ohjelmaksi* 2004.) In this programme the main aim is to address the problems concerning the availability of labour, and to outline the measures in order to overcome this problem. However, in addition to work-related labour, the aim of this programme is to make the steering system of the integration of immigrants more effective, and also to improve ethnic relations between different groups.

In other words, the aim in Finland is to build a pluralistic and a multicultural society, which is based on reciprocal respect of different cultures and religions. Regarding religion, the working paper sets as one of its goals to inquire how religious communities run by immigrants could be supported. However, it also expresses the limits for cultural understanding. Hence, the right for one's culture does not, for instance, include illegal practices, such as coercion to marriage, girls' circumcision, or murder and violence inflicted on women in the name of family honour. On the other hand, cultural rights do involve the development of cultural identity so that, for instance, bilingualism is encouraged in school education where immigrant pupils are taught, in addition to Finnish, also their own mother tongue. Last but not least, the working paper reiterates the understanding of 'integration' (*kotouttaminen*) as a two-way process of adaptation, involving both the immigrants and the wider society (*Ehdotus maahanmuuttopoliittiseksi ohjelmaksi* 2004, pp. 20–4, 30).

In similar fashion, the governmental action plan on ethnic discrimination and racism emphasises the constitutional right of different ethnic groups in Finland to maintain and develop their own language and culture. In order to meet this end, the government report says that it is important to respect the international and European recommendations for the protection of human rights also on the national level. Therefore, the protection of human rights is an elementary part of the national process of adaptation in a multicultural society. This adaptation process comprises of positive interaction, involving the active participation of the members of different ethnic minorities, which have both rights and obligations vis-à-vis the state and society. In the process

of interaction, the key role is laid upon communities and organisations of both old and new ethnic minorities, including also those of different religions. Interestingly enough, the report surmises that, as a result of immigration and the consequent pluralisation of Finnish society, especially the questions pertaining to religions and world views will become more and more important. It is also noted in the report that since religion, on the one hand, is often used as a tool in political conflicts, but, on the other hand, is also easily turned into a source of discrimination in society and employment, religious communities have an important role to play in the improvement of ethnic relations. Moreover, the obligation of the Ministry of Education is to see to it that issues pertaining to ethnicity, multiculturalism, religions and world views are duly attended to in education and particularly in textbooks used in schools. The ultimate aim of all these measures in Finnish society is to foster the acceptance of diversity and to work towards the realisation of ethnic equality. In sum, multiculturalism in this government report is understood as an equal coexistence of different cultures. (*Kohti etnistä yhdenvertaisuutta* 2001.)

Generous welcome and interculturalism in Ireland?

In Ireland in 1991, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform published a strategy proposal *Integration: A Two Way Process*. This strategy for the integration of refugees states that the responsibility of the government, but also that of each Irish citizen, is to welcome refugees and to embrace diversity, and thereby contribute to the development of a tolerant society. Thereby, 'integration' involves a 'two-way process which places certain duties and obligations on refugees and on the host society at both national and community level in order to create an environment in the host society which welcomes refugees as people who have something to offer to society'. Consequently, the 'emphasis in the integration policy should be on supporting initiatives which enable the preservation of the ethnic, cultural and religious identity of the individual'. From this starting point, the following definition of integration was adopted: 'Integration means the ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all of the major components of society, without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity.' (*Integration* 1999, p. 9.)

The first national action plan on racism in Ireland was published in 2005. The aim of the strategy proposal, entitled *Planning for Diversity*, is 'to protect

minorities against racism, accommodate diversity in health and education services and allow all minority groups to participate fully in society' (O'Brien 2005). In his foreword, Michael McDowell, Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, proudly refers to the reputation of the Irish 'for warmth and generosity as a people', and to the international image of Ireland as 'one of the most desirable places in which to live and work' (*Planning for Diversity* 2005, p. 11). This generous welcome is also reflected throughout the above-mentioned action plan for diversity. In similar fashion to the former strategy related to the integration of refugees (1999), 'integration' in this action plan is understood to be 'a two way process by that places duties and obligations on both cultural and ethnic minorities and the State to create a more inclusive society.' Therefore, in the context of this plan: '"integration" simply means a range of targeted strategies for the inclusion of groups such as Travellers, refugees and migrants as part of the overall aim of developing a more inclusive and intercultural society', which 'is essentially about the conditions for interaction, understanding, equality of opportunity and respect'. (*Planning for Diversity* 2005, pp. 38–9, 42.) With respect to religion, the plan notes that:

> There has always been religious diversity in Ireland, most notably in respect of the two largest Christian religious traditions in Ireland. Religious diversity has significantly expanded in recent years, mainly as a consequence of inward migration, and [religion] is an important dimension to many people's ethnic and cultural identity. There has been a long established Jewish community in Ireland dating back to the nineteenth century and the more recently established Muslim community in Ireland dates back to the 1950s.

> Between 1991 and 2002, the number of Muslims in Ireland quadrupled to 19,000 due to inward migration. Over the same period, the number of Orthodox Christians in Ireland grew from 400 to over 10,000 mainly reflecting inward migration from non EU European countries. This increasing religious diversity is to be welcomed and raises important issues that require sensitive and considered policy responses. (Planning for Diversity 2005, p. 51)

Hence, the Irish strategy acknowledges the importance that religion can have to one's cultural identity and explicitly welcomes religious diversity, including the fast-growing Muslim community. Thereby, on the level of policy papers, Ireland surely shows sensitivity to religion as a multicultural issue. Moreover,

this action plan is more explicit about racism with respect to religion also in the sense that it lists as a form of racism, experienced particularly by Jews and Muslims respectively, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. (*Planning for Diversity* 2005, pp. 29, 56.) Unfortunately, the paper does not elaborate these observations further.

The above-mentioned action plan also aims, in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of Education and Science Report *Promoting Anti Racism and Interculturalism in Education* (2002), at the 'reasonable' accommodation of cultural diversity by implementing a national intercultural education strategy at all levels of the Irish education system (*Planning for Diversity* 2005, p. 106). Admittedly, this goal follows the ethos of the *Education Act* (1998) which aims to ensure that the education system 'respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society' (see also *Promoting Anti Racism* 2002).

Most recently, the aim to 'normalise difference' was expressed in the recent guidelines for primary schools, which were published by the Ministry of Education and Science in May 2005, entitled *Intercultural Education in the Primary School* (see Holland 2005). In this report, 'intercultural education' is understood as 'education that respects, celebrates, and recognises the normality of diversity in all aspect of human life' (*Intercultural Education* 2005, p. 169). With respect to terminology, it is also stated in the introduction of this report that

> 'multiculturalism' is sometimes used to describe a society in which different cultures live side by side without much interaction, [whereas] the term 'interculturalism' expresses a belief that we all become personally enriched by coming in contact with and experiencing other cultures, and that people of different cultures can and should be able to engage with each other and learn from each other. (*Intercultural education* 2005, p. 3)

This definition of terms nicely encapsulates the distinction made in this study between multiculturalism in the descriptive and normative senses. In Ireland, the report (2005, 3) further notes, the approach to cultural diversity is one of interculturalism rather than that of multiculturalism. The problem, however, is that a traditional view of Irishness, not recognising the cultural and ethnic diversity in Ireland, makes many Irish people from minority groups feel excluded. (*Intercultural education* 2005, p. 13). Thus, the aim of intercultural education is, implicitly, also to change the definition of Irishness towards a more inclusive term.

According to these guidelines, the intercultural education is meant for all children (*Intercultural Education* 2005, p. 21), irrespective of whether they attend 'ethnically-diverse schools or one that is wholly white, Irish and Catholic' (Holland 2005). In addition to listing strategies for dealing with racism in school, these guidelines also include putting up multilingual signs and ensuring that teachers and pupils can pronounce each other's names properly. Concerning the first language of a child from an ethnic minority joining a school, teachers are encouraged to find out key phrases in that language, such as 'please' or 'well done'. (*Intercultural Education* 2005, p. 38ff). Moreover, in order to help the cultural adaptation of the children from ethnic minorities in the Irish schools, there are also plans to improve the teaching of English as a second language (*Intercultural Education* 2005, pp. 112; 162ff).

To date, in addition to learning English as their second language, the need of children from ethnic minorities to learn their first language has hardly even begun in Ireland (see O'Loingsigh 2001, p. 118). In this respect, it seems that there is more cultural awareness in Finland than in Ireland. Perhaps, the reason for greater sensitivity with respect to language in Finland is the fairly recently acquired status of Finnish as a dominant language of the country, and also the fact that Finnish is so scarcely spoken worldwide. For all practical purposes, Finns simply cannot afford not to know other languages than Finnish. However, it is a completely different matter with the English language, which is the dominant language in Ireland, and is rapidly gaining dominance also worldwide. Admittedly, the Irish language is taught in the Irish schools as the second language, in similar fashion to Swedish as the second language in Finland. However, in addition to these 'compulsory' languages, there is a fundamental difference in the multicultural policies regarding language education in Finland and Ireland.

Religion – to teach or not to teach

With respect to religion, a recent report on education and anti-racism in Ireland pointed out that the Irish system of education is failing to address the needs of families who are not Catholics. The present situation, where most of the schools are under the ownerships and management of the Catholic Church, and where, therefore, only one percent of the schools are multidenominational, leaves very little choice for parents with respect to their children's education. Previously, the multidenominational schools were seen mainly as an issue concerning non-

religious or non-practising Catholics. The growing pluralisation, however, has widened this issue to concern also Muslims, Hindus and other religions in Ireland. (Cullen 2005.) As noted by Philip Watt, the director of the National Consultative Council on Racism and Interculturalism:

> You have, for instance, Muslim children in Catholic schools who are sitting at the back of the class or playing in the corridor while the rest are being taught religion. That's hardly acceptable in the long run. (Cullen 2005)

Accordingly, this is a problem acknowledged in Ireland also by the Muslims themselves. However, this matter in Finland is dealt with in recent legislation concerning religious freedom and religious education in schools. No doubt, legislation is the main agency in dealing with the religious rights granted by these respective countries to people of different religions.

It is obvious from the above that the policies of multiculturalism in both Finland and Ireland, on the one hand, emphasise the right of their society members to an individual cultural identity, and, on the other hand, irrespective of one's cultural identity, encourage their full participation in the host society. In other words, these programmes do not propose two different standards for the old and new members of these societies: all of them are to be treated equally and offered equal opportunities in society. It is against this background that one should also look at the position of Muslims in these respective countries. In light of these equality-based multicultural norms, it should be possible for a Muslim, living in Finland or Ireland, to be a full-fledged member of these societies, while adhering to Islam as a fundamental part of her or his identity. This, however, is easier said than done. The general attitudes of the wider society do not always coincide with the national programmes and action plan to combat discrimination and racism; often the attitudes towards ethnic minorities are exclusive rather than inclusive. Therefore, in addition to international obligations, the racist and discriminatory attitudes on the home ground are of course another strong justification for the state to enforce multicultural policies and, in particular, to encourage intercultural education in school.

Research on the attitudes of a wider society towards minorities, immigrants and refugees in Finland and Ireland, and on the experiences of these groups in these respective countries, constitutes a fast-growing body of research literature. Both Finland and Ireland show similarities with respect to attitudes towards foreigners in the sense that, the more different people look or behave, the

harder it is for the 'native' Finns and the Irish to accept them. Moreover, newcomers from Western European countries score much higher than people from Eastern Europe – not to mention the Middle East, Africa or Asia – in the list of those with whom Finns and Irish want to have close contact. Hence, one can conclude that Muslims, who for the most part come from outside Europe, are among those people who most easily raise suspicions among the Finns and the Irish. This generalisation should not, however, gloss over the fact that Muslims, as a very heterogeneous group, also attract very different attitudes toward them.

Converts or tame victims?

One can, however, observe an interesting difference between Finland and Ireland in the expectations concerning the behaviour of foreigners, and the way foreigners themselves should aim to overcome the divide between themselves and the wider society. As was mentioned above, the Irish have a reputation of being a warm and friendly people, and it is this reputation that the governmental multicultural policies want to underscore. This reputation notwithstanding, the 'seductive charm of the Irish culture no longer seems to work in quite the old way': the Irish greeting of *céad míle fáilte* [hundred thousand welcomes], often used in the tourist industry, is no longer extended to all new arrivals. (Kiberd 2001, p. 45.) On the contrary, it has been argued that, as a result of recent racist attacks in Ireland directed towards newly arrived Africans and Europeans, the image of 'Ireland of the welcomes' has been irrevocably tarnished (Rolston & Shannon 2002, p. 2). At the same time, it has been noted that one should not underestimate 'the historical ability of the Irish to assimilate waves of incomers'. Kiberd gives the example of the Normans who became 'more Irish than the Irish themselves', and asks (with tongue in cheek no doubt): 'Who is to say that the latest group of arriving Nigerians might not know the same destiny. If there is no zeal like the zeal of the convert, there may be no Irishness quite like that of the recent recruit.' (Kiberd 2001, p. 45.)

Whether newcomers to Ireland will turn into 'converts' to Irishness or not is another matter, but a study on the experiences of international students in Ireland would seem to resonate with the assimilation tendency in the Irish attitudes towards foreigners. A study, conducted at three universities in Ireland in the autumn of 1997, showed that the international students interviewed for

this study perceived the acculturation attitude of the Irish as that of 'friendliness and insularity'. With respect to these attitudes, they saw, as the dominant feature the Irish society, cultural insularity, which in their view led to somewhat contradictory approaches of both Irish friendliness and discrimination towards non-nationals and ethnic minorities. Thus:

> Irish friendliness markedly increased towards those students who adopted to Irish cultural values, beliefs and social norms, such as the tacit rules for conversation, privacy and sites for socialising involved in everyday interactions. Those students who expressed Irish values, beliefs and norms were socially included by Irish people into the local community. However, those students who did not express these values, beliefs or norms tended to be excluded by Irish social groups in the community, a result which many of the students interpreted as a type of discrimination. (Boucher 2000, p. 244)

These observations clearly support the idea that the main attitude of the Irish wider society towards newcomers is inclusive in terms of 'assimilation'. However, the above-mentioned international students also complained about a contradiction of multicultural and discriminatory treatment of non-nationals by the Irish state. In other words, they explicated the state policy, which 'mixes internal inclusion for Irish citizens and certain categories of migrants with the external exclusion from Ireland of specific groups of non-EU migrants'. As a conclusion, one can note a contradictory mixture of inclusion and exclusion in the acculturation approach of both state and wider society in Ireland. (Boucher 2000, pp. 244–5.) Perhaps, therefore, the Irish approach to multiculturalism could be characterised as a paradox of 'friendly discrimination'.

Similar observations concerning inclusion and exclusion of different immigrant groups has also been made in Finland: 'People coming from other European countries, or those referred to as westerners, with historical and cultural similarities, are evidently considered more or less like us. No conceptual problem seems to arise in their case' (Suurpää 2002, p. 118). The 'problem' concerns those who score high in the hierarchy of difference. The above-mentioned study on international students in Ireland portray them as different types of cultural and social actors, of whom some do adapt to Irish society and some do not (Boucher 2000). Against the backdrop of this study in Ireland, it is interesting to read about a study based on interviews conducted in the winter of 1997 about the attitudes of young people in Helsinki towards immigrants. These young people,

who presented themselves as 'liberal', tended to make a clear distinction between a 'good vs. bad immigrant' on the basis of the immigrants' societal roles and positions as 'suitable and acceptable vs. doubtful and rejected'. In their views, a 'good immigrant' fits into the role of 'tame victims',

> who do not challenge Finland's supposed political continuity, nor the country's dominant cultural traditions. They are supposed to remain as observers regardless of what their real position is, both in socio-cultural and in legal terms. They are politically silent with a certain willingness to display a minimum of more or less externally demanded loyalty towards social practices and cultural values described as "common" and "dominant", whether Finnish or Western. (Suurpää 2002, pp. 118–9)

The attitudes displayed above are dissimilar to the Irish in the sense that one cannot find there any of the Irish 'friendliness', or any willingness to welcome newcomers, in whatever terms, to a local cultural community. An additional factor that comes up in the Finnish study is the question of language: Finnish language, or the lack of it, seems to be a particular threshold to cross over to 'Finnishness'. Admittedly, with English the language barrier is not necessarily so overwhelming as with Finnish. As was noted above, English is spoken worldwide, unlike Finnish which, even if the dominant language of Finland, is minuscule on the international scale. Most of the young people, interviewed for the above-mentioned study, agreed that 'a common culture presupposes a common language', and therefore those who hold a public role in Finnish society should be fluent in Finnish. In other words, language is used as an important boundary marker, which separates Finns from foreigners. In sum, immigrants in Finland are accepted if they submit to the often invisible social and cultural borders outlined for them; they are accepted 'as a more or less controlled community', regardless of whether their cultural habits are understood or rejected by the wider society. Foreigners are welcomed to make Finland into a more colourful place – but only on Finnish conditions, involving a restricted space and predictable ways. Consequently, there seems to be a huge gap between the supposedly recognised cultural rights of minorities in recent Finnish immigrant policy statements and the concrete encounters in everyday life where these rights should materialise. (Suurpää 2002, pp. 119–20.)

The above-mentioned studies provide only a glimpse into the multicultural field in Finland and Ireland, which of course cannot be generalised outright

onto the whole society. This reservation notwithstanding, one could note, tentatively, that in both Finland and Ireland newcomers are, to some extent, welcomed but only on terms set by the Irish or the Finns. However, there is also a difference between these two countries in so far as in Ireland newcomers are, in some sense, accepted for participation in the local community, whereas in Finland the newcomers seem to gain acceptance mainly as harmless and silent observers. One might detect these different approaches also in relation to Muslims of these respective countries.

Whatever the case may be, it is obvious that in both of these countries it is rather easy to justify the need for intercultural education and the multicultural policies promoted by the state. At the same time, the divide between the theory of policy-makers and the practice of everyday encounters in society accentuate the fact that there is more to multiculturalism than the descriptive and normative sense of this term. This will be discussed in more detail below with respect to multiculturalism from a critical point of view.

Critical approach: Criticism

Multiculturalism as a political concept can be loaded with positive connotation (Wahlbeck 1999, p. 16); however, it can also easily turn into a weapon of criticism (see Goldberg 1995; Samad 1997, p. 245). The multicultural situations in different countries might be different but, nonetheless, they have a feature in common, namely the question of social actors and the power and authority vested in them. In any society there is a group of people who are in a position to define what is meant by common national culture, but it is often the same people who also lay down the parameters of multiculturalism policies in a country. Multiculturalism is therefore intrinsically linked to 'power struggles and collective negotiations of cultural, ethnic and racial differences' (Modood and Werbner 1997: vii). Consequently, multiculturalism is not simply a neutral description of a situation, but rather an ideology that is used by social actors in order to promote certain social and political ends in a society. The concept of multiculturalism can therefore be furnished with a *critical* meaning, which also sheds a new light on the descriptive identifications of multiculturalism and its normative justifications.

From a critical point of view, multiculturalism almost inevitably becomes an ideological issue to be defended or opposed. One can therefore conclude

that identification with multiculturalism always entails *divisions*, which are inherent in the term cultural pluralism. Hence, a question arises as to how these divisions are argued about in respect of the cultural encounter between the wider society and those in minority position. For example, one might mention the opinion expressed by the chairman of the committee preparing the minority and refugee policy in Finland, Ilkka-Christian Björklund (1997), who pointed out that the main question concerning this policy is how to adjust the cultural habits of the newcomers to 'Finnish ways'. According to Björklund, polygamy and the circumcision of girls, for instance, are examples of traditions that are in conflict with the 'Finnish sense of justice' and hence unacceptable on any account. Moreover, he argues that problems also occur in respect of Muslim women who insist on wearing a scarf in a passport photo. In these issues, he is not willing to compromise and therefore he insists that demands of this sort should not be conceded in Finland. However, approaching cultural differences by simply saying 'This is how we do things here' is criticised by Charles Taylor (1995, p. 96) as 'awkward', or even 'crude' and 'insensitive'. Nevertheless, even in his politics of recognition there are situations in which this kind of a reply is necessary. Taylor refers to the 'Rushdie affair', which he, strangely enough, identifies with 'mainstream Islam'. (See Modood 1997b, pp. 3–4.) Thus, in similar fashion to Björklund, it is Islam which seems to provoke Taylor to name the limits for acceptance of cultural differences.

Taking Islam as an example of unacceptable cultural differences would indicate that the discourse of Islam as a problem is repeated also in discussions on multiculturalism, which is actually what Tariq Modood (1997b, pp. 2–4) argues with reference to the politics of multiculturalism. In itself, this is both surprising and worrisome. It is surprising in the sense that one would expect from experts of multiculturalism to know more than to simply identify Islam with problems, and it is worrisome because it reproduces the one-sided negative image imposed on Islam in the 'West'. Moreover, it must be noted that it is a religious tradition which is used here as a limit to the liberal vision of multiculturalism. In agreement with Modood (1997a; 1997b), it is argued here that, instead of disregarding them, religion in general and Muslims in particular should indeed be included in the conception of multiculturalism. (See Baumann 1999.)

In general, the above discussions on the limits of multiculturalism are an example of negotiations that are inevitable in a multicultural society. In this negotiation one can elicit the conditions that are set for the cultural encounter

between the newcomers and the host society. For Björklund, these conditions are defined against the backcloth of common Finnish culture that is identified with such terms as 'Finnish ways' and 'Finnish sense of justice'. However, all Finns do not draw the line between Finns and newcomers in the same way. In his writing, Björklund is also critical of Finns who object to the rights given to foreigners in Finland and who therefore are opposed to him and the committee that he was chairing. As such, the critical comments by Björklund shows that there are different ways to understand what being 'Finnish' actually involves. Moreover, it nicely illustrated how discussion on multiculturalism does not only concern the relations between the wider society and foreigners, but culminates in contested views on the national culture set as a norm for newcomers. Thus, in respect of multiculturalism as social argument, there is a particular kind of dynamism between the rhetoric of cultural pluralism and that of common national culture. In order to understand this dynamism, it is necessary to study multiculturalism in relation to actual social and historical contexts, and both from the descriptive and normative points of view. The history of a country can be constructed very differently if one merely concentrates on the development of the national culture and its main symbols instead of also recognising the cultural heterogeneity of people or the existence of certain indigenous elements that have hitherto been classed as not belonging to wider society.

As an example, one might take Finland, which is considered to be a very homogenous country, culturally, where the vast majority of people speak Finnish as their mother tongue and belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Officially recognised exceptions to this homogeneity are the aforementioned Swedish speakers and those belonging to the Orthodox Church. However, there are other native ethnic minorities in Finland such as the Sami and the Romani people. Until recently, both these populations have been marginalised, either geographically or socially, and consequently, for the most part, have remained culturally invisible. (See Pentikäinen & Hiltunen 1995.) In similar fashion to Finland, in Ireland one of the dearly cherished myths has been that all the Irish share a common culture, fashioned to a large extent by Catholicism, even though also in Ireland there are a number of traditional minorities, such as Protestants, Jews, and the Travellers, who have lived in this country for centuries (see Mac Éinrí 2002). In contrast to Finland and Ireland, the United States, however, is often used as the example of a melting pot of different cultures and hence is seen as the multicultural country par excellence. Nevertheless, in the official

policies of the USA one can detect a certain ideology of 'Americanism' that necessitates being white, middle class, and Christian (Goldberg 1995). Undoubtedly, one manifestation of this ideology is the American civil religion (see Bellah 1970; Albanese 1992). In sum, one can conclude that in an ostensibly homogenous country there exists cultural pluralism, even though it may go unnoticed, and that in an outwardly multicultural country there is a core of common national culture, even if it would not be articulated as such.

Mono– and multiculturalism – two sides of the same coin?

What we can conclude from the above examples is twofold. First, it is obvious that multiculturalism is context-bound and should be perceived as such. Second, multiculturalism should always be seen together with its counterpart, monoculturalism. In order to avoid reifying these, it is important to remember that both monoculturalism and multiculturalism have a history. Moreover, irrespective of their differences, both of them are, as institutional ideologies, modern inventions: the development of monoculturalism dates back to the end of the nineteenth century and was enforced along with the building of the nation state, whereas multiculturalism, as a challenge for monoculturalism, is in its contemporary form only few decades old. (Goldberg 1995.)

Thus, in a sense, mono- and multiculturalim are two sides of the same coin, and hence should be treated as such. Admittedly enough, a multicultural liberal society is ridden with contradictory demands when, on the one hand, it aims in principle at treating all cultural groupings equally, while, on the other hand, it seeks to maintain its identity as a society with a specific character and history. This, as pointed out by Bhikhu Parekh, 'raises the question as to whether and how the legitimate demands of both equality and identity can be reconciled' (1997, 16). Therefore, one can conclude that the development of a multicultural society almost inevitably involves some sort of conflict; it involves the interplay between justifications of monoculturalism and multiculturalism – or that of unity and diversity, or that of sameness and difference. Without a doubt, striking a balance in a multicultural society between identity and equality is a crucial topic in need of negotiation: 'The challenge is to foster an open and honest national debate in which the options are clearly defined and discussed' (Mac Éinrí 2002, p. 2).

From the critical point of view, multiculturalism cannot be taken for granted, because both the identification and especially the justification of multiculturalism are seen as an ideological expression of opinion that aim at reinforcing, in most cases, the prevailing social order (see Zemni 2002, p. 172). With regard to social order, in turn, critical questions of multiculturalism concern the incorporation of different cultural groupings into the wider society and, in particular, their access to the public domain (see Samad 1997, p. 241). Historically, there are different models of multicultural societies, of which the classical studies on pluralism focussed on colonial and post-colonial societies, which were institutionally divided along ethnic lines and the political power in the public domain was held by a small elite (Wahlbeck 1999, p. 16; Samad 1999, p. 242). A similar kind of power structure was characteristic also of the multiethnic imperia ruled by Muslims, who, as a ruling elite, were tolerant towards Christian and Jews, giving them considerable autonomy within their own religious communities. This toleration notwithstanding, Muslims were in a privileged position and Islam enjoyed a special protection in comparison to the other religious traditions. All in all, these former societies, marked by some sort of 'conservative multiculturalism' (McLaren 1995, p. 47), were generally characterised by some sort of collective segregation and institutional discrimination, which often were justified in benevolent terms, and were for the most part taken for granted.

However, there are historical variations to multiculturalism so that contemporary multiculturalism, for instance in Europe, is 'qualitatively different from the diversity of personal lifestyles and cultural differences of historic, territorially based minorities that already characterise some western European countries' (Modood 1997a, p. 1). In modern liberal democracies, moreover, the idea is that all members of society should have an equal access to the public domain. It is also argued that in order to enhance equal treatment of cultural and religious groupings the public domain should be neutral, while cultural and religious differences are restricted to the private domain (Bruce 2001, p. 92). According to John Rex, to put it simply, an ideal multicultural society is organised so that the public domain, i.e. law, politics, and economy, is unitary, whereas the private domain, i.e. family, morality, and religion, is marked by diversity (Rex 1996, p. 15; Wahlbeck 1999, p. 16). In other words, multiculturalism would be characteristic of the private but not to the public domain. Consequently, in this model, which resembles the 'civic assimilationist view' in Parekh (2000, p. 200), the public domain is marked by universal principles of unity so that the

differences in the private domain would have no structural consequences. However, in reality, this is not the case because some groups usually have a greater access to the public domain than others do (Samad 1997, p. 243). In fairly homogeneous cultures, such as Finland and Ireland, this group is bound to consist of the members belonging to the majority, i.e. the native Finns and Irish.

In conceptualisations of multiculturalism, therefore, the separation between the public and private domains should be problematised and attention payed to 'areas of society, like education, which intrude into both domains and these are areas where conflicts might occur and where some kinds of compromise have to be found' (Wahlbeck 1999, p. 16). In addition to education, one may note also that religion in many ways defies the private-pubic distinction (Parekh 2000, p. 203). Therefore, religion is also among those areas in which conflicts might, and have occurred, and where compromises should be found. This is the task of multicultural policies, which, instead of reinforcing divisions and inequalities in society, should find ways for integration as a mutual process of accommodation in which both the wider society and minorities aim at an agreement in basic principles and practices acceptable in a society they share. (Wahlbeck 1999, p. 17; Berns McGown 1999, pp. 54–58.) However, the enforcement of such mutual integration should not focus only on individuals and their ability to adapt, but rather produce changes in social structure and institutions because only in this way can collective norms be altered. (Soysal 1994, p. 5; Samad 1997, p. 241.)

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It is a spirit in opposition, rather than in accommodation, that grips me because the challenge of intellectual life is to be found in dissent against the status quo at a time when the struggle on behalf of disadvantages groups seem so unfairly weighted against them.

(Edward Said 1996)

Marie Louise Seeberg

The flip side of equality: different evasion in Norwegian curriculum and in the classroom

Taking as its point of departure the Norwegian version of 'equality as sameness' as defined in anthropological studies, this article explores how pupils learn to evade explicit references to racial and ethnic difference. Several examples from the everyday life in an Oslo school provide insight into the available discursive repertoires related to such differences, and show how pupils and teachers handle these repertoires. It is argued that the pupils' evasion of ethnic differences in the presence of teachers is closely linked to features of the explicit, the implicit, and the null curriculum.

Oslo is the hilly capital of a hilly country, rising unevenly yet steadily from the sea front to thforested mountains surrounding it. The city centre is small and relatively flat. It is cut in two by the river, which is less remarkable in itself than it is through symbolically separating the bourgeois west end from the traditionally working-class east end. As The New York Times boldly puts it:

> 'Today, there are two Oslo worlds. In western Oslo, shoppers bustle, some clad in sleek furs, and restaurants fill with families paying for specialities like salted lamb ribs with turnip mash. In eastern Oslo, dingy streets fill with some of the 130,000 immigrants, asylum seekers and other foreigners who live here.' (NYT 2002).

Such a description, though generally accurate, jars with dominant Norwegian self-presentations of a outstandingly egalitarian and homogeneous nation. Gullestad (1992, p. 174) identifies 'the particular Norwegian definition of equality as sameness. This equality is sustained by (…) an interactional style emphasizing sameness and undercommunicating difference'. The concept of equality as sameness was a theoretical point of departure for the research project 'Equality and multiculturalism in school'. A main concern is the relations between the deeply rooted ideal of 'equality' as sameness and 'multiculturalism' as a newer ideal reflecting a changing reality.

Near the centre of Oslo, in a residential area at the intersection between east and west, lies Bakken primary school. Bakken was chosen for this project[1] precisely because of its location, which meant that children with very different backgrounds were enrolled here. I conducted fieldwork in Bakken primary school for six months, spending most of my days there with the 19 eleven- to twelve-year-old pupils in class 6C, and with their teachers. In the present article, I wish to present some cases where teachers and pupils identify, classify, and negotiate selves and others in school. Taking as my points of departure field data covering everyday events and interviews, I will attempt to show how these examples relate to some central discursive repertoires. First I present a case which illustrates the significance of context and, more specifically, of the presence or absence of teachers, to the pupils' discursive options. In the course of this example, we move from the pupils-only context of the stairway and corridor to the teacher-and-pupils context inside the classroom:

The incident

As I went upstairs along with the children to their classroom, Maren came running after us, announcing that someone had just been knifed in the schoolyard! She breathlessly said she didn't know the details but last Friday somebody had hit somebody else with a bat over the head and today the same guys had been using knives, and now it was a whole brown gang against a white gang! She proceeded to find a piece of black colour in her bag and started smearing it over her face, saying 'I'm white, I'm scared of the brown gang, I better be dark so they'll think I'm one of them'. Teresa

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[1] The project referred to is my doctoral project (Seeberg 2003), financed by the Norwegian Research Council.

objected: 'yeah right, very clever, and then the white gang will be after you, don't you think'. Maren ignored her. Marco said 'Well, Hassan's real lucky', then he added '- and Cevat too, Cevat and Hassan are so lucky'. We entered the classroom and found our seats. Bente, the pretty, young substitute teacher, reminded us that this was her last day at Bakken. Maren quipped: 'Oh, what a shame Hassan isn't here, you gotta say goodbye to him before you leave, because he's in love with you!' Bente laughed and asked which one he was again. The whole class joined forces, trying to describe Hassan to Bente: 'You know, him the tall one with the round head, him the thin one who sits over there in the corner'. Bente said 'I don't know who you mean'. They didn't succeed in making her understand who Hassan was.

The name Hassan might have told Bente that the class were talking about a boy of foreign origin, but neither she nor the class went further into this. It is likely that describing Hassan e.g. as either black, African or Somalian would have helped Bente understand who they were talking about, since he was the only pupil in 6C who might fit into either of these three categories. Why did 6C not choose such a 'racialised' description in the classroom, when they had just verbalised 'racial' differences in the corridor? In the following, I will endeavour to analyse and explain their reasons. The contrast between the rumours of a brown-against-white-knifing incident and the inefficient non-racial description of Hassan illustrates how pupils openly used racialised language among themselves, while totally denying themselves the use of any such language in interaction with teachers. I saw many other examples of this in Bakken. In this first example, it is the short time span and the seemingly effortless oscillation between the discursive repertoires that makes the contrast so evident. It will serve as my point of departure here, and I will refer to it in the analysis while making use of further examples to build up my empirical argument that this contrast was an important one to the pupils.

Frankenberg (1993, p. 16) in her work about white women in the United States defines 'discursive repertoires' as 'clusterings of discursive elements upon which the women drew', and continues: ' "Repertoire" captures, for me, some of the way in which strategies for thinking through race were learned, drawn upon, and enacted, (..) chosen but by no means freely so' (ibid.). She identifies three discursive repertoires on 'race': 'color and power evasion', 'race cognizance' and 'essentialist racism'. I will make use of these repertoires in my analysis. Let me therefore briefly introduce the parts of her argument that I find particularly

useful. She outlines 'color- and power-evasiveness' as being 'dominant in U.S. "public" race discourse', and continues:

> 'For many white people in the United States (…) "color-blindness" – a mode of thinking organized around an effort to not "see", or at any rate not to acknowledge, race differences – continues to be the "polite" language of race' (ibid., pp. 142-3). 'While the discursive repertoire of color evasion was organized around the desire to assert essential *sameness*, the discursive repertoire that I will here describe as race cognizant insisted on the importance of recognizing difference – but with the difference understood in historical, political, social, or cultural terms rather than essentialist ones. (…) the race-cognizent women (…) shared two linked convictions: first, that race makes a difference in people's lives and second, that racism is a significant factor in shaping contemporary U.S. society.' (ibid: p. 157) 'color and power evasion and race cognizance responded to one another's terms, and (…) both of these repertoires referred back, implicitly and explicitly, to the terms of essentialist racism (…) – the notion that race makes a difference at the level of biology and being' (ibid., p. 189)

In 'the Incident', we may already recognize elements from these discursive repertoires. As Frankenberg also emphasizes, it is important to understand that the three discursive repertoires rarely occur in their 'pure' forms and in any case refer to each other. In the corridor, for instance, the children seem partly to negotiate, partly to play ironically with, 'essentialist racism' and 'race cognizance' as outlined by Frankenberg. In the classroom, however, the children clearly made an effort to 'be polite', which meant that they had to chose the discursive repertoire that she, very appropriately to my material, calls 'color evasion'. I will argue that they were in the process of learning this discursive repertoire from their teachers, as part of the explicit and implicit curricula of the Norwegian educational system. As we shall see, all three discursive repertoires have their counterparts in my material. In addition to these, however, other types of classification than the 'ethnic' or 'racial' that Frankenberg describes may have been as important, or more so, to the people I met in the two schools. In my material, characteristics related to gender is the most noteworthy example of this. These different types of classification and difference are intertwined to the extent that, although my main focus is on 'ethnicity', I can not simply choose to leave out what sociology summaries as 'gender' and 'class' without seriously misrepresenting people's own experiences of 'ethnicity'.

Indifference?

In searching for clues to the children's oscillation between different discursive repertoires, I tried to talk to the teachers about it. When I interviewed the assistant headmaster, Pernille, who also taught 6C, I asked her what she thought the differences meant to the children:

> Pernille: Well - there are all kinds of children here (at Bakken), from 37 different nations. The kids don't even notice it. It's so good, the way they just don't notice the differences. They couldn't care less about them. No. Not at all. And that isn't … to my mind, that must be wonderful. Because you are taken good care of in school. You know – the kids, they themselves wish to have some kind of belonging here, at school.

We may note that Pernille strongly emphasized the children's indifference to racial differences. However, at a later point in the same interview, she said that the children in 6C were much more 'tactful' and 'polite' about such differences than the children in 6B, thus implying that difference is something that requires tact rather than being something unnoticed. She attributed 6C's 'tactfulness' to some extent to their regular classroom teacher Kari's ability to help the children talk to each other about it when somebody was teased, rather than being strict and 'putting a lid on things'. I also asked Pernille:

> ML: So what does it mean to be Norwegian, then?
>
> Pernille: Well – to be Norwegian is to be similar to Norwegians. I mean, they have a different appearance because they come from another country. But clothes, you see how they use clothes to become similar – to be accepted. But you can still see it from their appearance. But at the same time you can't see that Teresa is from South – that she is half South African. I mean, white South African. So let's turn it around and ask, who do you see here? Well, you see Hassan. That's easy. And you see Majid. Because of his Pakistani appearance, right? Then you see Aman, but Cevat and Yasmin you don't see them that easily because of the clothes, otherwise you could have seen it much more clearly.
>
> ML: Do you see Fatima?
>
> Pernille: Oh yes. Fatima with the headscarf.

Pernille presents a mixture of her own perceptions and what she feels are the children's main criteria for difference and not-Norwegian-ness. What she refers

to as 'their appearance' is evidently physical differences such as hair and skin color, but where these differences are minor, they can be further neutralized through the choice of 'Norwegian style clothes'. Dress codes are central in her observations of strategies to obtain similarity and through similarity, acceptance. Deliberate and marked differences in dress, such as the Islamic headscarf, makes for being noticed as different, as not Norwegian. Let us hear what 6C's teacher Kari herself thought about the way the children perceived of differences among themselves. She had been in charge of 6C since they were seven-year-olds in 1C, and knew them very well. The following is a passage from my interview with her:

> ML: Do you think the children notice the differences much – like, some of them are black and some are white or brown - ?
>
> Kari: I don't think they even see it really, nowadays. It's become so common. So I don't think they think about it. At all. Though perhaps – there was one girl in class who used a shawl. Two, in fact. I think the others reacted to that. More that than … the skin colour. The shawls sort of stood out more. They didn't tease them but I think they were sorry for them in a way.

Kari here implicitly contrasts 6C's experiences 'nowadays' to those of schoolchildren of times and places of her past, when racial differences were not common. In this perspective, such differences seem to have become the norm and therefore not noticeable. She moves on to talk about what she thinks they do notice, which is the use of Islamic headscarves. Again, dress codes matter. She does not explain here why she thinks the other children were sorry for the girls who wore headscarves, but I asked her how she felt about it:

> ML: Are you sorry for the (Moslem) girls?
>
> Kari: Yes, I am, actually. I do think – that they are a bit oppressed.
>
> ML: Do you ever talk about things like that in class?
>
> Kari: Yes - we did Islam last year in *KRL*[2] and then we talked about it. But I didn't use the word oppression then. I said it more sort of gently – I explained that boys were allowed to do more things than girls. And that girls were protected better and… and that their parents were more strict with them. So they know that. And they were like: 'Oh wow, I'm glad I'm not a Moslem'.

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[2] *Kristendom med religions- og livssynsorientering,* ("Christianity with religious and ethical education")

We have seen here that the two teachers who had spent the most time with 6C wanted me to know that racial differences did not make any difference to the children. Further, we have seen that they think differences in dress do make a difference, when it comes to following the current Norwegian trends in general and with regard to the Islamic headscarf for girls. I will return to the headscarf as a marker of ethnicity and gender towards the end of this article.

When I interviewed the children, one by one, I asked each of them to describe some of their classmates to me, as well as to tell me who they liked or did not like, what was special about them, and so on. All of them were very clear about the fact that girls and boys were different, and that this difference was important to them. As was also evident in their chosen 'sex segregated' seating patters, this was their most important criterion in choosing friends and playmates. The second most important criterion, which they also linked to sex, was what one liked to do, and whether one was 'quiet' or not. None of them explicitly described any of the others in terms of 'ethnic' or 'racial' differences. As in 'the incident', this phenomenon intrigued me. The last one I interviewed was Juni. I asked her what she thought it must be like to come to a school in Norway from another country, and she immediately said:

> Juni: That must be just awful.
>
> ML: Do you think so?
>
> Juni: Yes. One has to learn a completely new language. And kind of learn to act like we do and… Usually one does that, sort of, and then… because the teachers say 'Now I want you to be nice and make friends with her'. And then one does and after a while it's like, 'now it doesn't matter anymore, now she's got used to the whole class.' And then she stands there alone, right?
>
> ML: Yes. Who does?
>
> Juni: Uhm?
>
> ML: Who? Who do you mean, *she*?
>
> Juni: But it's gone really well for Rubina after all.
>
> ML: She doesn't come from another country, though.
>
> Juni: Uhm?
>
> ML: But she doesn't come from another country, though.

Juni: Hm.

ML: She comes from Lakkegata[3], kind of. (both laugh a little). Or? She did come from Lakkegata?

Juni: Lakkegata?

ML: Mm. That's not another country, is it?

Juni: (Pause). I don't quite get it. She does come from another country.

ML: Which country then?

Juni: I don't know.

ML: (laughs a little)

Juni: She does come from some country or another.

ML: How come?

Juni: But one can see that.

ML: How does one see it?

Juni: Well, she looks exotic.

ML: Yeees…(hesitates) In what way?

Juni: She does have kind of a Southern name, sort of.

ML: Yes… She could still be born here, though.

Juni: Yes, but she… yes, she could but… Then she must be half from another country or something.

When I introduced the phrase 'coming from another country', I chose it because it was a common descriptive paraphrase for 'immigrant' in the school, as in polite society at large, while ostensibly simply referring to anyone who does not 'come from' Norway – whatever that means. I was curious to see how this girl, who was generally good at expressing her ideas, would respond to my using the phrase in a literal but unusual sense, equaling 'coming from' to 'being born in' a country. This usage evidently confuses her and she hesitates in responding until she says that she doesn't understand what I mean.

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[3] Lakkegata is the name of another Oslo school, to the east of the city centre, where the majority of the children are of 'not-Norwegian' origins.

Juni was an intelligent girl with a natural curiosity that made it easy for me to ask her to help me solve the mystery, so I continued:

ML: I thought it was a bit funny when I first entered your classroom, because I'd heard it was a class with pupils from a lot of different countries. And then I came there and then everybody looked completely Norwegian and talked completely Norwegian, sort of.

Juni: All of us don't look Norwegian.

ML: Everybody doesn't look Norwegian? Well, maybe you don't. How come?

Juni: Well, one is very … one *acts* Norwegian, one doesn't *look* Norwegian.[4]

ML: Why not?

Juni: Because (hesitates)… but how do I say it?

ML: You can just say it, Juni.

Juni: Well, they – some come from Somalia, don't they, and there they are much browner than us! Much browner.

ML: Is that a dangerous thing to say?

Juni: Well - no. But then I feel so odd. It's, like, hum, well (noises indicating awkwardness).

ML: Because nobody does say it.

Juni: No. No, don't they?

ML: No.

Juni: Why is that?

ML: I don't know. That's one of the things I'm trying to find out.

Juni: Because they are scared that they – they kind of believe that -. Maybe they are afraid of getting a scolding from Pernille if they do say it.

ML: Have they been scolded (for that) before? What does she say then?

Juni: I don't really know, I haven't been scolded by her, ever. But she's awfully strict, you know.

---

[4] This observation echoes what one of the other teachers told me in the staff room: 'I think it's the language that makes a difference to the kids, more than the way they look, which doesn't really matter much, at least when they know each other. And of course how they behave – as long as they act Norwegian it's generally fine. The important distinction is in how they function.'

ML: But Kari doesn't scold you for that?

Juni: Yes. But she's not, like (makes angry noises, to illustrate how mad Pernille gets)

ML: She doesn't get that mad. Or, she gets that mad but she's less strict.

Juni: Mm. (confirming). Then she sort of takes those two… the … the victim, and the one who teased, and she sits down and then they talk about it.

The use of 'racial' language was sanctioned, according to Juni. Further, the final reply indicates that Juni herself had adopted Kari's view that such usage was a form of 'teasing'. I never overheard her 'teasing' anybody in this manner, and indeed this usage was more common among the boys. Let us visit their classroom again:

Interaction between pupils

Today at lunch, Hassan and the other boys tried to get Majid to give them pieces of his food, since he always brings samosas. When Majid didn't want to give him any, Hassan said: 'But I am your nigger (*neger)*, aren't I?' As in 'I'm your boy, I'm your friend' and as opposed (I think) to Mohamed who is not Majid's '*neger*'.

There is a marked breach here with the difference-evasive discourse employed in the presence of teachers. I never heard anyone in class use the word *neger* except Hassan, who used it to refer to himself. He was also the only one who said 'Paki' (*pakkis)* to Majid, in the same way. In appropriating white people's 'weapons' against their 'others', is giving them an ironic twist, Hassan also gave them a new valour. *Neger* is usually translated as 'negro'; however, Hassan's usage here implicitly refers to African American slang rather than the white Norwegian discourse where *neger* belongs. I have therefore chosen to translate it as 'nigger'. Hassan's reference to African American slang was, I would argue, an example of trans-coding (Hall 1997, p. 270). He used this technique in an attempt to establish himself as a 'cool black guy' rather than a 'poor immigrant', drawing attention to his colour as a 'masculine' trait rather than one of outsider-hood. The 'victim' thus turns into an active party without, however, escaping 'the contradictions of the binary structure of racial stereotyping' or unlocking 'the complex dialectics of power and subordination' (Hall

1997:272). In other words, elements from the discourse of essentialist racism are trans-coded to the discourse of race cognizance.

In a similar way, Hassan also used racial references to construct similarity to other boys:

> During Maths, the boys are talking at the back of the room. There is a lot of talking going on and Kaare has his attention elsewhere. Hassan: 'Cevat, what's "brown" in Turkish?' Cevat tells him. Hassan: 'Majid, you're a browny (repeats Cevat's word), right? (Gleefully, to Cevat and the children around him in general: 'he's brown, right?' Majid laughs and shakes his head good-moodedly.

Another variety Hassan used was constructing new words based on existing ones:

> Biliana pulls out a packet of cookies under her desk so that Kari doesn't see. She eats one and gives one to Eli. Hassan whispers from behind her back: 'Biliana, let the *neger* behind you have some of that. And Majid too. Your "authentic inlander" (*ekte innlending*) got one. Are you so mean that you won't give the "authentic outlanders" *ekte utlendinger* two each?' Biliana gives them two each.

Utlending, literally 'outlanding', means 'foreigner'. *Innlending* is Hassan's own invention, which marks a category that is usually unmarked because it is the norm against which other categories are contrasted. In this passage, Hassan referred to the teacher-controlled discourse which did mark the norm, referring to pupils as 'wholly Norwegian' or 'half Norwegian'. In referring to himself and Majid as not just 'wholly foreigners' but as 'authentic foreigners', he also gave the word 'foreigner' a positive valour. Although he was the most active in this sort of word game, he was not the only one:

> André dared me to say xxx (a Turkish word) to Cevat. I asked him what it meant, and he grinned sheepishly: 'It's a dirty word. In Turkish and Pakistani and Somali I know nothing but dirty words. Except 'potato' in Pakistani, but that's kind of racist too.' Me: "Potato", that's Norwegians?' André nods, embarrassed.

To sum up, it is quite clear that while the children employed a color evading discursive repertoire when teachers were listening, they often used racialised/-ing language among themselves. The discursive techniques they employed were, however, more ambiguous than Frankenberg found among white American

women. This is perhaps not surprising, considering that my material derives chiefly from what may be described as an inter-racial and inter-ethnic, mixed gender context rather than from one-to-one interviews by and with white women. The complexity of the children's discourse thus reflects the many positions within the discourse. Let us take a look at the added complication of the teachers' presence:

Interaction between teachers and pupils

6C had been working in groups, preparing presentations on sports and hobbies of their own choice. Group by group, they are now presenting their work to the class as a whole. Kari's role in the process has been to 'supervise and advise' the pupils, training their ability to work 'independently and in groups' and to 'make use of their own experiences in school', all in agreement with the national curriculum (L-97):

> Eli, Juni and Rebecca presented their work on riding and horses. Kari was sitting quietly at the back of the room, having left the floor to the three girls. When they had finished their presentation, their classmates were supposed to ask questions for the girls to answer. There were many questions, and the girls answered them as well as they could. Hassan asked: "In which ways are all those different races of horses different, exactly? Arabs, and all that? Is it the differences in colour, and which country they come from, and that kind of thing?" At this, Kari quickly got up, taking over even as she went to the front of the room, and proceeded to answer Hassan's question very carefully. She talked about different 'kinds' of horses, thus avoiding the word 'race', which the girls had been using and which Hassan had picked up.

Hassan was, I would argue, trying to provoke out into the open what he knew was there: the view of him as different. The teacher took control. She made sure that the implicit reference to 'human races' was not picked up, as if the question could really only be about horses. The symbolic position of teacher, which she had temporarily left to the girls, was the only place she could do this from, so she had to take it back from them immediately.

At another occasion, 6C were making newspaper collages around news items of their own choice, and chatting while they worked:

Hassan declared he was putting the world boxing championship under 'World News'. Cevat: 'Hey Hassan, are there any Somali boxers?' Hassan: 'Yeah, now there is. I can't believe Tyson knocks out Hollyfield. But anyway I like Tyson more.' Cevat: 'Mohammed Ali!' Hassan: 'I liked him even more.' André: 'Where's he from then?' Hassan: 'America.' Cevat: 'He's not Arabic, he became a Moslem but he's American. Kari, what do you call those people who eat people?' Several of the other children reply: 'Cannibals.' Hassan: 'But those others don't exist.' Then, to André: 'It's illegal in USA to make a *neger* president, and it's illegal in South Africa to have a white president.' Cevat: 'Kari, in Indonesia where they are fighting, are half of them Moslem and half Christian or what?' Kari goes to Cevat, leans over him and talks to him in a low voice. Hassan: 'There are cannibals in Somalia but they suck blood only.' Kari goes to Hassan, leans over him and talks to him in a low voice.

The entertaining dimension of the above field diary extract was also important to the children themselves - they were having fun. Still, the loosely directed comments and conversations in the classroom reflect the participants' concerns and views on racial and ethnic issues.

Hassan is concerned with Blacks, and Cevat wants to talk about Moslems. For them, these are important issues. Hassan *is* a Black boy. Cevat *is* a Moslem boy. In everyday interaction as well as in interviews, they repeatedly stressed these aspects of their identities. Hassan is also a Moslem, but he very rarely referred to it. For him, playing with images of 'the cool black guy' from American media was probably a better strategy for gaining popularity, which was evidently important to him. (He tended to try too hard, however, to the extent that Biliana told me in her interview that Hassan was a notorious copycat.) Cevat was much less concerned with being popular among the other children in 6C. He seemed to have decided to choose his own path, not letting school decide who he was supposed to be. His main social arenas were the Mosque ('I have over twenty friends there', he told me during the interview) where he spent most week-ends, and his family, resident in Oslo as well as in Turkey. To return to the situation above, Hassan finds it difficult to believe that Tyson knocks out Hollyfield – which may be because he sees Hollyfield as the stronger of the two, but equally likely is an underlying disappointment with Tyson for using his fist power against another Black boxer. Cevat finds it more interesting that Mohammed Ali is both American and a Moslem, a curious paradox of an

American who chose Islam. Why he then brings up the subject of cannibalism is unclear, as is Hassan's retort that 'those others' don't exist. However, Hassan returns to the position of Blacks, and points to a paradox that he finds more interesting than Moslem Americans. This time he talks about Blacks in an international perspective, in contrast to Whites, and once again uses the word *neger* in his ironic way. Cevat is still preoccupied with Moslems, however, this time in contrast to, and violent conflict with, Christians. While Kari is occupied with talking to Cevat, Hassan takes the opportunity to take old White myths about Black cannibalism out of the closet and ridiculing them.

Clearly there were a host of potentially dangerous 'differences' being taken out of their various closets here. Kari's strategy was to discretely take away the discursive elements that she found to be unacceptable. The technique she used was the one Juni described to us that Kari used when someone was teased: she sat down quietly and talked. What she said remained between her and the culprit. The effect was immediate.

As in the above example, apart from 'racial' differences, 'religious' differences caused the teachers some concern. The generally perceived, and therefore real, opposition between Islam and Christianity formed a backdrop for these concerns. Very few Moslem pupils came to school at all on the occasions when the whole school was going to church, and the teachers lamented this. They also resented the fact that many parents refused to let their children take part in the KRL (*Kristendom med religions- og livssynsorientering,* 'Christianity with religious and ethical education') lessons. A coalition of organisations who opposed the new KRL subject had taken the government to court over the right to refuse these lessons. While waiting for a verdict (the government won the case later),[5] Bakken had informally agreed to let the children of protesting parents do their homework in the classroom during KRL. In the staff room, Eva, the form teacher of 7B, argued:

> 'It is different now from what it was when we went to school. We do a lot of other religions too nowadays, not just Christianity. It's so – I mean,

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[5] '"No pupil may be excused from tuition in Christianity, religion and ethical education, regardless of the religion of their parents or their world view. The limited right to exception from Christian acts, which already exists, is sufficient." This was the Supreme Court's unanimous verdict in the case of appeal regarding full exception from Christianity, religion and ethical education lessons… the case is now on its way to the Human Rights Tribunal in Strasbourg'. (SMED 2002, my translation)

the kids share the same room all the time, and then they are cut off from learning this about each other, when it's so important! I just think they should change the name of this KRL and leave out Christianity from the name altogether. After all, it is about all religions isn't it? I mean, we've been doing nothing but Islam now almost from Christmas to Easter!' Kaare was not so sure: 'They do Christianity for ten years, though. Still, only in 5th grade they learn about other Christian churches, really that is too late! I remember what a revelation it was to me when finally, way up in lower secondary school we learned about other religions. Until then there was nothing. It's better now, but not that great.'

A key word here is *other*. The State religion of Norway, Lutheran Christianity, is still the norm, and is taught every year for ten years. Kaare was 6C's KRL teacher:

Kaare asks the class why it is important to learn about different religions. André: 'Because it's boring if everybody believes the same.' Kaare: 'Well – maybe – but can anyone think of another answer?' Maren: 'Because it's important to understand those who are different (*annerledes*)'. Maren's answer was approved by Kaare.

Again, the *we* constituted by the Norwegian State church is the norm, against which 'those who are different' are contrasted. The word *annerledes* (lit. 'otherwise') is often used in a condescending or patronising manner, marking the different as a minority that is vaguely inferior to the norm, or targeting them as needing something from the normal majority —perhaps just tactfulness, or some kind of welfare state measures.

Teachers only: curriculum, curricula

In the following, I will draw on Eisner's (1979, p. 83) argument that '...schools provide not one curriculum to students but three...' They are, he continues, the 'explicit curriculum', the 'implicit curriculum', and the 'null curriculum'. By explicit curriculum, I will here understand the aims, methods and content of teaching as written in official documents – chiefly the national core curriculum known as L97 – and in textbooks. By implicit curriculum, I understand the presuppositions underlying the explicit curriculum as well as the teachers' socially embedded views on what pupils should learn. I would hold that these two elements of the implicit curriculum are linked to each other and to dominant

views on social values in a mesh of dialectic relationships on many levels. The null curriculum is what schools teach by not teaching. It is, I would further argue, chiefly the implicit and the null curricula that together constitute and reproduce the social basis and legitimacy of the educational system. Let us take a closer look at these curricula in Norway and Bakken.

The explicit curriculum

Teachers represent the school and, in extension, the national educational system of which their school is a local manifestation. This aspect of school informs their classifications and choice of words. '(I)t is important to realize that the (…) categories administered by institutions (…) are not contingent facts or arbitrary frameworks imposed upon a pre-existing social basis. The social basis of society is as much constituted by these categories as the other way around. As shown among others by Handelman (1981), Bauman (1991), and Herzfeld (1992), the paradigmatic form of organization in the modern nation state is that of bureaucracy, a bureaucracy whose basic function is to generate taxonomies in order to act upon them.' (Fuglerud, in press.) The bureaucracy of the educational system is no exception to this. The dialectic relationship between the categories of the educational system and its 'social basis' is evident in everyday life in school. The very categories' of 'teacher' and 'pupil' in their local manifestations are products of schools and of the educational systems. However, 'teacher' and 'pupil' are far from being the only categories produced and reproduced by the educational systems. Rather, they serve as points of departure for finer classificatory distinctions. Let us take a look at some of these further categories as they are bureaucratically produced, starting with the national curriculum, usually referred to by its abbreviation 'L97'. In an international perspective, the Norwegian national curriculum plays an unusually important role. It is a 'total' curriculum in the sense that it includes virtually all schools and all pupils in the whole country, [6] and in the sense that it gives meticulously specified directions for teaching on all levels. The following is a quote from the national core curriculum's chapter on principles and guidelines, where the categories 'girls and boys' as well as 'language minorities' are singled out as referring to groups worthy of special attention:

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[6] Over 98% of all primary school pupils attend a public school in Norway (SSB 2001)

Gender equality

> Education must take into account that girls and boys often experience things differently. The compulsory school must contribute to ensuring that both genders have the same rights, obligations and conditions in family life, further education, working life and social life in general. Both in its contents and its organisation, learning material and working methods, the compulsory school must aim to provide girls and boys with equally good opportunities for learning, giving them the same attention, the same tasks and the same challenges. The education given must encourage both genders to assume responsibility at work and in social activities, and to prepare themselves for education and vocational choices according to their abilities and interests, regardless of traditional sex role expectations. The education given must stimulate and prepare girls and boys for their choices in further education; the basis of equal occupational opportunities. (L97)

We may note here that the differences in 'reality' between girls' and boys' perceptions, positions, and experiences form an explicit point of departure for the implementation of gender equality as an ideal. Let us compare this to the next paragraph in the same chapter:

Language minorities

> The broad educational aims, which apply to the compulsory school in general, also apply to the education of pupils from language minorities. Education shall help them to participate as equally worthy and active members of society. It shall also help to stimulate the language development of the pupils in accordance with their own aptitudes and abilities. (L97)

Where the immediately preceding paragraph counterpoises the two 'gender' categories, there is no explicit contrast here between 'language minorities' and 'language majorities'. The 'minorities' seem to exist as such in isolation, in contrast to an unspecified 'general' or 'normal' category. There is no corresponding suggestion in this instance of taking into account any existing differences between two counterpoised categories. Let me, as an illustration of my point, replace 'language minorities' with 'girls':

> The broad educational aims, which apply to the compulsory school in general, also apply to the education of girls. Education shall help them to participate as equally worthy and active members of society. It shall

also help to stimulate the language development of the girls in accordance with their own aptitudes and abilities.

This experiment serves to make clear some underlying premises when it comes to the position of 'language minorities' in school. Generally speaking, while girls and boys at least verbally are acknowledged as two parts of a whole, the 'language majority' that forms a corresponding counterpart to 'language minorities' is glaringly invisible. More specifically, firstly, since it is necessary to make it clear, it cannot be self-evident that the broad educational aims apply to 'language minorities'. The next entry is more confusing: on the one hand, it is easy to agree with the premise that it is unlikely that, without education, 'pupils from language minorities' be able to participate as equally worthy and active members of society. On the other hand, would one expect anyone to be able to be able to participate in such a way without any education, regardless of language background? There appears to be something about education in Norway that transforms 'them' from being inherently incompetent and passive in relation to 'society' to being more like 'us' and thus being more competent and willing to participate. Finally, 'they' are evidently not expected to develop their linguistic skills to any generally competitive level – language here presumably being synonymous with Norwegian.

What is the relevance of these paragraphs to the reality at Bakken? The national curriculum (L97) as a whole played an important role for the teachers in their work, although their view of it varied, mainly along with their closeness to the bureaucratic aspect of school. Let us turn to the topics of two paragraphs I quoted above, and some teachers' views of 'gender equality' and 'language minorities'.

The implicit curriculum

Rather than 'language minorities' (*språklige minoriteter*), which was the term used in L97, *'fremmedspråklige'* (foreign language pupils) was the word teachers and staff used to refer to those pupils whom they sometimes also referred to as 'wholly not-Norwegian' (*helt ikke-norske*). They had this term from older policy documents, where foreign language pupils had not yet been replaced by 'language minorities'. There was an open matter-of-fact attitude to the inevitability of the never-ending process of bureaucratic re-naming, as in this slightly frustrated quote from the staff room: 'What's the word now, you know, for what we used

to call "immigrant pupils" (*innvandrerelever*)?' 'Of course, the foreign language parents never come to collective voluntary work (*dugnader*)' Kari told me on one occasion. When it came to definitions, things invariably turned confusing, as the following examples show:

> ML: What is *fremmedspråklig*?
>
> Kari: It must be when both – the definition is if one of the parents come from another country. But there are many of the pupils who don't need extra tuition. But I suppose it must be those who have both their parents from another country. And have another mother tongue than Norwegian. So Norwegian is language number two. But for the resources that the school gets, one parent with a different mother tongue is enough.

Pernille tried to explain it to me:

> ML: I often hear the term *fremmedspråklig*, what does it mean exactly?
>
> Pernille: Who they are? Well. That's really a good question in this school. Because, if you look at 6C for instance, you'll find a good proportion of them defined as foreign language pupils. Because one of their parents comes from another country. But when it comes to who has a right to extra tuition – that's far from all of them. I mean, that's a matter of individual judgment.

In terms of the school's access to resources, there was a large proportion of foreign language pupils. When it came to the need for extra tuition, the proportion was considerably smaller. As Pernille indicates, the main reason for this was the relatively high number of 'half Norwegian' children.

When I interviewed Luigi, who gave extra tuition to foreign language pupils (a term he did not like), he voiced his frustration with the school's approach to minorities:

> 'Norwegian as a second language should be a subject for teachers, not for pupils. Of course, Norwegian pupils know some things that the other children don't know. Because school builds on their realities, not on the experiences of the immigrant children. So to my mind it is school, in fact most teachers, who could do with some extra tuition.'

Let us turn to a phenomenon that symbolically brings together the topics of dress code, religion, gender, and being different: the *hijab*, or Islamic headscarf for women (and girls). Kari, in her quiet way, had strong opinions about this.

When Rubina (the girl who 'came from another country' that Juni talked about, above) had just started at Bakken, Kari commented to me:

> 'It's so good to see a Pakistani girl with short hair! It really says it all about her family, really it does!'

On the day of the School Football Tournament, Kari had found herself a spot in the grass and several of the girls from 6C and 6B had gathered around her. One of them was Fatima 'with the headscarf', as Pernille had described her to me.

> Kari stroked Fatima's shiny black hair, telling her: 'You do have such beautiful hair. It is so good to see you without the veil for once.' Fatima squirmed a little, she looked embarrassed, but said nothing.

One day, Aman, who usually wore her long hair loose, turned up in school with a headscarf. The next day Aman did not wear the scarf, and I never saw her with a headscarf again. Since she was one of the children who did not get her parents' permission to be interviewed for my project, I never found a good opportunity to ask her about this. I interviewed Yasmin, however, and asked her if she knew if anyone had ever been teased for wearing a headscarf at Bakken:

> ML: Is anyone teased for wearing a headscarf at Bakken?
>
> Yasmin: Mm.
>
> ML: Who would that be?
>
> Yasmin: I don't know. But… I used to wear a scarf.
>
> ML: Did you?
>
> Yasmin: Some months. I tried it. At Møllergata[7] I tried it for some months. And then I quit at Møllergata and then I came to Bakken school. And then I said, 'No, I can't be bothered to do this anymore' and then I took it off.
>
> ML: Did you wear it to begin with, here?
>
> Yasmin: No
>
> ML: Never? They haven't ever seen you with the scarf?
>
> Yasmin: No-o.

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[7] Møllergata is the name of yet another Oslo school, to the east of the city centre, where the majority of the children are of 'not-Norwegian' origins.

ML: So why did you stop wearing it?

Yasmin: They don't know that I wore a scarf, right? They say: 'It's so good that you don't have a scarf', 'It's good you don't have a scarf'. You know. And if I tell them it'll be: 'Oooooo, my!' And, like: 'did you wear the scarf?'

ML: Well, I won't tell them.

Yasmin: No, please don't! (both laugh)

I also had the opportunity to ask Kari what she thought about the headscarf when I interviewed her, and she gave me another example – a girl who had moved from Bakken before my arrival.

Kari: Zara from Somalia. She was held very strictly. She was only allowed to take that shawl off when there were only girls in the classroom. So sometimes, we had to tell the boys to leave the room. Then we were all girls inside. Then she beamed with pleasure – it was incredible. And she got a lot of attention and sympathy.

ML: Do you find it problematic, when they wear it at school?

Kari: No, not problematic. But I do find it a little – I think it is – unfortunate, that such small girls have to cover their hair. And it hampers them. And it's warm. And it makes them so conspicuous. So I don't think pupils in primary school – I don't think it should be – I don't think it should be allowed, really. At least they could wait until lower secondary school. They should be old enough to decide – and not be, um, forced to wear it. But then it seems to make them proud too, in a way, it gives them a certain prestige – in the family – that now you're such a big girl that you should… so it has to do with identity and – it isn't really only negative.

ML: Well, I don't know. But maybe it does seem a bit unfair, when the boys don't have to.

Kari: Yes. Oh yes. They have much more freedom. Islamic boys are much more free than the girls. There's a vast difference there.

As these examples indicate, girls who wore the Islamic headscarf had reason to expect that teachers (especially women), as well as other pupils (especially girls) would feel sorry for them. Donning the headscarf was, it transpires, interpreted by Norwegian women and girls as an expression of a femininity that implied accepting subordination to men and boys. Skilbrei (in press) shows that

Norwegian women who work in the cleaning business have a corresponding experience versus middle-class Norwegian women. She holds that their expressions of female identity, cast in the mould of the old-fashioned housewife, elicit pity and condescension from educated women, who feel that their less fortunate sisters do not know what is best for them. The Norwegian feminist movement is to a large extent a success story, and Norwegian middle-class women are generally proud of their achievements in this field. As in other feminisms, however, white middle-class women's experiences have been the implicit points of departure and have had a hegemonic status. Their particular expressions of femininity have also achieved a superior status as compared to those of 'others', be they working-class Norwegians or Moslem schoolgirls. As yet, this superiority has not yielded to challenges from 'other' women (Berg and Lauritsen 1998).

To see the Islamic headscarf as a 'not-Norwegian' or even 'counter-Norwegian' expression of femininity only is, of course, inadequate. Yet highlighting this aspect of the *hijab* in a Norwegian school may help us see dominant Norwegian perceptions and expressions of femininity more clearly. I will not go into this in further detail here, but rather point at it as an interesting methodological possibility.

The null curriculum

What could possibly be missing in the extremely detailed and comprehensive national curriculum? In the quoted paragraphs from L97, the vagueness of the approach to 'Language minorities' stands out in stark contrast to the approach to 'gender equality'. An agenda on how to achieve 'ethnic equality' is, in other words, missing. So is the history of ethnic minorities in Norway, including knowledge of the different religions present in Norway. The many ways in which colonial history has affected Norway, both domestically and internationally, is also absent. Summing up, the general Norwegian 'undercommunication of difference' (Gullestad 1992) is manifest in the national curriculum – to some extent with the exception of gender differences.

Differences and indifferences

In this article, I have attempted to describe and discuss how evasion was the discursive option available to pupils in interaction with teachers, and how they made use of other options in the (relative) absence of authority. I have also tried to show how these strategies related to the curriculum as understood and put into practice by the teachers.

In Norway, equality understood as sameness is generally seen as a necessary point of departure for interaction (cf. e.g. Gullestad 2002, p. 82, and Lien, Lidén and Vike 2001). In my material, there is little or no indication of the teachers or the curriculum giving pupils any adequate basis for talking about, and dealing with, real social differences. Nor did school provide any tools for critical reflection on different ways of talking about, and dealing with, such differences. What school does not teach may be as important as what it does teach, indeed what school does not teach pupils in fact does teach them something (Eisner 1994). Implicitly, school taught that differences were dangerous and were to be evaded, but it left to the children to find out why this was so.

The children did perceive the differences that structure much of society and indeed of everyday life at school, such as differences in language, class, skin colour or religion. They found their own ways to handle such differences, and became very adept at switching between evading differences, as school taught them to do, and dealing directly with the same differences in their own ways. There is little reason to believe that this was particular for Bakken. On the contrary, I would assume that it is a general phenomenon in Norwegian schools. This is both because of the formally and informally hegemonic position of the national curriculum, and because the curriculum itself is only a reflection of a general Norwegian ideology and practice of equality as sameness.

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Equal recognition of one's identity is not just the appropriate mode for healthy democratic society. The projection of an inferior or demeaning image on another can distort and oppress, to the extent that the image is internalized.

<div align="right">(Charles Taylor 1994)</div>

Pirjo Lahdenperä

From a monocultural to an intercultural approach in education

In Sweden there are already many so-called multiethnic or multicultural schools, i.e. an increasing number of schools have students with varied cultural backgrounds. The schools are multicultural because of the multiethnic students. However, these schools usually work as ordinary Swedish schools without defining themselves as or working as multicultural or multiethnic schools. If one defines a school as multiethnic and multicultural in its activities, one should reasonably assume the existence of appropriate educational content, working methods, and different type of organization, which uses the students' different cultures and languages as a starting point instead of solely depending on Swedish. The various aspects of school activities such as teaching, evaluation, assessment, and grading, operations and curriculum, educational materials, etc. should reflect the multicultural composition of the students. The development of activities from monocultural to multicultural is an unexplored area, where the research on the teacher's role goes hand in hand with the multicultural school development.

Evaluations from a number of multicultural classes show that the teachers, despite the students' varied backgrounds, often teach the classes as if the students were ethnically Swedish. In my study (Pirjo Lahdenperä 1997) study, for example, teachers were very aware of the multicultural students but they often defined having a class with many immigrant students. This perspective assumed a monocultural perspective, where the "Swedishness" formed the basis, norm and goal for the teaching. This article reviews the results of my study on Swedish teachers' thinking about immigrant students and their difficulties at school. It also discusses the much-needed change in research tradition from monocultural to intercultural educational research. The term intercultural commonly refers to an interaction process with mutual contacts between persons from different cultural backgrounds. In general, different cultural backgrounds allude to intercultural connections to different ethnic cultures.

In the prevailing thinking in Sweden, not only in administrative circles of schools but also in teachers' pedagogical discussions, is such that students with immigrant backgrounds are often associated with problems and difficulties. The primary aim of my research (Lahdenperä 1997) was to examine the relationship between teachers' conceptions of students' difficulties at school, the attitudes towards students' immigrant background and ethnic classification. The overall purpose of the study was to survey and analyze teachers' conceptions and attitudes as contextual factors for immigrant students´ schooling and discuss how the beliefs one can be elucidate and change.[1]

The research questions as such are omitted in this text.

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[1] Against the background of the distinction made between three different orientations and strategies within multicultural education in the USA (Banks, 1992), these being (1) curriculum or syllabus orientation, (2) achievement orientation, and (3) inter group education orientation, it is ascertained that both the curriculum or syllabus orientation and the inter group education orientation have been significant to multicultural education in Sweden. Achievement orientation receives less attention both in educational research and in school administrative discussions. The intention of this thesis is to study the factors surrounding immigrant students' schooling.

Research as a constructive process

The social-constructionist view of communication presupposes that people interpret and create the social reality. Language is the key instrument that allows us to create the reality we live in and coordinate our actions with others. This implies that meaning is created and given by the interaction that takes place between people. The interpretation of an event or experience for a person depends on the context in which she or he finds herself or himself. Thus, meaning also depends on social circumstances, evaluations, criteria, interests, attitudes and social practices. The social reality is created, ordered and given meaning with linguistic tools, (for example, terms, concepts, categories, etc.) The study discussed here can be seen as a constructive process. The purpose of the study is not to give an objective or correct picture or image of reality, but rather to create structures and "tools" with which to describe, examine, and treat this reality. The social constructionist goals for knowledge are compatible with, for example, the study's purposes of analysis and systematization of the thinking on school difficulties - and of finding and systematizing different attitudes.

Social constructionism, as interpreted by Gergen (1985, 1989), Harré (1985), Shotter (1989, 1993), Krippendorf (1991), Steier (1991) and others, as well as the psychological communications orientation of Cronen and Pearce (1980, 1985), and Pearce (1994, 1995), constituted the epistemological and methodological basis for the study. The social constructionistic orientation proceeds from the epistemological assumption that objective knowledge or reality does not exist and cannot be conceptualised outside our senses and language. Meaning and the social world which people live exist in an inter-subjective medium. We construct the world by the means of language, and language is, by nature, a relationist-oriented phenomenon. Thinking, conceptions, and attitudes are viewed as interpersonal phenomena, since meaning is created and given in the interaction and communication between people. Thus all these ideas and designations can also be viewed as culture-related, depending upon the cultural context in which meaning is created and given. Culture is therefore a part of our social world. As other aspects of our social world, culture is also a context for the conversations in which we participate and of which we are products.

People who form an integral part of the same culture tend to perceive phenomena in a similar way. They tend to take many things for granted. Therefore, all culturally bound perceptions and conceptions can be regarded as more or less ethnocentric. When one applies the above social-constructionist theory to the concept *culture*, – (as an analytical tool) – one can describe it, analyze it, or study it from the seven different points of view:

1) cultural artefacts, i.e. different cultural products and depictions, such as cuisine, art, architecture, music, costumes and dance;

2) repeated patterns of behaviour such as different types of practices, traditions, rituals, celebrations, how one maps out one's day, etc.;

3) collective religious conceptions and belief systems, i.e. different conceptions, values, virtues, opinion systems, norms and evaluations, what is right and wrong;

4) our thinking, i.e. the way to think, abstractions, concepts, categories, metaphors, memory functions, etc. are culturally bound as well as;

5) emotions, i.e. frames of mind and emotional expressions and feelings;

6) the way to communicate and relate to one's surroundings, such as family relations and the relationship between the sexes, are dependent on the surrounding society and culture in the above-mentioned social-constructionist perspective.

7) self concept, how one constructs one's own personal picture as a person – is also culturally bound.

My empirical research material consisted of an *intervention program*, designed in connection with in-service training courses in special education dealing with immigrant students at the Stockholm Institute of Education. In these programs, the teacher describes a student or a class/group as problematic for him/her or for other teachers in one's school. With a social constructionistic approach, the intervention program, as research material, can be studied as communication texts and as written stories. In order to analyse the contents and get at the "treasures" in the intervention program, the content analysis as a textual analytical research method was chosen. The textual analytic research process for the study of the intervention programs can be described as a circular process in the following phases: (1) pre-understanding, (2) constructing analysis (3) in-depth analysis and (4) new constructions. From the results of variations in

conceptions and attitudes, conclusions can be drawn for new constructions, i.e. in the form of a system of meaning. Cognitive maps make up the theoretical basis for construction of the categorisation charts with the help of which the text in the intervention programs were been studied and analysed. These cognitive maps consist of two different maps:

i) thinking on school difficulties and ii) attitudes toward students' immigrant backgrounds and ethnic classifications.

Thinking on school difficulties

Cognitive maps made up the theoretical basis for the construction of the categorization charts with the help of which the text in the intervention programmes were studied and analysed. Foucault's (1969, 1971) concept of discourse was used in the reconstruction of the concept of school difficulties. The concept of school difficulties was chosen as an overall conception, in order to put the phenomena being analysed into concrete form. Up to now, special education and student welfare have been an overall concept in theoretical analyses and in the general thinking on difficulties in school. However, in the discourse analysis they are subordinate concepts, which exemplify both discursive practice and praxis in how difficulties in school have been analysed and treated. Teachers' thinking in general on and about school difficulties was divided into three different discourses:

1) student characteristics approach;

2) student development approach;

3) contextual approach.

Student characteristics approach. Medical, biological, individual, and differential psychological theory, which focused on aptitude-related explanation models, served as the basis for understanding here. Difficulties or handicaps were viewed as related to one or more characteristics - deficiencies, faults, aberrations, or injuries - which an individual possessed. Examples were descriptions of a student who lacked self-confidence or ability in mathematics, a student who was aggressive, hyperactive, anti-social, had difficulties concentrating or learning. The descriptions used tent to be based on an image of a functional and active

personality as a norm, in which the extent of the defect was the distance to normal functioning. Diagnosis or judgement of the type and extent of the defect were based on descriptions of the person's behaviour and on standardized tests results. Intervention work in such instances would be focused on helping students adjust to school's requirements. This occurred by using specialized educational intervention focusing on the application of different forms of treatment, enlisting the aid of specially trained personnel as psychologists or special teachers, or by placement in institutions, in treatment homes, or in special classes or groups.

Student development approach. An interactional view of the individual's development served as the guiding tool here, where the focus was more on the students' development and needs, rather than on characteristics and aptitudes. The purpose of diagnosis and problem descriptions was to find one or more areas within the framework of a holistic development approach, which were neglected or in need of reinforcement. A holistic view of development included the individual's cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, social, and physical development, in which the various aspects of development were characterized by their own research traditions and explanatory models, as well as treatment expertise in the area.

From this viewpoint, reasons for difficulties and problems can be found in mental disorders, functional impediments or faults related to different needs for development, such as emotional disorders, social problems, dysfunctions in cognitive processes, such as language development and memory, or disorders or impediments in physical development related to different kinds of diseases and disabilities. Diagnosis was based on a description of the conditions of the child's socialization history, where an effort was made to identify a deficiency or injury in that particular area of development, which might have explained the difficulty or problem. The result of the "socialization description" was then translated into an intervention plan geared towards the student's needs, in order to be able to make necessary changes to the pedagogical environment, the manners of instruction, or treatment of the child's needs, level of functioning and prerequisites.

Contextual approach. The third approach to school difficulties can be found within the field of system theory and organization theory. In these models the individual and his/her behaviour are always seen as a part of the larger environment in which each individual functions - the group, the class, the teachers' room, the family, the culture, and the school system. This occurs on

both a large and small scale, i.e. in the context where problems and difficulties appear and are experienced.

Environment as a basis. Insights from of organizational theory were used as a tool to shed light on different organizational factors as bases for analysis and treatment of difficulties and problems in school. In this view it is not only the students who have difficulties in school, but also the personnel working in the school; teachers can have teaching difficulties, administrators can have administrative problems, and so on. In this manner, the picture of difficulties in school is broadened: the teachers may have difficulties independent of the students, just as the school leadership may have difficulties organizing and running the school as a professional organization. A school leader who has problems, for example, distributing his or her workload and steering the school's personnel may pave the way to the development of conflicts between teachers. Pupils tend become blamed for problems, are readily defined as hopeless, etc. A teacher who is incapable, for example, of making mathematics more concrete and thus understandable for children creates the preconditions for problems in mathematics for the children, etc.

Environmental factors can relate to the school's decision-making process, instruction, co-operation between staff members, inter-school relations, teaching methodology, the group, etc. Intervention possibilities at the organizational level mentioned in schools included local development programmes, inspired by systems theory approach, where the focus was on staff and activity development. Working methods to accomplish this might include consultation, group discussion, work plans, teaching methods, courses etc.

Meaning as basis. Social constructionism was used as a starting point to conceptualize the "meaning". It is a theory in which science, logic, knowledge, etc. are arranged in a semantic and social context. The emphasis when analyzing difficulties and problems and selecting appropriate treatments is on "systems meaning". The focus here was on description of difficulties as they existed in the present – relations, communications, evaluations and attitudes, "games rules" in the form of agreements and actual functioning of school organisation. For example, the bullying and discrimination of a student are treated as school based problems and not as the problem of a single person.

Systems working methods to solve problems were derived from a system theory approach. These stem from family therapy approaches as well from the therapeutic and work transition fields. A typical intervention along these lines

would be to create a student welfare team whose assignment is to develop interaction conditions and communication within the school organization. In this consultative working method - in which everyone involved in the school and outside school becomes involved in the process of change - alternative ways of looking at the problem and reformulating the problem is desirable in order to create the possibility of change and development. In this way, the different systems of meaning, which exist in a school system, can be elucidated and changed.

Attitudes toward the student's immigrant background

Westin (1984) states that attitude, as an analytical instrument, contains three components or aspects: a) beliefs, b) values, and c) intentions. Here a belief refers to characteristics, a value regarding a decision of whether the object in question is good or bad and an intention as to how the person might consider dealing with the object in question. Very generally speaking, attitudinal approach to a student's immigrant background can be divided into two types individual: a) the categorizing and b) the non-categorizing.

Among the *categorizing* types are the teachers who regarded aspects in students' immigrant backgrounds as a deficiency, which the school should treat or compensate for. For these teachers, the student's immigrant background or ethnic classification is a reason to classify the student *negatively*. The teacher's own upbringing, culture, social position, qualifications, values, etc. are frames of reference that encourage an ethnocentric attitude used for evaluating and interpreting the student and his/her parents. Categorization can also result in a *positive attitude*, i.e. the student's immigrant background is evaluated as a useful resource for the person, the instruction, or the entire school. Among the positive attitudes are those by the teacher towards students' mother tongue, country or cultural heritage.

The *non-categorizing* attitude can be characterised as *neutral* or *indifferent, reciprocal* or *intercultural*. The difference lies in whether the relationship to the student/problem is described in terms of you, he/she/it or I. The *neutral* or indifferent attitude could indicate dissociation from the student. The student is treated as a third person. A reciprocal attitude indicated a capacity for affective and cognitive insight into the student's situation and needs. It also expressed a will or intention to treat the student with consideration and respect. The student

is treated as "you," as an individual; neither ethnic classification nor immigrant background influence recognition and categorization. An *intercultural* attitude indicates a consciousness of one's own cultural background and presumes an equal relationship. The teacher describes the student or the problem in the first person, i.e. he/she is conscious that the description of the student concerns a person with another ethnic background, which might cause biases and limit the understanding of that person. An intercultural attitude can describe the problem as a form of cultural conflict.

The results of the research

The results of the research on the intervention program showed that most common view of school difficulties was dominated by the *characteristics* discourse. More than half (55%) of the teachers perceived the student's characteristics, behaviour, or background (e.g. parents) as reasons for school-related problems. Barely a third (28%) of the teachers' answers made reference to aspect of the student's development as reasons for the problem or as something that could be treated in school. At least 83% of the teachers categorized the students as ones who "owned" the difficulties and problems in school - and thereby disregarded environmental factors around the student. Only 16% of the teachers embrace any kind of an environment or in the contextual view of school problems. These teachers explained or described problems in terms of group problems or environmental issues, which included instructional difficulties among colleagues, administrative shortcomings or cultural conflicts between different ethnic groups in the school.

Examining the results of the study regarding attitudes toward the student's immigrant background revealed that 70% of the teachers perceived aspects of the student's background or ethnic classification as negative for schoolwork. None of the teachers had exclusively positive attitudes toward the student's immigrant background. One-fourth of the teachers can be characterized as having had a reciprocal or intercultural attitude. These teachers were committed to the student and had a non-categorizing view of the student's immigrant background and ethnic classification.

Conceptions of school difficulties and attitudes toward the student's immigrant background seemed to be related. Viewing problems in terms of

characteristics tends to be associated with a negative or categorizing attitude toward the student's immigrant background. A developmental view is also not devoid of negative and categorizing attitudes. It is worth noting that 76% of the teachers who embraced a developmental perspective exhibited categorizing attitudes. The reason might be that is it difficult to analyze students' needs without being ethnocentric. Barely one-quarter exhibited a reciprocal attitude to the student's immigrant background and ethnic classification. Those teachers who took into account students' environmental factors, using contextual analysis, were the least negative or categorical toward the student's immigrant background.

Variations were identified in the study of conceptions and attitudes, as related to the teachers' background factors, e.g. ethnic classification, school experience, education, and school level. The teacher's capacity for reciprocal thinking increased if the student and the teacher had the same ethnic classification, or if the teacher identified with the student's immigrant background. Analogously, difference in ethnic classification and having awareness of cultural distance increase the desire for separation, i.e. discrimination of the student.

The majority of teachers with multicultural backgrounds exhibited a non-categorizing attitude toward the student and his/her background. Both teachers of Swedish as a second language and Swedish class teachers were among those who categorized the most negatively. Only one of these teachers showed any contextual understanding of school difficulties. A possible reason could be, that the organizational placement for class teachers and for teachers of Swedish as a second language - those with the duty of teaching immigrant students to speak Swedish - forms a framework for non-contextual conceptions of school difficulties. This also holds true for the negative attitude toward the student's immigrant background. It is hard to identify a uniform pattern in special teachers' conceptions and attitudes. They could be found anywhere on the continuum of possible conceptions and attitudes, with the exception of the negatively categorizing and intercultural approaches. None of the teachers at the upper secondary school level viewed school difficulties using development approach. Upper secondary school teachers either categorized the student's immigrant background or exhibited a contextual and non-categorizing view of problems and difficulties with those termed immigrant students. Nor many upper secondary school teachers attended my course, and they were therefore not well represented in the study. Hence, no conclusions could be drawn about a relationship between "grade level being taught" and one's conceptions and attitudes.

Reflections and implications of intercultural research

The problems associated with immigrant research do not relate to the circumstance that immigrants or minorities constitute the object of different types of mapping and investigations, but also that the reference point for the results and conclusions uses monocultural Sweden as the measurement instrument. However, the norm or values of Sweden are beyond evaluation. The monocultural perspective – this might relate to the identity formation of minority children, the control of language, school success, or the standard against which everything is measured in today's school research. Since the in-depth study suggested that a contextual conception of difficulties in school and an intercultural attitude toward immigrant students appeared to be the least discriminatory with respect to students with immigrant backgrounds, it is useful to discuss the conditions for a contextual and, respectively, an intercultural intervention project. These conditions include the following.

a) To change the general thinking about school difficulties away from focusing on problem individuals toward a wider context emphasizing problem generating systems or systems of meaning. This presumes that the problem can be reformulated, from being about students as "owner" of difficulties to studying in what context and in what activities or operations the problem is experienced and described. Teaching, learning, instruction, administration, and cooperation are examples of such activities upon which the formulation of difficulties and problems can be built. Such activities (e.g. co-operation) can be analysed with reference to, for example, communication, relations, interaction patterns, unofficial "game rules," official agreements, and concrete courses of action.

b) It is important that there be staff at the school who can comprehend, analyse, and change the school and the way the students are approached, and that they have experience and knowledge of different schools and forms of instruction that they can successfully work with students from immigrant backgrounds. Moreover, it is of vital importance that there are staff at the school that have the legitimacy and the qualifications to deal with teaching problems, administrative difficulties, or with the school's philosophy.

c) Experience of different cultural contexts and of multicultural relations can be an advantageous for the development of an intercultural attitude, since these offer possibilities for the treatment of ethnocentric ideas and broadening

of the individual's cultural horizon. Bicultural or multicultural people, acting as home language teachers, are important resources at the school when dealing the multicultural students. They can contribute to the creation of the necessary conditions for the intercultural viewpoint, which, as stated by the guidelines for Swedish schools (Skolöstyrelsen, 1987, 1989), are to characterize all school activity.

The changes needed in the philosophical and the discursive concepts, which I have illustrated on the basis of analysis of approaches presently being used to define the issues as follows.

1. To shift from using the concept of immigrant students and students with immigrant backgrounds to multiethnic students, which better describes the multicultural cultural richness in the student, as well as his/her need for recognition of both (or multiple) cultures that make up a person's identity (Lahdenperä, 1996, 1997). To refer to the actual culture in which the person is living, working or interacting, I would like to speak of one's "contextual culture".

2. To shift from compensatory to complementary attitudes toward parents. In Sweden the school has a compensatory political task in society, e.g. that the school would compensate the lack of resources, abilities or parental care or other disadvantages relating to socio-economical factors in students' home environment. This task can be problematic when attempting to arrive at a more equal relationship between parents and the school. A complementary position implies that the school is seen as socially complement the upbringing being provided by the parents. Upbringing is seen as a partnership in which it is important that the multicultural/multiethnic parents are invited to discuss their child's schooling and education as communication partners on an equal standing. Discussions cannot be blocked by embracing a single model approach or strategy, which is perceived to be valid for all multicultural children, regardless of their cultural origins, their situations, and their status in the country; there must be an acceptance of all bicultural educational strategies[2].

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[2] According to acculturations research (Liebkind, 1994; Sue&Sue, 1990) biculturation is the most positive adaptation strategy for minorities and immigrants. Biculturation is even considered to be good for the minority's psychic well-being and social relations, since the language and cultural barriers are not obstacles in the creation of social relations neither with relatives and other close friends from the original culture nor with people from the contextual culture. Futhermore, biculturation leads to two languages or multilingualism which increase the mobility of the family and the individual and the possibilities to seek education and work both inside and outside the country in question.

3. To shift from immigrant research to intercultural research. In immigrant research, the focus is placed on immigrants or on minorities. The surrounding country, the society with its institutions, etc. have been seen as being located outside the interest area of the research. In intercultural research, however, interest is directed at the surrounding society and on the interplay between, for example, the majority society and its minorities. These phenomena are studied from an inter-ethnic, inter-cultural viewpoint in which the different cultural perspectives, like majority and minority perspectives, connect and complement each other.

Why intercultural research

Since the pedagogical and didactical problems that occur in multiethnic schools are thoroughly socially constructed and contextual, it is an advantage that the research takes place in the interaction between various actors in the situation where it is experienced. Heterogeneity in the project group with respect to insiders versus outsider's status, ethnic backgrounds, professional experience, etc. is an asset in the research process. "Researchers" come into the situation with a variety of views and experiences. This pertains to various aspects of the research process: the theories employed the hypotheses, the interpretation of research results or their research attitudes. Teachers come with cultural competence concerning the school and its curriculum, methods employed and special teaching problems that might have been experienced. Heterogeneity provides the possibility to "complementary asymmetrical positions" (Boman, Rodell Olgac (1999), where the researcher and the teacher combine their different competencies and perspectives jointly to create a picture of the school and the work in the classroom.

In different contrasting views are combined, intercultural research offers further possibilities to make clear culturally bound assumptions of learning and teaching as well as the teacher's work and role. This is made easier if the teacher and the researcher have different cultural competencies and ethnic backgrounds. The prerequisite for such intercultural work is that there is an opportunity to discuss culturally bound aspects and that they occur in an open and permissible climate, where no one judges or evaluates the other's work. It can be difficult to attain these relations between a teacher in the field and a researching teacher trainer/methodology teacher, since the task of the teacher

trainers to judge and evaluate the teachers and their work. To evoke other perspectives and "cultural restraint" through role-playing exercises can be a possible way for a common and productive research work.

Furthermore, it is my opinion that it is not only possible to learn theoretically, i.e. cognitively, how to become conscious of one's own cultural conceptions and limitations. Ethnocentric conceptions and evaluations must be confronted with other ideas and emotionally processed. This is also time-consuming. Consequently, if a research project claims to be called intercultural, it implies actors with different ethnic and cultural perspectives need to participate, as well as having both majority and minority perspectives present. The characteristics of the research objects, for example, multicultural children or intercultural learning, do not make the research intercultural. An intercultural teaching process is demanded, where different phenomena are viewed from different cultural viewpoints and perspectives and confronted with them. Therefore, it is an advantage if the research group consists of different ethnicities so that an intercultural learning process can begin. This learning process makes it possible to deal with different culture-bound conceptions, the reconstruction of old belief systems and practices, as well as the creation of something new.

To sum up, intercultural research can be described as research, which studies different phenomena from interethnic, intercultural viewpoints, where different cultural perspectives, for example, majority and minority perspectives cooperate and complement each other. In a multicultural society schools will have intercultural challenges and we need the established research practice that helps to provide solutions for daily parctices. The task of the intercultural pedagogical research, among other things, is to make clear the ethnocentric and monocultural ideas and evaluations in schools and in education. The aim is to bring about changes in one's outlook and the processes of interaction and in the monocultural way of tackling the "problem." But no individual research approach can alone study this complex multicultural system on its own. Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarly research attempts are needed, that illuminate the school and the education from different points of view.

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Teaching is an intellectual, creative,
moral and political endeavour
(Alan Perskin 1985)

Jukka Husu

Teacher ethics and the educative importance of school values[*]

Nowadays, schools are under a pressure to create safe, orderly, and effective learning environments where students can acquire social as well as academic skills that will allow them to succeed in school and beyond. Over the last two decades, student populations – but also teachers – have become increasingly diverse. Students and teachers sharing the same school can come from a broad rage of cultures and socio-economical backgrounds. As a result, schools face the challenge of creating pedagogical environments that are sensitive to numerous individual backgrounds in order to support students' social and academic success. Schools can no longer afford to focus solely on delivering academic curricula; they are also responsible for establishing and maintaining school-cultures that empower students - and teachers alike – to negotiate the diverse values and social norms of our communities (Noddings, 1992). The aim is to improve social competence among all pedagogical participants. This is because social curricula are crucial for mutually productive interactions and durable interpersonal relationships. However, students benefit not only socially, but also academically, when they are supported by caring classroom and school environment (Wentzel, 2003).

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[*] A significant portion of this chapter is based on prior work published in the following articles: Husu, J. (2001). Teachers at cross-purposes: A case report of ethical dilemmas in teaching. *Journal of Curriculum & Supervision, 17*(1), 67-89; Husu, J. (2003). Teacher ethics – a mission impossible? *Teacher Development, 7*(2), 311-326; Husu, J. & Tirri. K. (2007). Developing whole school pedagogical values – a case of going through the ethos of "good schooling". *Teaching and Teacher Education* (in press).

This paper aims to empower the voices of social context of schooling. It argues the standard viewpoint that the four walls of the classroom contain all that is necessary to understand and direct what goes on within them. In addition, it encourages to utilize the cultural experiences and the embedded knowledge of teachers and students to understand what takes place in their practices. This knowledge can help the practitioners themselves, as well as the public, to understand their own place and their knowledge holding position within the flows of pedagogical practices taking place in schools.

It is hoped that these investigations can open new horizons to what teachers and students actually do and are able to do in schools. To explore the conditions of pedagogical practices can make teachers' work more visible and give them more control over what they are doing. However, the purpose of this paper is not to present the 'foreground': the results of 'what works' but, instead, to highlight the 'background' of professional action - teacher ethics and school ethos.

Emergent problems of schooling

Over the past decade, the social context of urban education in Finland has been transformed. Caution requires modesty in claiming which factors have been the most important ones within this development. However, the following features in school life stand out (cf. Hautamäki *et al.*, 2000; Jakku-Sihvonen, 2002):

Student background There are several examples of the relationship between social factors and the educational access and outcomes. Students from socially-deprived families are more likely to experience school problems and are less likely to participate in learning activities. Also, parents' education level is strongly associated with student achievement. In general, children of parents with higher levels of education perform better, on average, on assessments of academic achievement. In addition, pupils from high-income families are more likely to go further levels of education than pupils from low-income families.

Diversity Minority students are projected to make up an increasing share of the school age population during the coming decades. Nowadays, the average rate of students from different cultural backgrounds is approximately 7% in capital area of Helsinki but their number will be increasing. Consequently, the percentage of pupils having difficulty speaking and understanding Finnish will grow. Important, by social standards, these pupils are also more likely to live in poor economical conditions.

Differences in schools The development causes growing differences in and between schools. Especially within secondary schools, it has become evident that schools' ability to implement equality policies in order to secure pupils' equal opportunities to present and further studies can be in danger. The prevailing national politics of economizing and student ranking also endangers educational equality in schools (Soep, 2006). Yet, according to recently published PISA study, the differences between schools in pupils' learning level are still smaller in Finland than in any other country in the study.

The role of school The role of school in pupils' general learning capabilities is clearly significant: schools are responsible to as much as a fifth of all the differences between pupils' meta-learning skills and capabilities. Here, schools' operating principles are at the centre. According to the national evaluation report, there are very clearly differences between schools' operating principles. The report showed that the problem in the schools that perform poorly was not specifically the level of teaching, but was usually related to the general issues to do with the school's working and educating environment.

As presented, the school is a principal site for the early encounter of social contradictions and tensions, thus placing students and teachers at the frontline of social problems. In this light, schools can be seen as sites and instruments through which practical actions, cultural responses and material conditions are played out (Coburn, 2003). Schooling is not only a 'pedagogical instrument,' it is also a site for many contra dictionary forces and forms. Accepting this premise does not mean adopting of 'mission impossible,' but rather committing to an understanding of the complexity of contemporary schooling experiences (Wills, 2003).

Ethical judgement in teaching

Recently, education has become a topic of increased interest in professional ethics. These activities warrant consideration about the "field" of these issues (e.g. Strike & Soltis, 1985; Strike & Ternasky, 1993; Sockett, 1993; Hansen, 1995; Hostetler, 1997, Cambell, 2003). Previous research on ethical judgements in teaching reveals that most teachers are not always aware of the impact of their actions and decisions (Jackson et al., 1993). Furthermore, teachers have reported that they are ill-prepared for dealing with ethical dilemmas that they identify in their work (Lyons, 1990; Husu & Tirri, 2001).

Professional ethics concerns those norms, values, and principles that should govern the conduct of educational professionals. It emphasizes the inherent normative meanings that determine the appropriateness of professional practices. The normative core of professional ethics, therefore, provides various ways to appraise the merits and to judge the significance of educational practices taking place in schools (Strike & Ternasky, 1993, p. 2). Because teachers work in public institutions and make decisions with which the public may deal, they likely need professional skills to enhance their decision making. Teachers distribute resources, mete out punishment, grade papers, evaluate performance, make curricular choices, and deal with comparatively naïve and vulnerable students in their classrooms. There appear to be no "definite answers" for how to handle these professional tasks because the answers always can be contested. However, no moral movement of any kind is possible without some sense of direction (i.e., that "this is better" and "that is worse"). Therefore, the normative core of professional ethics presents a starting place for discussion and reflection.

When a teacher makes a decision, it is no longer a descriptive consideration, but becomes normative at the very moment that the decision is made. Teachers must take stands and evaluate what they are doing at every step of their practice. These processes may be unconscious, but, nevertheless, they are normative on some basis (Kansanen *et al.* 2000). According to Oser (1994), "any single teaching act undertaken in a classroom or in any teaching setting has a moral core" (p. 59). The unit of analysis is the teacher's decision to help her or his educational partners learn, communicate, reflect, evaluate, and so forth. Consequently, the very point of decision making turns descriptive thinking toward the normative side. In addition to the teacher's knowledge base, many other contextual factors influence this process. Fenstermacher (1994), for example, has analyzed the nature of knowledge in teacher research and has considered many aspects of knowledge as a concept and as an application in the research into teaching. What is needed, however, is not this kind of justification but essentially an open approach based partly on knowledge of research, mainly with normative premises consisting of the values, aims, and goals behind the practical solutions.

Morality can be defined as an active process by which individuals come to understanding and meanings relating to social interactions (McCadden, 1998). Accordingly, definitive answers as to which morality or whose morality should be observed are perishable. In the context of the school community, the values of teachers, parents, and children are in constant engagement with each other.

In addition to their personal values, teachers should consider the ethical standards of the teaching profession. According to empirical studies, teachers cannot separate their own moral character from their professional self. The stance of teachers' moral character, functioning as a moral approach in teachers' reasoning, guides their ways of interacting with students, parents, and colleagues (Tirri, Husu & Kansanen, 1999).

From ethical reasoning towards dialogue

Coombs (1998) has reviewed the literature of educational ethics and concludes that, despite its considerable diversity, two basic approaches seem apparent. The first approach sets forth a moral theory or set of principles to follow and offers guidance as to how these principles are to be applied; the second attempts to understand and improve the reasoning educators engage in when they deliberate about moral problems. These two approaches can be contested by Shotter's (1993) rhetorical-responsive view of moral issues in their practical settings.

Theory application insists that acting morally means acting in accordance with well-justified moral principles. The real test of the approach is the way the educator responds to real-life moral problems. How valuable is the offered guidance likely to be in helping educators with the moral problems they face in their profession? According to Brennan (1977, pp. 112-133), this offered guidance does not provide substantial support because moral principles are "open-textured" by nature. That is, a moral principle is difficult to explicate in such a way that it can encompass the varied kinds of actions that will and will not count as instances of acting on the principle. Educators' knowing the principle does not inform them whether their interpretation of a problem is desirable or justifiable. As Coombs (1998) emphasizes, "[t]he major task in solving the problem is that of determining how the problem should be interpreted" (p. 558). In practice, two educators may not perceive the same problem, and, therefore, neither do they apply the same principles to the problem. Wallace (1988) calls this complexity a relevance problem: we are unsure whether and how our moral principles apply to the complicated practice.

The moral reasoning approach takes a different view of understanding improvement of educators' thinking and action. Instead of providing a set of moral principles and advice on how to apply them, the approach explicates a process of good moral reasoning. Coombs (1998, p. 563) describes the general

process, which involves (1) encountering a situation in which a moral choice is required and about which a person has a certain intuition of how to act; and (2) formulating or stating the moral principle that justifies an educator's often implicit decision and reaction. The approach argues that educators have a sort of underlying and intuitive moral judgment that can be linked to their general and explicit moral principles. Coombs (*ibid.*) criticizes the approach in that it puts too much emphasis on making explicit the judgment underlying individuals' intuitive judgment (p. 565). According to him, moral reasoning erroneously is understood as a "skill" to be learned through discursive practice.

However, discursive practices can be used as tools for interpreting the construction of moral reasoning. Shotter (1993, p. 18) speaks about "the knowing of the third kind," which redirects attention from a focus upon how individuals understand and apply moral theories and principles to how they understand each other in their practical settings. The stance focuses upon people's use of certain ways of talking to construct their social relationships. Within this flow of responsive and relational practices, socially significant dimensions of interaction originate and are formed. People's responsive understanding of each other is the important issue. This kind of joint activity between people in their socially constituted situations, not just the people themselves, structures what people do and say. As Shotter (*ibid.*) emphasizes, attention to such situations reveals a complex and uncertain process of testing and checking essentially moral issues: issues involving judgments about matters such as care, responsibility, and justice (pp. 17-31).

This *rhetorical-responsive* view coincides with the manner of conduct within the occupation of teaching. In fact, teaching is strongly connected to the betterment of pupils. Therefore, extended talk about teachers and teaching is impossible without "the language of morality" (Sockett, 1993). Professionally, the teacher is morally responsive to the client's needs, whether the client is defined as the pupil, the parent(s), or the public community. The teacher has moral obligations to these individuals or groups, and this responsibility can be expressed through relationships.

Joint action in pedagogical settings

The social context of teaching is not teachers' personal property. Rather, it is "out there" as a vast interpersonal domain that comprises both teachers' professional practice and their thinking of that practice. Buchmann (1987) has used the phrase "the knowledge teachers live by" to indicate the lack of clarity about much of what teachers know as professionally special to them. This situation is special in the sense that the knowledge teachers employ can be considered very different in character or degree from ordinary knowledge or common sense. Simply, teachers acquire much knowledge by their participation in various pervasive cultural patterns of education and schooling. Sociological studies of the teaching profession have illuminated this "apprenticeship of observation," the social adaptation of professional practices and beliefs (Lortie, 1975).

Professional knowledge must work for teachers in order that they may secure their method for action. A vast majority of educational problems cannot be solved procedurally by applying a uniquely suitable formula or technique. Instead, solutions to such problems must be found by an interactive consideration of means and ends. The problems teachers face in their work relate most closely to the class of questions that Gauthier (1963) referred to as "uncertain practical questions." According to Reid (1979),

1) they are questions that have to be answered—even if the answer is to decide to do nothing;

2) the grounds on which decisions should be made are uncertain;

3) in answering them, individuals are tied to the existing state of affairs and are never free from past or present contexts and their arrangements;

4) the problems compel individuals to choose between competing goals and values, and all solutions are made at the expense of other solutions; and

5) individuals can never predict the outcome of the particular solution they choose. (pp. 188-189)

Here one observes that the particulars of teaching present many kinds of complexity, and "the sphere of the practical is necessarily the sphere of the uncertain" (Gauthier, 1963, p. 1).

Buchmann (1987) call these particulars the "folkways of teaching" (p. 152). She argues that the knowledge base of teaching cannot be considered special, and that adults, both teachers and parents, are often ambivalent about its real value. Teachers feel entitled, but also forced, to use their common sense in teaching. However, this recognition does not intend to belittle teachers' professional knowledge. Rather, it suggests that the knowledge teachers use cannot be placed on either side of the divide between "specialized knowledge which particular individuals need in their occupational roles and common knowledge which all adult individuals need as members of the community" (Znaniecki, 1965, p. 25). Collaboration is required between various parties of the community.

In this sense, Shotter (1993) speaks about "joint action." It occurs in a "zone of uncertainty," and it has two major features that he describes in the following way:

1. As people coordinate their activity with the activities of others, and "respond" to them in what they do, what they as individuals desire and what actually results in their exchanges are often two very different things. In short, joint action produces *unintended* and unpredicted outcomes. These generate a "situation," or an "organized practical-moral setting" existing between all the participants. As its organization cannot be traced back to the intentions of any particular individuals, it is *as if* it has a "given," a "natural," or an "externally caused" nature; though, to those within it, it is "their/our" situation.

2. Although such a setting is unintended by any of the individuals within it, it nonetheless has an *intentional* quality to it: it seems both to have a "content," as well as to "indicate" or to be "related to something other than beyond itself"; that is, participants find themselves both immersed "in" an already *given* situation, but one with a *horizon* to it, that makes it "open" to their actions. Indeed, its "organization" is such that the practical-moral constraints (and enablements) it makes available to them influence, that is, "invite" and "motivate," their next possible actions. (p. 39)

As presented, Shotter's (1993) definition focuses explicitly on language and communication and adds additional dimensions to consider the meaning and extent of social interactions in teaching. It emphasizes that the social processes involved in teachers' practical-moral settings are not based, to any great extent, upon pre-established ethical reasoning, but in "socially shared identities of

feeling" that individuals create in the flow of activity between them (Shotter, 1993, p. 54). In teaching, human actions should not be judged from a single point of view. They also should be viewed in terms of how eloquently the participants in question are able to persuade others of the validity of their judgments. The ethical "argument" in this art is not the construction of a "proof," as commonly assumed. Rather, the idea of "argumentation" ties together the issues debated until a course of action is found. This kind of rhetorical understanding of ethical reasoning enables individuals to distinguish between the different sides of ethical problems and to gain a better conception of them. The stance leads teachers to mediate between (conflicting) private and public interests, including those pertaining to personal, professional, organizational, and societal values. This plurality of understandings is an integral part of the teaching profession.

The approach also seeks to have teachers relocate their "inner" reasoning of ethical issues toward more momentary "relational encounters" between the people involved. This kind of dialogic or relational approach also suggests a new way of thinking about and deliberating ethical issues. Instead of viewing them as functioning according to a set of pre-established rules and principles, resolution of ethical issues involves active dialogical processes of testing what is at stake for all parties in a morally demanding situation. And consequently, one's actions can be successful only if they can be accepted by the participating others. By adopting different "voices," individuals more successfully can formulate and respond to others in the situation or circumstances.

The notion of joint action can be seen as a tool through which to see the various facets of moral dilemmas in teachers' work. By its use, individuals can interpret how teachers engage in their "dilemma managing" (Lampert, 1985).

How to identify ethical dilemmas?

The development of an interpretative account on ethical issues starts from the teachers' background beliefs. Within this realm teachers develop a more or less comprehensive and coherent account of their convictions. The perspective is intended to provide a sort of understanding that leads to an adequately informed and defensible professional action and understanding. It provides a chance to examine the underlying assumptions why something is regarded as right or wrong.

Taylor (1992) speaks about these realms as a person's "background of intelligibility," those "moral horizons against which things take on significance for us" (p. 37). In many cases it is the world teachers know only dimly. According to Coombs (1998, p. 563), the process involves encountering a situation in which a choice is required, and about which a person has a certain intuition or "gut reaction" concerning the right choice to make. The approach argues that we have a sort of underlying and intuitive judgement that guides our practical actions.

This perspective is not meant for immediate utility. Its premises are not meant to apply straightforwardly to the analysis and resolution of a particular ethical dilemma. That will come later. Its task is to provide an essential basis for further levels of ethical reasoning.

How to interpret professional code of ethics?

Ethical dilemmas can also be viewed from a rule and principle-based perspective. The approach judges educational decisions according to "implicit and explicit rules and duties owed" (Walker, 1998, p. 298). The focus is on the policy decisions and on the teacher's conformity to a principle or a set of rules. The stance relies on implicit and/or explicit accounts of appropriate guidelines of how to act. Thus, it requires teachers to agree on courses of action based on a set of general rules and principles. They provide a general guide to action, a certain authority in their decision-making. As action guides, rules and principles indicate the rights and obligations that are at stake in particular situations.

Whenever asked what these principles are, teachers tend to speak in simple maxims, which for them can be desirable rules of conduct: Be caring, be available when your pupils need you, practice what you preach, etc. These general guidelines can be seen as the underpinnings for such formal ideals as thoughtfulness, accessibility, and coherence. As action guides, they indicate the rights and obligations that are at stake in a situation. According to Nash (1996, p. 111), they can clarify and justify teachers' solutions to problems because they provide certain standards by which decisions and actions are made.

How to translate professional codes into pedagogical practice?

Situations can also be interpreted through a calculation of the probable positive and negative consequences (short and long term) of a particular educational decision and action. Once the likely outcomes are predicted, the alternatives that provide the greatest benefit and least harm may be chosen. The best interests of students are served if the negative consequences are minimized and positive benefits are maximized.

The problem of attaining a fair and just resolution that also works often means the balancing of the pros and cons of the particular situation. The circumstances usually compel teachers to choose between competing goals and values. Teachers may choose a solution that aims to maximize the desired results across a range of students involved, but usually, some will suffer at the expense of others. In many cases, teachers' aims for any particular student are entangled with teachers' aims for each of the others in the class and in the school's professional community. As Page (1999) reports, in their work, teachers cannot see their goals as a neat dichotomy between one and the another and their job as making clear choices.

As presented, the grounds on which pedagogical decisions are made are often uncertain. Nothing can tell teachers infallibly which method should be used, what evidence should be taken into account or rejected, what kinds of arguments should be given precedence, etc. In addition, teachers always have to take the existing state of affairs into account. Teachers are never free from past or present contexts and their arrangements.

School values

Many educational scholars have recognized the school's role in value education and in moral development. Already Dewey (1934) viewed value education as crucial to the basic purpose of a school. According to him, "the child's moral character must develop in a natural, just, and social atmosphere. The school should provide this environment for its part in the child's development" (p. 85). The statement reflects the general motion that the school should help to develop pupils' values. Later, i.e. Jackson *et al.* (1993), Goodman & Lesnick (2001), Campbell (2003), and Slattery & Rapp (2003) have emphasized the ethos of the school in the pupils' value construction. They all deliver the message

that schools simply cannot avoid being involved in the (moral) values of pupils. This is because pupils absorb in and are affected both by the formal instruction and its unintentional side effects. All and all, the ethos of the school makes pupils' pedagogical practice.

In the value domain students have important learning challenges in school, in addition to those explicit and formal goals in the cognitive, affective and social domains. Some of these learning goals are explicitly expressed in the National Curriculum (Framework Curriculum for the Comprehensive School, 1994). Such basic values as student welfare and the importance of schools in helping students grow into active citizens are emphasised. In order to achieve these ends, the responsibility of all members of the school community is highlighted within the framework of the operation culture of schools. It is believed that these basic values operate as principles that help define the professional practices taken place in schools. These fundamental values and tasks of the school include i.e. personal growth, individual freedom and integrity, and participatory citizenship. They must be taken into consideration in all pedagogical activities of schools. Within this process, the basic values of national curriculum must be seen as instruments of orientation and interpretation. Teachers are not free to choose whatever they personally regard as valuable. The task of teachers is to make already given – and abstract - value prescriptions to work in practice.

Values and teacher community

Professional learning emerges first in a social plane in relations with people and is subsequently appropriated as psychological and pedagogical categories. As Hoffman-Kipp *et al.* (2003) formulate it: "Reflection without participation is as impossible as thought without language" (p. 251). Teacher reflection in the social context occurs as teachers engage in and share their reflections in many ways. Whether through writing, speaking, or simply listening, teachers participate in the construction of their pedagogical knowledge as well as their professional identities. In professional communities, teachers can function as resources for one another and provide each other with assistance so that they can build new ideas.

The analysis of teacher reflection and learning of this kind moves away from a concern with individual teachers and their learning to a conception of

teacher learning within a broader context of school institution, profession, and politics. It is important to note that a failure to ensure this kind of professional reflection easily leaves the field open to common sense and often superficial considerations as the sole guides of pedagogical action: "These are the values of our society, and that's that, so we better toe the line" – type of argument. In turn, teacher reflection and learning should lay the foundations for thinking about the goals of learning more generally, for students in a variety of settings, and for teachers as well.

School values concern teachers' judgements of approval towards abilities, qualities and behaviours teachers think worthy of striving for. To speak of school's values implies that the holding of those values is definitive of membership of the particular school in question. As Aristotle (1955) argues, the essential cement of solidarity among group members is a shared conception of the good. On a more practical level, Bellah & colleagues' (1985) definition of community is useful. According to them, community is:

> a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it (p. 333).

Schools can be regarded as such communities. In them, teachers and students 'share many pedagogical practices' that 'define the school as educative community.' All participants in educational undertakings are 'socially interdependent' and, to a certain extent, should 'participate together in discussion and decision making.' Teachers, as members of the same profession, share a sense of identity and relatively common (professional) values. They also share the same (formal) role definitions and professional language. Ultimately, teachers control the reproduction of their professional community through the socialization process as well.

As Grossman *et al.*, (2001) report, such communities are not quickly and easily formed. It is crucial how the formation of group norms occurs and how they come to define school community. Norms represent the shared moral life of a school community – that element which encourages participants to discipline their desires for the sake of membership in the group (Carter, 1998). Since so much more than rational beliefs are involved in the values teachers hold (attachment, emotions, identity, and so on), mutual reflection of these issues becomes vital in school communities. Also, if the process of value

reflection is to be educational and not mere social engineering, it needs to be undertaken with a degree of understanding of the process on the part of the teachers involved (Wringe, 1998). Teachers cannot successfully teach and transmit values if they are not personally committed to their applications in real school life situations.

Therefore, this paper argues values as a legitimate mode of community discourse and reflection. Critical reasoning should be a crucial element in the process of value reflection that takes place in schools. If values are understood as something generated by members of a school community - rather than received from some distant authority - then shared experience of a positive kind is the principal way in which they are to be acquired. Thus, values can been as essentially social and positive, not prohibitive and prescriptive. The concern is not just with good behaviour in schools (i.e., school discipline), but with influencing the pupils' long-standing value commitments and their whole future way of life. Those relevant experiences need to be enjoyed in a pedagogically-supportive atmosphere and subject to appropriate guidance and supervision.

A key rationale for teacher community is that it provides an ongoing venue for teacher learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). Reflective discussions with colleagues are a crucial aspect of the teachers' professional development. Also, teachers' perceptions of their level of empowerment are significantly related to their feelings of commitment to the school organization where they work (Bogler & Somech, 2004). It is a question of "a process whereby school participants develop competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems" (Short *et al.*, 1994, p. 38). If such a condition prevails, teachers believe that they have the capability and knowledge to improve the situation in which they operate.

The importance of visions and ideals

Professions are usually described as a complex set of role characteristics and skills in matters of importance to society. Also, and more often implied, is the normative aspect of a profession that is set as a standard of responsible behaviour. Teachers are expected to be persons of integrity whom students and parents trust and who can contribute to the good of a society and advance the quality of human life (*cf.* Frowe, 2005).

However, the emphasis on prescriptive rules should not give an impression that being a competent professional means no more than following a variety of rules governing the conduct of teachers. As Flores (1988, p. 2) argues, while this approach has its value in giving teachers general guidance as to how they ought to act, it also has its limits and can distort our understanding of the normative aspects of the teaching profession. The emphasis is not on how teachers and students should act given a catalogue of value prescriptions, but on what kind of ethos/value structure could prevail in schools so that they can be considered truly educative institutions and professional communities. Flores (1988) claims that the teaching profession should be understood as a complex of virtues and ideals that are essential to success in a teacher's role. Hence, teaching as a normative concept can be defined as an idealized way of being (in a certain role) that contributes to the realization of the good central to the profession.

Hammerness (2003) proposes that understanding teachers' vision – teachers' images of their ideal school practices – may provide a means for us to better appreciate teachers' decisions and experiences in their classrooms. This is because "images mediate between thought and action … and show how different kinds of knowledge and values come together in teaching" (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1984, p. 33). Vision can provide a sense of reach that inspires and motivates teachers, and also guides them to reflect on their work.

Darling-Hammond (1990) argues that one of the most powerful predictors of teachers' commitment to teaching is a "sense of efficacy – the teachers' sense that he or she is making a positive difference in the lives of students" (p. 9). Here, visions are helpful in three ways: First, they provided a means to reveal and examine teachers' beliefs. Making visions explicit may also help provide a foundation for the development of teachers' professional knowledge. Second, vision may enable teachers to 'dig deeper' into beliefs and goals by examining, challenging, and further articulating their beliefs through the sharing of visions. Finally, examining visions may encourage teachers to deal with the gap between their hopes and their practice. Learning to navigate the gap between vision and practice may be helpful in developing the contextual understanding of teaching. With the aid of visions, teachers can select and create contexts in which they can sustain their feelings of agency.

However, it is not very helpful to talk about visions and the role they can play in teachers' professional development without considering the contexts in

which teachers actually work. Whether or not teachers feel that their contexts provide support is focal to their ability to carry out their visions. A supportive or unsupportive school context refers to a teacher's perception of the degree to which such aspects as classroom resources, collegial environment, and school leadership are consistent with her/his professional vision. As Shulman & Shulman (2004) argue, a developed and articulated vision can serve as a goal toward which teacher development is directed. Also, it can set a standard against which teachers' thoughts and actions can be evaluated.

Searching for the limit

Overall, however, we tend to have erroneous ideas about the role that values, beliefs and principles play in influencing human behaviour. Our eagerness to posit normative judgements has a tendency to make values programmatic in their orientation to education: "a set of duties or obligations that if well-enough defined and well-enough followed will produce the [ethical] behaviour desired" (Todd, 2001, p. 436). According to this stance, education is seen as a fulfilment or failure of prior principles of goodness and rightness - prior actual encounters between teachers and students. What it tends to omit is the uncertainty and unpredictability of the pedagogical encounter itself (Reid, 1979; Husu, 2002). Both teachers and students bring to pedagogical situations a host of idiosyncrasies and unconscious associations which cannot be predicted or controlled. Therefore, instead of asking what ought to be, we should also ask what makes values possible in pedagogical settings.

Therefore, teachers' value reflection should be anchored to real values expressed in real-world school situations (Husu & Tirri, 2001). If a teacher says s/he values honesty, we should ask her/him to explain what that would mean to her/him in terms of real-world classroom or school behaviour. Consequently, we should encourage teachers to identify practical examples where there is a gap between values and their behaviour, either on an individual level, or an organizational level. We should develop methods that bring behaviour in line with our values.

Professional values are not an 'ivory tower' idea but a real issue in everyday teaching and learning in schools. Even if both teachers and students are bound by certain values inherent in educational system that is not to suggest that they are without choice. Rather, it is there that teachers begin to recognize that

choices they make in schools are often based on their subjective interpretations of situations. And consequently, as Brindley & Selinger (2003) argue, the task is to make explicit the different ways teachers tackle their problems and the value positions they thereby adopt, "even though they themselves simply [may] believe that they are acting 'practically'" (p. 152). The stance implies the need for

> "a dialect which allows multiple understandings and therefore multiple possibilities for resolution, and ultimately, individuals who are self-motivated in making effective learning choices" (*ibid.*)

Helping teachers to acquire this kind of dialogical competence requires the creation of workable means by which teachers can discuss value issues. An important task is to learn to analyze pedagogical dilemmas from different points of view in a way that allows the dilemmas to become objects of conscious reflection. Therefore, what are needed are forums that emphasize the conscious analysis and articulation of ethical and value dilemmas. As Strike (1993, p. 112) has argued, creation of such opportunities also seeks to help teachers perceive their pedagogical practice in a more concise manner.

Implications for teacher learning

It is important to note that ethical and value-based reasoning cannot be learned sufficiently during formal teacher preparation. As Strike (1993) has argued, "character is the product of years, not credit hours" (p. 107). Curriculum leadership must attest to the significance of practical teaching experience and acknowledge how the continuing work in school settings persistently informs teachers' practice. Also, a consistent variability in the quality and capability of teachers' dealing with moral dilemmas must be expected (Husu, 2001, 2003). Therefore, rather than blame teachers themselves or teacher educators for incomplete attention to value-laden dilemmas, policy consideration should attend to the ethical learning of teachers in their practical school settings. If decisions of teachers are to be informed by competent pedagogical reasoning, special attention must be accorded to construct the social conditions in schools that permit the occurrence of serious moral deliberation. No matter what the teacher's personal and professional moral commitments, each teacher is strongly affected by the school's ethos (Donnelly, 2000). No amount of time spent in

college classes can develop sufficiently the skills involved in moral discourse practices; such improvement is attained only through teachers' reflected experience as they work in schools.

As Coburn (2003) arguers, the issue of scale is a key challenge for school reform of this kind and size. It is a question of "a degree to which schools and teachers have the knowledge and authority to continue to grow the reform over time" (p. 4).The schools need to address important qualitative measures that are fundamental to their ability to engage pedagogical reforms in ways that make a real world difference for their teaching and learning. Therefore, and following the thoughts of Coburn (2003), three methodological concepts are presented as 'thinking tools' in order to give greater attention to the further dimensions of scale needed in ethical and value-laden pedagogical dilemmas:

> *Depth* When teachers begin reforms in their classrooms they do so in ways that vary, in depth and substance. This is because teachers draw on their prior knowledge, beliefs, and experiences to interpret and enact their professional development. Therefore, what is needed is a change that goes beyond surface procedures to alter i) teachers' beliefs, ii) norms of social interaction, and iii) their underlying pedagogical principles. The question is: how does teachers' developmental work cause them to rethink and reconstruct their beliefs and values? Which strategies are effective at developing and nurturing depth in teachers' enactment of the reform?

> *Sustainability* So far, most discussion address issues of sustainability and change separately, and therefore, obscure the way that change depends upon sustainability. As Coburn (2003) reports, the majority of developmental work focus on schools in their first years implementing new ways of working - thus, failing to capture sustainability. This suggests the need for reconsidering the strategies of developmental work for providing schools with the structures and tools they need to sustain their reforms (Cuban, 1988). Teachers are more able to sustain change when their efforts are supported at multiple levels of the school system. Consequently, the developmental task is to create conditions in schools that support and sustain change over time.

> *Shift in reform ownership* In most cases, when schools start development projects, the knowledge and authority of the reform is situated outside the school: usually some outside provider is responsible for spreading the change. However, in due course, it is the teachers', schools', and the responsibility of the local communities to enact and sustain the reform

in ways that make difference to students. Therefore, it is important to create conditions to shift authority and knowledge of the development from external actors to teachers, schools, and districts. Ultimately, it is the task of districts, schools, and teachers to sustain and deepen reform principles and practices themselves (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994). With the shift of ownership, the reform may become self-generative. Consequently, the task is to provide detailed, concrete descriptions of what strategies are effective in cultivating the capacities necessary to provide local authority for teacher development projects.

If educational decision making is based upon such discourse, then different meanings must be exposed to public dialogue within the school community. Such a collective exchange of meanings presupposes that many different types of meanings become visible. Consequently, such an exchange presupposes a willingness and means to create conditions for open dialogue. Among its attributes, this situation moves away from a rule-governed understanding of practice and opens up the number of meanings and descriptions of practice. Finally, collective reflection accepts difference and divergence. It does not regard them as potentially debilitating. One learns to 'live with doubt.' Then, the key is not unanimous agreement but discourse and the testing of plural meanings.

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We make up selves from a tool kit of options made available by our culture and society. We do make choices, but we do not determine the options among which we choose.

(Anthony Appiah 1994)

Elina Lahelma

School Grades And Other Resources: The "Failing Boys" Discourse Revisited

Worry about the poor school achievement of boys is one of the current travelling discourses that is repeated in one country after another. One of the assumptions that is taken for granted is that school achievement, as it is displayed in school grades, has dramatic effects on young people's paths to further education, the labour market or society at large. It has also been taken for granted that these effects are the same for young men and for young women. I challenge this assumption drawing on the educational paths of a several young people living in Helsinki, following them from the age of 13 to 20–24. I discuss how they themselves construct their lives within the positions that are available, how they interpret their achievements and failures, and what resources they use. I suggest that some resources are gendered. I argue that for young men in the current Finnish educational and political context, school grades are not as important as for young women. This paper draws from an ethnographically grounded longitudinal life history study called Tracing Transitions—Follow-up Study of Post-Sixteen Students.

Prologue

In 1982, as a planner at the National Board of Education, I conducted a study about students' routes to upper secondary education. I drew from a new national register which also included students' lower secondary school grades in all subjects. The issue that surprised me was that in spite of earning better grades on average, girls were accepted into their field of choice in secondary education less often than boys. This result was not picked up as news by the media, but a huge debate emerged from the—actually old—finding that girls achieved better than boys. "School oppresses boys!" became the slogan that was used in the discussion early in the eighties—earlier than, for example, in other Nordic countries.

After that, the public discourse on boys' underachievement has had its highpoints every now and then. It received new fuel after the PISA results of 2002. Finnish boys scored better in reading literacy than students in all countries on average, better than boys in any other OECD country, and better than girls in many of the participating countries (Välijärvi et al. 2002). However, worries were expressed by the media and educational authorities. The problem was that the gender gap was the widest in Finland: although Finnish boys scored well, they scored worse than Finnish girls. For example, the main daily paper Helsingin Sanomat published a huge reportage entitled "Rescue the boys!" (Helsingin Sanomat 14.12.2003).

Through this prologue, I want to demonstrate that educational problems are neither logical nor "natural" expressions of an individual's voice, but historically produced effects of power, "systems of reason" that refer to the rules and standards for thinking about the objects of education (Lindblad & Popkewitz 2003). With these rules and standards, teachers, state officials and policy documents order and classify what are to be considered as educational problems. There is a "system of reason" behind the discussion on gender and education. Moreover, this system of reason is a "travelling discourse" (Lindblad & Popkewitz 2003)— what counts as "facts" travel in various ways across the world (Arnesen et al. 2004). I suggest that the system of reason, considering talk about the success of the girls and the failure of the boys, is based on taken for granted assumptions. One of them is generalization; girls are successful and boys underachieve. Another is the evaluation of girls' success as something problematic and of boys' lack of success as something heroic. Moreover, the taken for granted attribution of boys' lack of success to working methods and feminization of the schools is often

heard in the media and from the authorities. Finally, the discourse often limits the scope of analysis and it is taken for granted that school grades have a direct relationship with achievement in further education, the labour market and society at large. These assumptions have been challenged by feminist research (e.g., Epstein et al. 1998; Arnot et al. 1998; Francis 2000; Osler & Kerry 2003; Lahelma & Öhrn 2003; Lahelma 2004) but they live on in the media.

One obvious background for the current "failing boys" discussion is connected with achievement tests (cf. Arnot et al. 1998; Francis 2000) instituted by restructuring policies with a new liberal focus on standards, competition, and the new conservative focus on basic skills (Gordon et al. 2000). The system of truth is constructed by educational authorities' and the media's emphasis on aspects of education that are measured and categories that are compared. In Finland an extensive system of evaluation has been built by the National Board of Education during the last decade. Achievements of school students are regularly tested in core subjects. Outcomes are routinely classified by gender, which is an easy, taken for granted category. Categorizations by social class or ethnicity are not made as often; they are regarded as more sensitive classifications. It is, then, not unexpected that gender has recently turned out to be the most important category of inequality in education in the official discourse of Finnish authorities, and plans for a pedagogy for boys have been suggested (e.g., Vitikka 2004)[1]. Differences in achievement between different kinds of boys or between different kinds of girls are overlooked. As a consequence, in the popular discourses on school, matters of class and ethnicity are being put forward as gender issues (Arnesen et al. 2004; see also, e.g., Francis 2000; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli 2003).

However, the central question of a curriculum should not be "What should they know?" but "What should they become?" argues David Hamilton (1999). A gender gap in grades is important if it has relevance in what they—girls and boys—become. In the current system of evaluation of school achievement the focus is on grades, whilst the impact of grades later in life is not often discussed. It is taken for granted that weak grades in the Finnish language, for example, indicate problems. It is, however, a question of policy in relation to the entrance criteria for further education and the labour market how much this is the case.

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[1] This is an interesting change in the discourse: gender was more or less a mute category in the 1980s when feminist researchers pointed to the girls' disadvantage (e.g., Lahelma 1992; see Lahelma & Öhrn 2003).

In this paper I challenge the assumption above which limits the analysis to school grades. I illustrate structural patterns in the educational and labour market by presenting the paths of several young people living in Helsinki, following them from the age of 13 to 20–24. I first present the research that I draw from.

Ethnographically grounded longitudinal life history research

I am writing about young people that I became acquainted with when they started secondary school at the age of 12 or 13 years. In an ethnographic study of two schools in Helsinki called "Citizenship, Difference and Marginality in Schools—with Special Reference to Gender", our research group of six women (see, e.g., Gordon et al. forthcoming) traced everyday life at school for one school year.[2] We followed lessons, breaks and special occasions. We interviewed students and their teachers and parents, collected curricular materials and students' writings, developed questionnaires, etc. We were interested in both the official and informal processes of the school and the way in which time, space and embodiment affect pedagogy and practice.[3]

Tuula Gordon and I continued the relationship with the same young people. In the new research project *Tracing Transitions—Follow-up Study of Post-Sixteen Students* we have interviewed the same young people; 63 of them aged around 18 and almost all of them again at the age of 20. Now the young people are 23 or 24 years old, and a new round of interviews is starting.[4] In this study we analyse economic, cultural and biographical as well as educational aspects in the paths pursued by young people (see, e.g., Gordon & Lahelma 2002). In the interviews the young people also reflect on their memories concerning life in secondary school (Lahelma 2002a). Our study is, accordingly, ethnographically grounded longitudinal life history research (Gordon & Lahelma 2003).

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[2] This was a project of the Academy of Finland, directed by Tuula Gordon.

[3] We worked together with Janet Holland, who conducted similar studies in two schools in London (e.g.,Gordon et al. 2000).

[4] I have conducted this study as a part of the larger research projects that I also direct: "Inclusion and Exclusion in Educational Processes'" (Academy of Finland and University of Helsinki, 2001–2004), and "Learning to be citizens—ethnographic and life historical perspectives" (Academy of Finland 2005–2008).

Young people on their paths to further education

Our interviews with the young people reveal complicated and interchanging routes to further education and work. As Johanna Wyn and Robert White (1997) have argued, the transitions of young people to adulthood are not clear steps, and traditional "unified" transition patterns to adulthood have broken up. Further, the boundaries between youth and adulthood have become blurred; the concept "transition" itself has been regarded as problematic. Choices may appear to be free, but are framed and curtailed by structural and cultural boundaries including social class, gender, ethnicity, embodiment and sexuality (see, e.g., Ball et al. 2000; Evans 2002; Gordon et al. 2005).

These are the well-known arguments of current youth research that I have reflected on when I have tried to understand the plans, choices and transitions of the young people in our study. I choose to concentrate on the stories of several of them. The focus in this article is on young men, whom I will give the pseudonyms Altti, Jukka, Kalevi, Saku and Santtu.

Altti lived with his divorced mother who worked in the service sector. He was high-achieving and went to a competitive upper secondary school. He was already interested in history and foreign policies from a young age and had plans to apply to the university to study either law or political science. At the age of 20 he had completed his military service, having conducted his duty with success, and was offered office work in the main headquarters. It was clean and easy work. "I work as a foreman, with about 30 men below who obey and then all the time I am getting experience and education for leadership." The job gave him good wages and plenty of time to prepare for the entrance examination for the university. But he had started to think about another option: Military Academy and a career in the army. He reflected that the good side of this option would be a straight path for four years, the certainty of a job and a daily allowance during the studies. The bad side was the obligation to work for the army for four years. "It would be eight years out of my life!" Altti also reflected that the army does not give any opportunities for quick promotion or intellectual challenges. I have not met Altti since, and do not know which of his plans was realized.

Jukka respected his father and his father's manual work. At the age of 13, he already knew that he would choose a vocational education. Jukka's grades were average and the career counsellor suggested that he applies for upper

secondary school. But he chose a vocational school in a technical field. At 20 he had completed the course, but realized that the work was not what he had thought it would be. He had plans to continue his studies at a technical college. It was not going to be difficult because of compensation related to the studies and the work experience he already had attained. But he had an alternative plan as well; to go professional in sport. He reflected:

> Were I to succeed in football (…) then I would get an apartment and a car from the league, maybe also enough money to make a living (…) Let's now see about this sport, how it starts to mould my life.

At the age of 24 Jukka had dropped out of technical college-at least temporarily-because he had football training every day. He regarded himself as "semi-professional" in football. He reflected that he should move away from Helsinki-either abroad or to a smaller town in Finland-if he wanted to join a league where he could really make a living with football.

Kalevi was an immigrant whose language and appearance did not reveal his foreign background. He focussed on mathematics and physics in school, even if he did not especially like them. But he knew the importance of these subjects for admittance to further education. He did not do well in the matriculation examination, not even in mathematics, but succeeded in being accepted to the technical college of his choice nevertheless. Kalevi was interested in ICT, and already in upper secondary school he had earned money for his studies by making homepages and other tasks. At the age of 20 he was studying at the technical college and working part-time at a firm with flexible working hours that made it possible for him to unite working and studying—which in college is not very easy because of the rather fixed timetable. He told me about his work:

> Yes, I started there, and then, when they realized that I could use computers and things like that … and when the new Nokia Communicator came, then I ran around to the big bosses and others to get them to operate, and then, offers for work started to arrive.

At the age of 23, Kalevi still continued his studies part-time while working at the same firm full-time as a "computer nerd", as he called himself. He related that he earned enough money, but did not have enough time. He now had applied to a very competitive course at a polytechnic, a course in which he could unite his two dearest hobbies: computers and drawing.

Saku's mother was a nurse and his father a technician. I remember him at the age of 13 as a childish boy whose constant questions got on the nerves of some of the teachers. He tried to achieve at school and did relatively well, but he got tired after the long school days. At lower secondary school he already had a concrete plan to become a chef. He wanted to do creative work in the future, and he was also thinking of being an entrepreneur. His school counsellor succeeded in tempting him to go to upper secondary school before doing his vocational education. At the age of 18, still in upper secondary school, he was resentful of the counsellor, but at the age of 23 he had found that it had been a good idea. At that time he had upper secondary school, the army and culinary school behind him, and he worked as a chef in one of the top restaurants in Helsinki. At the time he did not have any plans about having his own restaurant, but perhaps he will some day.

Santtu's parents are both well-known artists. Our field notes from the school reveal countless situations when Santtu was restless during the lessons, behaved disruptively, quarrelled and teased his classmates. At the age of 13 he reflected that he was "quite a nuisance but got along with teachers all right nevertheless". At the age of 20 he remembered not having learned very much at school, because of his own attitude. He talked metaphorically: "I kind of made my hand into a fist so that nobody could put anything into it." He enjoyed only music lessons and absorbed all information from there; the rest of the time he rebelled. In lower secondary school he was already participating in artistic projects and getting paid. At the age of 20 he had dropped out of upper secondary school, and had applied, without success, to further education in the field of arts. He worked as an artist, had received praise and had relatively good earnings. He was a humane young man with an alternative life-style. He remembered his earlier fooling around in school and his earlier self with some irony. He told me that he had struggled with himself and was proud that he had succeeded in changing and in "choosing the things that I feel like, this is mine, this is what I like". After this interview I have seen Santtu only in the media as a celebrated young artist.

Whilst each life history is unique, the stories of these young men are not untypical for our data. They come from two different secondary schools in Helsinki, they are from different social backgrounds, and their paths seem to go in different directions. During the final interviews they still had various

choices to make in relation to their education and careers. Their school grades varied from excellent to rather poor. They did not, and neither did most of the other young men, mention school achievement as a resource or as a hindrance when they reflected on their memories from earlier schools or their plans for further education.

In this article my main focus is on young men. But I will now present two young women, Marika and Riikka, just for reference.

Marika is a working class girl. At the age of 18 she remembered that in primary school she was a nice and shy girl, but teased in her class. When transferring to a lower secondary school where she was not known, she decided to become "hard". With some older friends she skipped school and her grades were poor. She wanted to study, however, and succeeded in being accepted to an upper secondary school that did not have a good reputation. Her weak background from lower secondary school made studying very hard for her. At the age of 20 she still was studying for the last test of the matriculation examination, working at the same time. She complained about the poor quality of education at her school; she was "full of hatred towards this school and the teachers". She now remembered her time in secondary school, and reflected that she would have completed upper secondary school much more quickly if she had continued to be a "good girl". She planned to continue either in vocational school or to find another job. For the future, she dreamed about having children and "that I can look at my own certificate of matriculation, it will be a huge achievement—I have worked so hard for it". Her fear for the future was unemployment.

Riikka was the only child of an upper class family. She was a well-behaved girl, liked by teachers and friends. Her school achievement was good although she did not, according to her, work very hard. At the age of 18 she had several options of where to apply to, which were all very competitive academic fields. At the age of 20, she knew that she wanted to become a lawyer. After the matriculation examination in April she started to revise for the entrance examination that took place in June. She knew that she needed to learn the books by heart. She read them "about ten times", as she related, and took part in an expensive training course for applicants. Her points were close to the limit for acceptance, but she failed. The same happened the year after. Then she decided that she still would try once more. The third spring she also applied

to a polytechnic, and was accepted as a student before taking the entry examination for the faculty of law. She reflected that perhaps the acceptance letter helped her be more relaxed in the test, and this time she was accepted. Each of these three years Riikka had spent several months in the spring reading ten hours a day, and the rest of the year she worked in a pizzeria. When I interviewed her at the age of 24 she was finishing her first year at the university and was certain that this was her field. She found her studies most interesting and planned to apply for a job in the public sector. Money was not her main focus and she did not want to become a private barrister. She still worked part-time in the pizzeria as a foreman.

Young people's resources meet gendered structures and cultures

These young people are differently positioned in their paths to adulthood, and they still have many choices to make. I have here described their rich life stories with just a few lines, but tried to choose incidents and perceptions that illuminate various economic, social, cultural and emotional resources that help them to construct their lives and to make choices. I argue that some resources are more easily available to the young men than to the young women, in the prevalent gendered structures and cultures (e.g., Connell 1995).

Altti argued that he learned much in the army, and also got a good job. In Finland, more than 80% of the male population participates in military service. Going to the army is regarded as an important step in the transition to male adulthood and a period of further education. For women, military service has been optional since 1995, but only less than 1% takes advantage of this option. Many of the young men—and also young women—in our interviews emphasized the positive aspects of the army; they believed that the army's male networks are helpful in getting jobs, and that the army teaches useful skills, for example leadership, that are appreciated in the labour market. Military service, as an almost obligatory duty for young men, can also be regarded as a resource, and it is a resource which is strongly gendered (see further Lahelma 2000, 2005).

Jukka was not the only young man in our data who had a dream or a plan for the future as a professional sportsman (cf. Mac an Ghaill 1994). Knowing

the huge salaries and other benefits of men on celebrated ice hockey teams or in other fields of sport easily tempts some of the boys to put more effort into sport than school—especially because good achievement in sport also is more appreciated in some boys' cultures than good achievement in school (e.g., Tolonen 2001; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli 2003). There is more sponsor money available around male sports, which attract larger audiences than female sports, and males even receive two-thirds of the state subsidiaries for sports (Suomen olympiakomitea 2004). For some young men who are excellent in sport, opting for a career as a professional might even be a realistic plan, whilst some others remain in the territory between a profession and a time-consuming hobby. Sport does not make a long career in any case, and all the young sportsmen also planned to further their education later.

During the last decade, various firms and institutions have had a constant need of extra help when faced with rapidly renewing information technology. Flexible and relatively well-paid work has been available for young computer nerds, as the example of Kalevi suggested. When we followed these young people in secondary schools in the middle of the 1990s, boys more often than girls were eager to use computers, had a computer at home more frequently, and chose voluntary courses in ICT more often (Lahelma 2002b).

Most of the young people that we interviewed worked or planned to work at least part-time during their studies.[5] Therefore, to be able to go on with education— especially for young working class people—it is relevant whether there are jobs with flexible working hours and good salaries available. Kalevi had IT work and Altti worked in the army, but also many other young men had flexible jobs with rather good salaries, for example taxi driving. The young women more often worked in cafeterias and shops where wages are rather low and several complained about the hectic speed of the work, as did both Riikka and Marika, although they both liked their work. A recent survey at the University of Helsinki revealed that male and female students both worked equally many hours, but female students earned only three-quarters of the male earnings (Karjalainen 2003).

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[5] That is the current situation in Finland, and one of the reasons that the length of time to complete an education lengthens—which worries the educational authorities. State benefits do not the cover cost of living, and young people generally cannot or do not want to count on their parents' help, neither to live with them very long (Lahelma & Gordon 2003). Study loans are risky because of the rather uncertain prospects for employment and good salaries.

Kalevi and Jukka chose technical fields, which are male dominated. In the contemporary Finnish education structure[6], entrance tests and criteria are, in general terms, more selective in the fields which women apply for than in the male dominated fields—the most important of which are the technical fields in universities and vocational education. In the strongly gender segregated education and labour market, women with a good education and excellent marks typically compete with other women with good education and excellent marks.

In Finland currently, grades or achievement in the matriculation examination as such do not have much importance in the competition for entry into the most popular fields of higher education—most of which have a female majority. Riikka as well as Altti were aware that they would get no extra bonus for their good scores on the matriculation examination in the entrance criteria for the faculty of law.[7] Mathematics and physics, however, count for students who apply for technical fields. Kalevi knew this and chose the extensive course in mathematics in secondary school. Because the competition in the field that he applied for was not heavy, he was able to get in even if he did not succeed in the matriculation examination—the choice of the extensive mathematics course was more important than his actual grades. Although there are no clear differences in girls' and boys' achievements in mathematics, more than half of boys and only somewhat more than one quarter of girls choose extensive mathematics courses in upper secondary schools (Lahelma 2002b).

Accordingly, typical male choices act as resources in applying for further education. The story of Jukka, on the other hand, suggests that upper secondary

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[6] I will give a brief introduction to the Finnish school system. After comprehensive school (7–15 years), a good half of young people, 57% of whom are female, choose an upper secondary school, which has a focus on academic subjects and finishes with the matriculation examination. Most of the rest go to vocational schools which last for 1–3 years. Polytechnics take students both after upper secondary school and after vocational schools. Entrance examinations for the most popular fields of the universities are very selective, and young people often apply several times. There are rather small female majorities in universities and polytechnics, whilst gender segregation in fields of education is significant.

[7] The current system in many universities and fields divides candidates into two quotas: 1) for students with the best grades on the matriculation examination, both it and the points achieved at the entrance examination are counted; 2) for students with lower grades on the matriculation examination, only points achieved at the entrance examination are counted. In some of the most competitive fields, for example law and social sciences, there are so many candidates whose grades at the matriculation examination are outstanding that they fill the first quota, and candidates with only excellent grades are in the second quota, which means that they compete from the same starting point as students with poor achievement.

school is not always important for progress in the educational path: technical fields allow a variety of routes from vocational schools to polytechnics, and even to the universities. These kinds of straight routes are not equally available in all female dominated fields of vocational education. Poor grades, on the other hand, are risky, especially for young people who apply for further education in female dominated fields. Girls with weak achievement in secondary school continue into further education more seldom than do boys with similar achievement—at least immediately (Järvinen & Vanttaja 2000).

Using examples from the life stories of Altti, Jukka and Kalevi, I have suggested some resources that have helped their paths to further education. Some other young men in our studies also used the same resources, whilst they were much less often available for young women in the gendered structures and cultures of the Finnish educational and labour market. Table 1 is the summary of these resources.

Table 1.

Young men's resources	Gendered structures and cultures of education and labour
The army (Altti)	The importance of military service for a career
Activity in sport (Jukka)	Opportunities for being a professional in sport
IT as a hobby (Kalevi)	Need for IT help in the current society
Working while studying (Kalevi, Altti)	Good wages and flexibility in male fields
Extensive mathematics course(Kalevi)	Emphasis on mathematics in entrance criteria
Technical fields (Jukka, Kalevi)	Easy access to education and direct routes from vocational schools upwards

None of these resources were evident in Santtu's or Saku's life stories. The items that I picked to demonstrate their transitions were less gender differentiated. The cultural capital of Santtu's family obviously has acted as a resource that helped him towards a career, even if his school history was not successful. Art as an intensive hobby also acted as a resource for him; this was also the case for several of the young women in our data who studied in a performing arts class (Gordon & Lahelma

2002). For Santtu's career, the interrupted upper secondary school is not necessarily a hindrance, as it would have been to Marika's dream not to be unemployed; this difference is not due only to gender but, rather, to family background. Along with Santtu and Saku, several other young men as well as women in our data also knew early on what they aimed for, and succeeded in their plans. The support that some young people receive from parents, teachers or other important people is equally evident for young women and young men (Gordon & Lahelma 2002). Finnish nationality, language and whiteness, a healthy body or a heterosexual orientation as unmarked normality are resources, the importance of which is only visible when related to someone lacking these.

An obvious resource that correlates with gender is school grades: it is more typical for young women than for young men to pay attention to achievement in school. Educational achievement also occurred often as a theme that young women wanted to reflect on in the interviews—more often than the young men. Riikka and Marika both put much effort in trying to achieve their goals, which for Marika was passing the matriculation examination and for Riikka being accepted to the faculty of law. "Being a bad girl" at one point had its impact years after for Marika. Good school achievement did not help Riikka in her entrance examination. For young women, achievement is important, but it is not enough.

Valerie Walkerdine et al. (2001: 164) suggest that for middle class English girls, high achievement is expected but not valued; it is healthy normality against which all other performances should be judged. Drawing from the interviews with young women in our study, we suggest that this is true for most of the Finnish young women, not only from the middle class but also for those from a working class background (Gordon & Lahelma 2002; Lahelma 2004).

Conclusions: how much do school grades count?

I started this article by suggesting that the current discourse on underachieving boys is "a system of truth" that circulates from one country to another. I discussed this system through general taken for granted assumptions that live on in the popular discussion. I then focussed on the fourth of the assumptions that limits the discussion on achievement in school to grades. I asked whether grades in the contemporary Finnish society are the most important resources

for young people in their paths to further education and the labour market, and whether their impact is the same for young men and for young women. I concluded by arguing that young people's success is based on various other resources, and that some of them are gendered. For young women, school achievement is expected but it is not enough; for young men, other resources are often more central.

The real question should be not whether girls as a group or boys as a group are more disadvantaged, but which girls and which boys. Jane Kenway and Sue Willis (1998, p. 51) argue that males continue to be more powerful than females in broad structural terms, and this makes the idea that the boys' issue is an equity issue rather laughable. Clearly educational equity issues are involved, but for particular groups of boys (e.g., Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli 2003; Phoenix 2004). According to the criteria of academic performance, schools always fail some of their students and invariably this cohort of "failures" includes girls and boys—although their patterns of failure differ. On the whole, girls fail quietly, while boys' failure is more noisy and noticeable. While the poor achievement of boys has been regarded as an educational problem, the problems of girls with poor achievement have been ignored even though these girls stay outside further education more often (cf. Osler and Kerry 2003). Difficulties of some boys are considered, when in practice not all boys have particular problems at school. Such arguments are based on a dichotomous view of girls and boys, and do little to address the difficulties experienced by particular boys and particular girls in schools (cf. Epstein et al.1998; Kenway and Willis 1998).

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When we discuss teaching and teacher-learner relationship in depth, we will see that teachers not only have to create caring relations in which they are the carers, but that they also have a responsibility to help their students develop the capacity to care.

(Nel Noddings 1992)

Margaret Trotta Tuomi

World Citizenship Education in My Classroom

World citizenship, a lofty ideal, a philosophical concept, a noble idea but, a teacher may ask, what does it have to do with me? A classroom of children full of energy, frustration and anger and confusion, sometimes directed towards each other is enough for me, thanks. If only I could get them to settle down so I can teach them to read and write, the rest is not my problem. Then there are the quiet ones, how are they faring? There is no time. Is it enough, or even possible, to teach specific skills without consideration for the social dynamics of the classroom? What are the implications of that type of teaching for the future?The function of the educational system is not only for children to gain academic skills, but to enable them to play a protagonist role in the evolution of society. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights states that education is a means by which people, "learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies". (Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1995/47). It should aim "at the building of a universal culture of human rights". (Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995–2005). These are goals for the education of all students, regardless of their land of birth or residence, their nationality or status in society. World Citizenship Education, also called Global Education, is "education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all". Global Education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights

Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship (Global Education in Finland 2004, 15). Additionally, according to the document World Citizenship Education 2010 Kansainvälisyyskasvatus 2010) produced by the Ministry of Education of Finland, global education comprises human rights, equality, peace and media education; education for intercultural understanding; issues relating to development and fair practice; and education for sustainable development, this should be seen in all classrooms, regardless of the ethnic composition of the students. All students are diverse and need to learn to work with others. Having foreign-born students in the class can provide additional resources for this to take place.

Minorities defy definition

From a global perspective, the concepts of minority and majority defy definition. (see more in Tuomi 2006) The same people who are members of a minority group in one region are in the majority in another. There are all sorts of minorities, and even minorities inside other minorities. There can never be a minority group so small that it cannot include a smaller minority, so defining minority groups, per se, is not possible, nor is it always wise to do so. Society is currently so prone to prejudice that even trying to label minorities may create a pretext to increase, rather than decrease, discrimination. The segregated are often seen as playing a part in their own segregation while, except for a few extreme cases, this is not the case. However, the majority plays an important role in the maintenance of the status quo in questions of discrimination. Holistic structural and attitudinal changes need to take place in addition to learning the essential tools for communication and constructive, goal orientated consultation.

Many Western European countries that traditionally have considered themselves culturally homogeneous states, such as Finland, are going through changes in population demographics (Johnson 2003). The peripheral " geographical cul de sac" position of Finland away from the Earth's main crossroads created a relative dearth of diversity other than their own cultural and linguistic minority groups this (see Grönfors and Tuomi 2006), which reduced Finns' exposure to variation in habits and customs. From the 1960s to the 1980s the foreign population remained stable at 0.3% (Foreigners and

International Migration 2002). Now, foreign-born schoolchildren aged 5–19, represent 3% of their age cohort. (Statistics Finland 2004. p. 66.) Although the number is small, the relative jump has presented Finnish society with challenges requiring immediate adjustment by teachers and other school staff.

Approaches in the training of immigrant children have varied from country to country and in some countries from school to school (European Commission 2004). Professionals in special education and second language acquisition also approach the question differently. Some focus attention on segregated preparatory classes with intensive intervention in language and cultural acclimation, others use special education teachers and include immigrant children together with children with special needs.

Most essential is the use of teachers, trained in good pedagogical skills, who are attracted to diversity and understand second language acquisition. Additionally, despite all efforts on the part of teaching staff and the immigrant children, the effect of all these approaches will be diminished if the student body is unprepared to accept the immigrant as an equal partner in the school and enable them to start their own process of life-long learning. Change is inevitable. It is not only the role of the newcomer to adapt to the status quo of the majority, but rather, there is change for all involved.

World citizenship education: essential at the grassroots

World Citizenship Education, which stresses the rights and obligations of all towards all others, is not only a global endeavor. It is even more important at the grassroots, because it is here that children learn in practice how to work with others. It is only with this type of experience that young people can gain the skills that they will need in the future, and to work at both the local and global level. More concretely, how can we uphold and advance World Citizenship Education in our schools and not include all classmates, regardless of the land of their birth?

Schools need to be based on principles rather than on traditions. According to McLaren (1968), schools often depend on external forms of customs and traditions. Schools often develop "we have always done it that way" customs, McLaren calls them "ritual acts" which can become important for their own sake making it is easy to lose sight of the valuable principles behind them.

When the meanings behind cultural acts get lost, the same principles, in a different cultural garb, can become unrecognizable. In cross-cultural contacts, the ability to recognize common principles expressed in a variety of ways is a valuable skill. Rather than basing what is done on tradition, an examination of why it is done and what principles can be found behind them will help to identify and recognize a diverse expression of the same principle. The value of "cleanliness" when eating, for example, can be seen in washing hands before meals, using personal chopsticks rather than commonly used knives and forks, or using only the right hand while eating. In a diversity-positive school, all the children should be able to see that the principles on which their schools' environment is based are recognizable as the same values that their own society holds dear. With this understanding, children and staff can more readily recognize those same values reflected in a different way by those from other cultures.

Unless immigrant students and their families see the values found in their new school as being in harmony with their own, why should they care to collaborate? Schools need a two pronged approach which includes World Citizenship Education for all and the training of immigrant children. While these two processes are mutually dependant on each other, they are also mutually supportive. All children benefit from sound pedagogical practices. While the training of immigrant children require certain skills, such as second language acquisition and teaching literacy to older children, the professional development of the teacher with these skills can be adapted and applied to the needs of their other students as well.

World Citizenship Education in the Classroom

The Human Dignity Project (see Tuomi, M. T. 2004/2001) realizing World Citizenship Education started in Finland in 1995 to investigate how to create a diversity-positive environment, to provide children with tools to prevent problems from starting in the classroom and to deal with those that do occur, and, additonally to lighten the load of the teacher by creating a milieu conducive to learning. A theory was developed, followed by a two-year action research study conducted with school starters (1995–1997). The same theory was tested in Lebanon (Ghosn 2004). Partnership in education: Lebanese evolution of a Finnish educational model.)

The Human Dignity Paradigm (see Figure 1) is a picture of how a diversity-positive environment can be accomplished. It includes four parts. The first
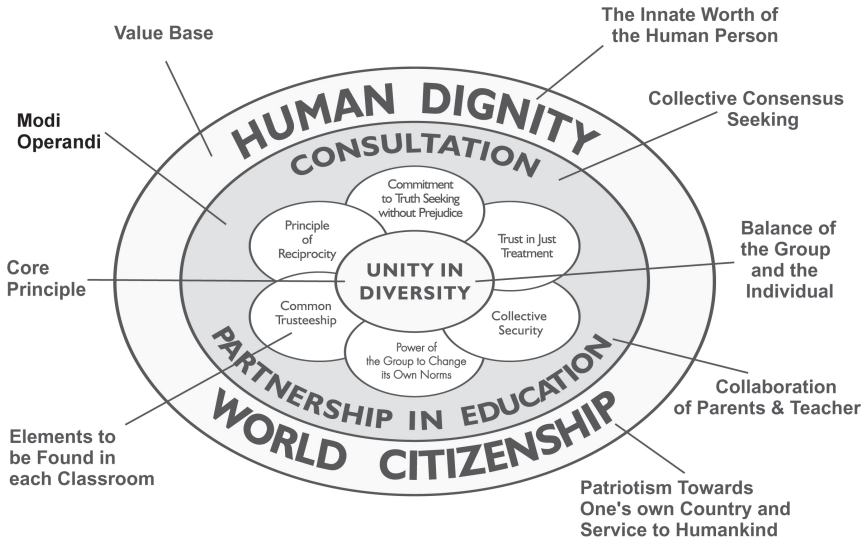
Figure 1: The Human Dignity Paradigm

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part, Human Dignity and World Citizenship, can be seen as part of a person's worldview. Each human being is endowed with human dignity; it is innate and cannot be taken away. All the citizens of the world are included in our "in group". There is only one human race. Racism exists not in the skin but in the mind. It is scientifically provable that humankind is one entity (Tuomi 2004/ 2001, pp. 48–51).

Humankind is not a "gray mass" of people. Most human aspects we all share in common, some are vastly diverse. This is expressed in the core principle, unity in diversity, seen in the center of the figure. This balance is seen throughout the research, such as in a unity in goals and diversity in application. Unity in diversity can be achieved through the use of consultation for both determining goals and the means to attain them. In the case of children in schools, it also involves a partnership between the teacher and parents. This partnership (shown in Figure 2) is necessary for the whole child to be taken into consideration since parents have the chief responsibility for the education of their children. Despite the fact that children's formal education takes place in

schools, they address only part of the whole child, which is made up of intellectual, physical and ethical or spiritual aspects. It is only in a partnership of teachers and parents that the whole child can be addressed.

The petals of the flower, seen in the figure above, show what needs to be present in a classroom in order for consultation and a teacher-parent partnership to take place. It can be described so:

- Commitment to Truth Seeking without Prejudice: How can people consult together to find the best solution unless they agree that knowing is valuable?

- Trust in Just Treatment: In consultation, the participants must feel that even if their ideas are unpopular, they will still be treated fairly.

- Collective Security: A redistribution of power is required. Truth and justice, rather than bullying or physical strength, holds the power. All individuals will be protected.

- Power of the Group to Change its Own Norms: No matter what the conditions found in society, the teacher and the students may set, develop and maintain agreed upon norms withing their classroom.

- Common Trusteeship: The diverse attributes of the group members must be seen as its resources to be protected and nurtured.

- Principle of Reciprocity: Every right includes a reciprocal obligation to protect that right for others. Not only my rights and your obligations are important, but also my obligations and your rights too.

	Main Role	Supportive Role
Parents	Education	Instruction
Teacher	Instruction	Education

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Figure 2: Partnership in Education

Partnership in Education describes a division of labor between the teacher and the students' parents, each being mutually supportive of the other. The parents have the primary role in the education of their children, when using the widest sense of the term. Teachers are in the main role of the instruction of children as mandated and defined by the state. Parents are in a supportive role in the schooling of their child. Indeed, parents would be obliged to take over the role of schooling of their children in the event that the state did not provide schooling. The teacher is in a supportive role of the holistic education of the child together with the child's parents. This partnership is of the utmost importance when a child comes from another culture, when a great deal of understanding and application is needed together in upholding the dignity and rights of the principles of both cultures. Teachers may find themselves in situations which require looking at the situation from a perspective which they have never thought of before. It will also require them to set limits when a custom deviates from the local laws. Having a good working relationship between parents and teacher can assist in both the prevention and resolution of these types of situations and assist in guidance and career counseling.

Striving for an environment of justice is a continuous process requiring constant attention. The value base, human dignity and world citizenship encompassed both 1) self-integrity and the integrity of others and 2) the moral right and obligation to work for the realization of the well-being of all. The core principle, unity in diversity, was a concept which provided the balance of the individual and the group in the realization of both rights and obligations. The means of doing this, consultation and partnership in education provided tools for the stakeholders to pro-actively affect the children's future.

Teaching children with immigrant backgrounds

All children are unique, and immigrant children are no exception. Teachers must develop their pedagogical and didactical skills to understand the learning styles and challenges of each of their students. The OECD multinational study PISA differentiates students into three large,diverse groups of children (OECD 2001 p. 153) when analyzing its data. Teachers can consider these factors when planning their own teaching:

- Non-native students: those born abroad and whose parents were also born abroad. These children may have arrived as babies or as teenagers,

which greatly affects their situation. Those who remember may have witnessed or experienced very different laws and life styles, social upheavals, war or torture. Their involvement and awareness of the decision to move to another country can affect their preparedness, acceptance and reaction to their move.

- First-generation students: those born in Finland but whose parents were both born abroad. These children have experienced no other country than Finland. They have grown up with Finnish media and playmates but their parents may find it very difficult to help them with their homework.

- Native students: those students who were born in Finland and who have at least one parent born in Finland. These children can get help from parents. Often these children are bilingual so their normal language development may differ from monolingual children.

The didactics of teaching immigrant children, as with all children, is based on knowing the child, their background, their culture, what they know and what they have experienced. This can all be taken into consideration when planning their lessons but teachers need not overstress the "foreign" dimension of the child. It is important to focus on the child's personality and learning style rather than on his or her immigrant status. The collaboration of the classroom teacher with the second language teacher and the child's home language teacher, in addition to the parents, will greatly enhance the teacher's ability to understand and evaluate the child's skills. With this support, if problems do occur, the teacher will be better able to differentiate if the contributing factors are weak language skills, normal bilingual language development, difficulty in mastering specific content, post-traumatic stress or depression, loss of sensory perception due to genetic or war situations or possible neurological disabilities.

Valuably, as teachers enhance specific expertise, new talents improve their teaching skills for all their students. Foreign language teaching can be used as an example of this. When an instructor of English language has expanded knowledge to understand not only about Indo-European languages, of which English is one, but about other families of languages, they can help all their students. If their student is a speaker of Finnish or Arabic, neither an Indo-European language, they know that these students will have little understanding of the deep-level structure of English. On the other hand, if their

student is a speaker of Persian, French or Russian, the learner can be made aware of many more structural similarities, despite the differences in script, since these languages are all members of the Indo-European language family.

Indeed, being a non-native student brings many challenges to the learner. Using again the example of foreign language learning, an Arabic speaking child, learning Swedish from a teacher using Finnish as a language of instruction must learn all the nuances of Finnish to fully conquer Swedish. It becomes much more complex if the student does not fully, grammatically master the language used as the medium for teaching.

What I have done in my own teaching with non-native students, also students with sensory issues such as blindness, hearing-impaired or autistic spectrum disorders, is to give them a chance to prep ahead of time. By giving them the materials others will receive in class they know what topic will be discussed, what new vocabulary I will be using so they can read it carefully and look up any unfamiliar terms. I share it privately and they have been grateful. Also, I inform the whole class on the first day that if they have any difficulties, they should let me know, that some students may work a bit differently, but no one will get off more easily. I find this much more conducive to learning, to inclusiveness in the class and to the maintenance of the dignity of each student. Pre-prepping can give the students with challenges just the edge they need to keep up with their lessons and learn during class time, along with their fellow students, rather than trying to catch up while learning new materials. Students are highly motivated and have positive attitudes towards school when they feel they can succeed. This was seen also in PISA research with foreign-born students (*Where Immigrant Students Succeed…*). All, most certainly, deserve their fair chance in acceptance from their fellow students.

It is essential that all students identify themselves, and others, as noble human beings, endowed with dignity, and that they see themselves as participatory citizens for all of humankind. All students should learn to collaborate with others to develop a just and stable society which is based on commitment to a standard of justice that does not focus only on my rights and your obligations, but also your rights and my obligations as well.

World Citizenship Education is not only a matter of putting maps on the wall, though awareness of the world may help, it also has deeply to do with

how we see ourselves in relationship to others, what kind of future we want, what kind of future we want our children to inherit and what we as teachers are willing to do to see it happen. What tools are we as teachers giving students to deal with the future? There are no quick tricks, no easy solutions. World Citizenship Education prepares all of our students for their future lives. Immigrant students are just one small part of that process. While World Citizenship Education may indeed be a lofty ideal, we, as teachers, can start today by creating diversity-positive environments in our classrooms.

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Where Immigrants Succeed – A Comparative Review of Performance and Engagement in PISA

A person who is sure of his cultural identity
can play with the rules of cultural game.

(Pierre Bourdieu 1991)

Mirja–Tytti Talib

Why is it so hard to encounter diversity?

More than ten years have passed since Finland experienced a large influx of immigrants. In their classrooms, teachers may today encounter students who are at-risk due to family problems, students of immigration, and students of integration with special needs. These students seem to be a great challenge to teachers everywhere. Multicultural education asks whether schools are places of harmony and co-operation, or places where good intentions are lost when teachers are frustrated because of lack of experience or time, insufficient resources, or lack of support from colleagues. In my studies (Talib 1999, 2005), many teachers in multicultural schools experienced teaching immigrant students as both challenging and enriching, but also somewhat tiring. However, the view that teaching immigrant students is enriching tends to fade as teachers gain more experience with them.

This paper aims to discuss the result of my recent study (Talib 2005) in which 359 teachers from fairly multicultural schools took part in a survey research and in which eight teachers were personally interviewed. The research examined Finnish teachers' thinking about multiculturalism and their own preparedness to work in a class with a diverse student body. The paper also seeks to understand why teaching students from different cultural backgrounds seems so difficult for teachers and to identify what creating a culturally relevant teaching environment to students with varied needs and abilities demands of teachers.

A new situation in Finnish schools

Except for its old minorities e.g. the Sami, Swedish speakers, and Roma people, Finland has, until recently, had a fairly homogeneous population. In the early 1990s, Finland received comparatively large influx of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, Iran, and Iraq. However, the challenges the schools were facing resulted not only from the increase in students with a foreign background, but rather from the delayed effects of the economic depression in Finland during the early 1990s. The Finnish economic situation and newly arrived immigrant created additional conflicts in schools throughout this last decade. This understandably made Simola (2004) ask whether Finland is facing a new situation of inequality and a new educational underclass that is a collection young people of different social, cultural, and economic realities. One of the new challenges for teachers is to meet the culture of marginalization.

In this new social situation, the responsibility to prevent marginalization has increased and the role of the teacher as a facilitator of democracy has become even stronger. Teachers must be able to meet diversity, multiculturalism, and the various expectations imposed by the workforce and by the surrounding society. Teachers' abilities to deal with issues of special education, developmental psychology, and intercultural competences are ever more needed. Teachers' multicultural competence has been considered as one of the most important factors in preventing the marginalization of students. The demands have drastically changed the teacher's role. In addition to acting as educators, teachers must also act as caretakers of children. No wonder teachers find teaching in multicultural schools as both challenging and stressful and find caring for children especially tiring (Talib 2005).

Even though Finnish teachers are well educated, they are unprepared for the new situation in schools. Many teachers have no clue where to begin and what to do. Consequently, teachers' professional incompetence may cause various problems. First of all many teachers are genuinely interested in their work and are morally committed to ethically demanding work. However, their lack of knowledge and experience may lessen teachers' trust in their ability manage their work, especially when they find the requirements placed on teachers unreasonable. Also, young teachers may not continue their teaching career after one or two rough experiences, they may prefer to move to an "easier school" with fewer at-risk students or students of immigrant background or leave

teaching altogether. A stressful job may easily lead to one's alienation from the work or oneself. Work that teachers find strange or difficult may increase their indifference, especially to the ethical principals guiding their work. Those teachers who just manage their daily work have little energy or willingness to pay attention to students' individual needs, which is the basic requirement to help students at risk.

Multicultural education

To talk about a multicultural school requires a working definition of multicultural education. Multicultural education is usually linked to a school's goals and practices to meet the educational needs of its various student groups and to consider the original culture and traditions of those groups. These goal and practices are based on multicultural policies in which the structures of the societies are supposed to actively support, not just merely tolerate, the existence of cultural diversity (Sihvola 2004). Also, the goals of multiculturalism are to renew and improve schools according to the results of multicultural research, so that cultural diversity and social equality may flourish. The differences between intercultural education and multicultural education remain rather unclear, but the former, intercultural education, is more frequently used in the European context and multicultural education, the latter, in North America. Intercultural education, however, stresses the fact that in interaction, people representing different groups will learn from each other, and thus influence one another. Intercultural education also refers to the need to educate its own people in multiculturalism in countries with a fairly homogeneous cultural base.

The literature of multicultural education is usually divided into at least three theoretical areas: conservative, liberal, and critical points of view (McLaren 1998). Even if these areas overlap, clarification of the different multicultural positions is useful. Conservative multiculturalists assume that justice already exists and needs only to be evenly apportioned. According to Kanpol and Brady (2001), a school in this context assimilates students into the dominant culture and attend to their values and norms. To put it simply, the conservative view of multiculturalism simply smothers cultural differences in favor of cultural homogeneity. Their dominant assumptions are that everyone has an equal chance to attain excellence if one put one's mind to it and works hard. So here, excellence

and equality are based on excessive competition, opportunity, survival of the fittest and basing one's worth on achievement.

On the other hand, the liberal version of multiculturalism places emphasis on the need for diversity and cultural pluralism. The main notion is that diversity speaks of the importance of the universal acceptance of difference. This "humanistic approach", while progressive in intent, many times masks the conflicts and contradictions inherent in a society. From the liberal point of view, Kanpol and Brady continue, equality, empowerment, and excellence are understood in light of acceptance, tolerance, and human understanding, but they also incorporate the conservative notion of competition, success, excellence, and so on. The liberal views overlook power constructs, control issues, especially who constructs knowledge as well as social and cultural contradictions. The "empathic approach" is necessary but is an insufficient condition for gaining power, especially in the educational realm. (Kanpol and Brady 2001.)

Critical educationists have begun to question what conservatives and liberals take for granted. Thus, critical multiculturalism attempts to create a condition in which the complexities of ethnicity, class and gender function in a ridged world of educational meritocracy. The aim of critical multiculturalism seeks to find a common ground that would allow equity, empowerment and excellence, for example, to replace ethnicity, social class or gender configurations (Kanpol & Brady 2001). Most importantly critical multiculturalism would be connected to real life situations and enhance caring in them. There is simply little use for critical thinking if it is unaccompanied by the students' ability to be both caring and reasonable (Noddings 1994, Thayer-Becon 1993)

The goals in multicultural teacher education should focus on training culturally competent teachers. According to Cochran-Smith (1995), such courses should increase teachers' awareness of a) the existence of personal knowledge, b) the social and cultural connections of a school, c) the assessment of learning opportunities for a minority student, d) the understanding of a student's viewpoint, and e) a new reconstructive pedagogy. Teachers' critical perspective should be widened so that she or he would become an active player in society. The notion of the teacher as an activist is akin to Aronowitz and Giroux's (1985) more general concept of the teacher as a transformative intellectual who develops critical pedagogy. Cochran-Smith (1991) would put it in another way, arguing that teachers who challenge the inequalities of the system must learn to teach against the grain.

Finnish teachers and multiculturalism

According to recent studies, Finnish teachers seem to agree with cultural diversity and plurality as a rule (Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999; Talib 1999, 2005). The practical side of multiculturalism, however, does not appear in the responses of the teachers, as they do not in Sweden either (e.g. Lahdenperä's article). Teachers do not think about their work in terms of how it would affect students with an immigrant background, but rather stress the practical problems of their work and their effects on the learning of Finnish students. The reason for this is partly because many teachers have found themselves in multicultural situations with no training or guidance. They are experiencing their own culture shock, and are still in a conflict stage in which one's own culture is considered the best.

First of all, some progress in the field of multicultural education has taken place in Finnish schools in the last decade. Especially in the Helsinki (capital of Finland) region, multiculturalism has a better chance than elsewhere in the country. Teachers in these schools have worked with multiethnic students for a long time, have acquired additional training, and have participated in collegial discussion about the topic. A concrete example of this is that in the teachers' interviews and surveys I conducted during 1994-95 (Talib 1999), teachers did not mention tolerance as an important value of a multicultural school. However, 208 teachers in my recent study (2005, N=359) considered tolerance the most important value of a school with a diverse student population. Things are not necessarily as good as they seem. Even if teachers stress that diversity has enriched their schools, students' different cultural backgrounds are often seen as a problem, as in Sweden and Norway (e.g. Seeberg's and Lahdenperä's article), and assimilation could best take care of it. With such comments of tolerance, the underlying sentiments, however, are often superiority and ethnocentrism. When teachers are unwilling to see differences, they resort to colorblindness. According to one of the teachers in my study, knowledge and theories of multiculturalism are not enough; teachers also need to be conscious of and recognize differences, and finally accept them:

> "In reality we are different. In my opinion, we do not want to understand that we are different. We always look for something similar in others. And we do not necessarily find it, at least not until we are willing to meet and discuss. We have such a need to fit people into some kinds of molds."

The same teacher asks whether we can openly accept someone who is clearly different from us, or whether we merely tolerate him or her. Similarly, American multicultural educator Sonja Nieto (2003) says that tolerance contains the idea that we must tolerate unpleasant and difficult things. At schools, this would mean that cultural diversity and multilingual interaction may sometimes be a burden that we have to bear (tolerate) in a pluralistic society. Nieto stresses that tolerance is just the first step towards understanding and respecting each individual student.

Other values that teachers in my study (2005) considered important in a multicultural school were openness, equality, acceptance of differences, justice, and understanding of diversity. According to the results, accepting differences and understanding diversity for the most part are in the awareness stage. Equality as such is a tricky thing. It is one of the grounding values in Finland as well as in other Nordic countries. In all these countries, equality is understood as sameness (e.g. Seeberg 2003). The historically created notion of a "homogenous population" does not necessarily include different kinds of people (ethnic others) to share in the equal opportunities of society. This belief was confirmed by the answers of teachers' personal values. They considered Finnish culture (including values, language, and traditions) as the most important values in their personal lives.

Teachers' strong sentiments on Finnish culture and nationalism may prevent this sought-after tolerance. Globalization, the EU, and social changes in Finland have created a situation where enduring national values and traditions have become even more important in society. The emphasis upon national sentiments may also bear some resemblance to what is known as cultural racisms (Stolcke 1995), which is gaining space in Europe where biological racism has lost its credibility after the Second World War. In cultural fundamentalism, cultures and people are not openly classified as better or inferior to each other but rather some people are "authentic or right" members of a given society, and other are not.

On the other hand, teachers' strong feelings about Finnish culture can also be explained by Sue and Sue's (2003) five-stage accommodation theory of acculturation to a new culture (in this case multiculturalism). In the first stage, when encountering a new culture, one usually reacts emotionally, either loving or hating it. In the second, conflicting stage, one finds many faults in the new culture and a lot of good qualities in one's old culture. In the third stage, one resists the new culture and the required adjustments to it. Many Finnish teachers

are in this stage. In order to progress further, they must be able to reflect critically on the new situation they are in. Not until some reflection takes place can they reach the integration stage, where they are able to look at cultures from different angles without emotional reactions. At the integration stage, a person has reached the intercultural understanding of cultural diversity.

Cultural codes guiding decision making

Professionally, perhaps the most challenging situations occur when a teacher meets for the first time a student of a different cultural or social background than her or himself. Conflictive experiences are usually viewed as negative. The negative encounters with others may often initiate the critical self-reflection process. For those who are unwilling to self-reflect, the threatening situations may incite defensive behavior from them. The more the individual views himself or herself as an object, the more defensive the behavior is likely to become. Teachers' reactions to differences in their classroom could partly be explained by the automatic behavior codes guided by our own culture.

Hofstede (1993) sees a culture as a product of two things: (1) so-called "high culture," which includes literature, music and art of that culture, and (2) human endeavor, thinking, values, actions, needs, lifestyle, etc. Culture codes guarantee that social structures and culturally appropriate behavior are in sync. The cultivation of people within a given culture, as Bauman (1997, p. 188) states, means sharing and understanding cultural codes. Values, rituals, and heroes represent the inner layers of a culture, whereas symbols are the outer layers of it. Culture is learned through interaction with others. Cultural codes are transmitted through language, but the relationship between culture and language is fairly complex (Kaikkonen 1994, p. 68).

According to Bauman (1997, pp. 177-181), the etymology of the word "culture" relates to the verb "cultivate," which can mean two things: to cultivate and to civilize. The word itself creates an image of a gardener, who carefully cultivates his patch of land within a given culture. On the other hand, the gardener selects the seeds to sow, and also fertilizes them in order for them to grow. He weeds the unwanted, intruding plants that tend to mess up the order of the garden. Bauman understands culture as the opposite of nature, and as such, an object of an action. The goal is to force a certain reality into an unnatural

form. Thus, culture functions as a maintainer of order and rejects everything that resembles chaos; Order has priority over disorder.

People have similar needs to create and maintain order in their environment. This need is learned (e.g. Bauman 1997). We remember the actions that resulted in desired results, and what actions when we received acceptance and praise from others. The orderly world is predictable and, at the same time, created by cultural choices. A behavior reflects the order. We behave differently in different situations. If we do not function according to the rules we feel guilty, embarrassed and ashamed. The guilt created by a culture functions as a defense mechanism, keeping people on the right tract. It is worth noting that there are two kinds of feelings of shame: amoral and moral shame. Moral shame results from being bad, whereas amoral shame is a reflection on one's own failing, worthlessness, and nothingness. Bauman (1997, p. 185) discusses amoral shame, which is an instinctive reaction to one's failure to notice the existing (cultural) difference. Thus, amoral shame functions as a mechanism against the mixing or ignorance of the differences.

Teaching as an emotional risk

We should also remember that teachers' personal theories and beliefs on teaching have developed very early, and often before actual teacher education, and teachers adjust them to fit the school culture they work in. Many times a teacher works routinely, and she or he uses the former experiences of teaching situations in order to understand and quickly interpret changing social situations (Zeichner 1990; Lortie 1975). The knowledge linked to such situations has become a teacher's tacit knowledge. In this manner the system of teachers' personal beliefs, values, and principals are believed to guide their cognitive functions and actions. In addition, the codes of one's culture facilitate automatic responses and reactions to often-repeated questions or situations (Bourdieu 1991).

These automatic thinking patterns of cultural codes may also lead to a situation where a teacher misjudges a student's behavior. A teacher may misinterpret a student's body language. He or she may think that fearful behavior is a sign of either obedience or defiance, or mistake confusion for stubbornness. The difficulties associated with interpreting a student's behavior may also result in that student being ignored in the classroom. This is more likely to happen when a student represents a different social class or cultural heritage than that

of the teacher. A teacher's emotional intellect is also challenged when a student evokes strong feelings in him or her. Facing emotional situations in a classroom makes it even harder for a teacher because he or she must also face his or her own vulnerability.

Caring for students' welfare requires both an understanding students' emotions and also of teachers' active work with their own emotions. Hargreaves (1998, p. 838) defines teaching as an emotional work and defines four categories: 1) teaching is an emotional activity; 2) teaching and learning require emotional intelligence; 3) teaching is hard emotional labor; and 4) teachers' emotions reveal their morality. That is why teachers' awareness and control of their emotions is a basic requirement of their professionalism. The need to be aware of one's emotions is more vital in a multicultural society which challenges the traditional values. Teachers, when facing unexpected situations for which they do not necessarily have experience or training, have to rely on their intuition or former behavior patterns. In such situations, teachers' professionalism and ethical commitments are evaluated.

The intuitive ability to apply fast decision making and action in teaching situations is called tact (van Manen 1991). Tact refers to the instantaneous perceptiveness to react to a situation. It requires a simultaneous understanding of both the student's self and the teacher's self. A teacher, for example, knows exactly when to demand action from a student and when not to. Such interactive or intercultural awareness of the situation of a minority student will be apparent when a teacher understands different situations, but she or he has no need to label the minority students according to their background or ethnicity.

Teachers' multicultural competence

According to Matinheikki-Kokko (1999), teachers' multicultural professionalism develops best through experience. Every teacher should monitor his or her own process at working in a multicultural environment. The multicultural competence of teachers and teachers in training develops only through work, extensive reflection in interaction with others, and by acquiring sufficient skills. Multicultural awareness could also be understood as a worldview, which is easier to achieve if a person has lived with otherness (difference). Kaikkonen (1999, pp. 26-27) discusses about sensitivity, which would facilitate an understanding

of what is really happening in cultural interaction. The development of teachers' own cultural identities would, in Kaikkonen's opinion, require teachers to understand other cultures as well. In addition, teachers should be aware of the automatic reactions caused by Finnish or any other culture. The teacher's own cultural awareness helps him or her to differentiate various forms of behaviors as well as to understand how students' cultural backgrounds partly guide their interaction. On the other hand, Costa (1997) would argue that teachers do not need to know all the cultures or their special features, but should instead be very critical of the mystification of cultures and of the stereotypes that cultural differentiation brings.

At best, the moral conduct of a teacher is based on his or her worldview, ethical awareness, critical choices in a given situation, and collegial interaction and reflection. Many times, however, teachers do not make ideal decisions because they don't have the correct "formula" that would work in a culturally sensitive situation. Nor should we forget that teachers teach as themselves, which is connected to the ideas of self and of one's professional self. One of the basic requirements for a teacher to encounter challenging moments with diversity is that he or she is in some kind of harmony with him- or herself. In a conflicting situation, teachers cannot resort to their rationality or professionalism because the powers of their unsorted past may take over. The need to be in control of the classroom may jeopardize the dignity of a student or students, as well as that of the teacher. When discussing multicultural encounters at school, a teacher should become more conscious of his or her own positionality and how life experiences influence any given situation. This would require self-reflection. Multicultural professionalism would in that respect require us to be willing to reflect upon the encountered conflicts and culture shocks from a new and different perspective. An interpretation grounded on empathy can be reached if a teacher is willing to test his or her own ideas against how our likes, dislikes, and fears affect his or her interpretations of a student.

Self–reflection and mindful practice

For most of us there is no initiation into the truth of who we are. The teacher who was quoted earlier in my study would say that there must be a reason or inspiration for professional reflection:

> "It could be almost anything. It can be a movie, a person, or a trip abroad. Impulsiveness or profoundness is insufficient. One's action must be thought through. It would be good if one could reflect upon one's work and its social effects. What I am after is some kind of enlarged professionalism."

Teachers' multicultural competence can be understood as an enlarged understanding of oneself, as a critical approach to one's work, as empathy, and as a comprehension of different realities and lifestyles. The ethically challenging work would require a teacher to have a clarified sense of self because the structures of self guide our interpretations of reality. Blumstein (2001, 183) sees the self as a motivator for behavior. Identity, on the other hand, is always relational, and changes and varies in different interactions and social situations. According to him, people observe their expressed identities in given situations and eventually accept them as a part of their real self. This would mean that we can change ourselves to fit into new situations. It would, however, require that teachers be willing to reflect upon their past experiences and the kinds of (latent) incidents that have influenced a teacher's thinking of themselves, their worldview, or the their views on education. Cole and Knowles (1997, 33) have suggested that teacher education should have a cyclical structure, so that in the beginning, students would pay attention to themselves, their life histories, and especially to their school experiences. After the self-reflection, attention is paid to one's profession and relations at work, and finally, students would study themselves as a teacher in training who functions within a certain system.

As discussed above, teachers' professionalism is tightly connected to the idea of self. Individuals enter a new situation with a personal reality constructed through past experiences. The starting point for personal and professional growth is critical reflection. Similar reflection is required to come to terms with one's own ethnicity or ethnic identity. We cannot understand the cultural perspectives of our students who enter our classrooms until we critically examine our own worldview and our own actions. Critical educational theory is driven by self-reflection. It would mean that we question truths often taken for granted.

Edward Said (1993, p. 23) points out that we should be unwilling to accept easy formulas or ready-made clichés or ever-so-accommodating confirmations of what the conventionals have to say about the reality. He also stresses that such an intellectual would belong on the same side as the weak and unrepresented.

This would mean that teachers' moral responsibility is to care for those students who do not achieve educational goals so easily. Nel Noddings (1992, pp. 22-26) discusses the ethic of caring which has four major components: modeling, dialog, practice, and confirmation. The fourth component of moral education, confirmation, means an act that affirms and encourages the best in students. Confirmation would, however, require attribution of the best possible motive consonant with reality. This is one of the major challenges in multicultural education; when minority or immigrant students do not succeed in the given tasks, many educators attribute school failure to the "deficit syndrome", or to what the minority students lack or cannot do. According to Geneva Gay (2000), to teach from the deficit mindset sounds more like correcting and curing than educating. She also notes that educational success does not emerge from failure, and that of weakness does not generate strength. Because high-level learning is a very high-risk venture for a student to pursue with conviction, it requires him or her to have some degree of academic mastery as well as personal confidence and courage (Gay 2000, p. 24).

Teachers' multicultural competence not only includes reflective thinking about oneself, one's work, the awareness of different social realities where teachers and students live, but also the understanding that knowledge is socially constructed. The claim that knowledge is socially constructed usually means, according to Peter McLaren (1998, p. 174), that the world we live in is constructed symbolically by the mind through social interaction with others and is heavily dependent on culture, context, customs, social class, and history. This would mean that teachers should examine knowledge, both for the ways it misinterprets or marginalizes particular views of the world, and for the ways it provides a deeper understanding of how the student's world is actually constructed (1998, 186). Reflection as such is a beginning point for socially aware teachers who actively work toward a better future not only for his or her own students but also for distant others who live in places far away from us. The process of teachers' multicultural competence would usually progress gradually from personal identity clarification to global responsibility, but everyone will choose

their own route that is not necessarily linear. There are eight different dimensions of awareness in teachers' multicultural competence: (1) I (myself), (2) identity, (3) reflection on one's past, (4) ethnic identity, (5) social awareness of self / other, (6) critical professional reflection, (7) social action and influence, and (8) global sense of responsibility and influence (Talib 2005).

Understanding the other

According to my studies (1999, 2005), the most difficult thing, however, is to meet the other (a person different from us). Multicultural professionalism would also require one to be aware of our own relationship to others. Charles Taylor (2002) points out that one of the greatest challenges of this century is that of understanding the other. A major problem, he notes, is the temptation to make sense of the stranger, the other, too hastily in our own terms. Otherness has been created as a means for us to define those who are considered different from us. It also functions as a tool for ideological, socio-political and economic power (e.g. Said 1978). Destructive encounters with others usually result from fear. Tajfel (1978, p. 83) explains that this is our need: to belong to a certain group that is identified in positive terms, and thus, the other in negative terms. On the other hand, hostility and animosity are socially learned. The attitudes of one's parents are passed on, and learned hatred creates a frame of reference that colors both information and experience.

This is the process that Stuart Hall (1992, pp. 302-306) calls an exclusion from the ideal identity system that we represent. The categories created to maintain exclusion or exclusiveness are also used when defending the social, political, and economic systems that prevent the others from being part of the material and symbolic powers. Categorizing others also functions as a creator and maintainer of national identity. Said (1993, pp. 99-100) points out that our main problem is how to fit our own identities, culture, society, and history with other cultures, peoples, and their ways of living so that they would create a kind of harmony. It can never be reached by simply defending our own cultures or our likings. An effective intervention would be based on justice and moderation. These concepts would allow room for the national and individual differences by pointing to hidden hierarchical value systems.

In a society where opportunities for people to do things together are lessened, schools can be places where cooperation and interaction with different people

are practiced. Such citizenship would not be narrow-mindedly nationalistic (Saukkonen 2003). Julia Kristeva (1991, p. 5) also insists on something more versatile, but also more fragile, than nationalist culture. She envisions a culture in which different groups of people can search for maturity. Tomlinson (2001), in her book *Education in a Post-welfare Society* stresses that the global market economy requires global education. The goals of education would then be to respect human rights, the development of human identities, and resistance to nationalism.

According to Bauman (2001, pp. 210-211), otherness is a result of a way of thinking or reaction to something that is different or unfamiliar to us. It is a highly charged emotional situation, and in that respect, rationally very difficult to control or change, particularly when we feel that we are out of sync with the cultural order. Bauman states that "others" must at least in some way be different from us. When finding and naming the difference(s), we have the evidence of otherness. Negative differentiations, according to Root (1999, p. 74), result in self-definitions based upon what one is not, and depend on maintaining distance from the other. Unfortunately, destructive differentiation leaves very little room for exploration, which might also expand one's worldview. Root points out that fearlessness of difference creates tolerance of ambiguity. If a person is able to suspend stereotyping or to refrain from rigidly applying conceptual frameworks that do not fit the situation, a person who is other – different from oneself – may be constructed side be side rather than in opposition to the self. Such a construction allows for connection and interaction while recognizing differences. Consequently, differences can be neither immediately stratified nor avoided, and an individual has a better chance for acquiring a greater context within which to understand difference, or even to find oneself as a part of that difference.

French philosopher and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva (1991, p. 192) uses Freudian discretion concerning others. The symptom, called *xenoi* in Greek, might also be interpreted as an invitation not to reify the foreigner or the other, nor to petrify him as such, nor to petrify us as such either. The point is that if we want to understand the other we must start from ourselves. We must discover our own otherness, because the fears we suffer result from the projection of our own "demons". We want to reject all that is imperfect, improper and unacceptable from our "solid" self. Not until we understand the ultimate condition of our being as other, and accept our weaknesses, can we begin to

understand others. According to Vacarr (2001), the act of confronting our perceived inadequacies is a beginning into the truth of our beings. Lost in self-doubt, we often become paralyzed, unable to understand what we see, make decisions or act courageously. The practice of mindfulness enhances and enlarges our capacity for empathy. It cultivates an open curiosity toward each emerging situation, and strengthens our ability to sustain a non-judgmental stance toward ourselves and in relation to the variety of our students' experiences. This ability allows us to make meaningful connections between the experiences of self and other.

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The people of this world have brought together technologically but have not yet begun to understand what it means in spiritual sense. We have to learn to live as brothers or will perish as fools.

Martin Luther King

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