

Josep Soler Carbonell's lecture on "**Multilingualism and education: case studies of Estonia and Catalonia**"

What I'm going to present here today are two particular cases of how can language policy deal with multilingualism in education. We will be talking about educational language policies in Estonia and in Catalonia, which address to this issue rather differently, as we will see, and therefore, have also different outcomes which are interesting to analyze. Now, the presentation of these two cases, together with Jim Cummins' critique on USA and, to some extent, Canada's treatment of multilingualism in education will hopefully give us enough ground to have a broader perspective on this issue, i.e. on the implications that multilingualism has over education and its language policies.

But before we go into more detail on Catalonia's and Estonia's approach, let us have a general overlook at multilingual issues from an educational perspective. To start with, there are many questions that we could ask ourselves regarding our topic of discussion today, and as many implications or assumptions about it that we could make because we are dealing with a very complex and multiple-sided issue, as you know. One of the most important things to do from scratch is to clarify what we understand by "multilingualism", because as a label, it can have several interpretations and lead us to different implications. Most prominently, we can think at least of two levels of multilingualism: the macro and the micro ones. On the one hand, from a macrolinguistics point of view, when we talk about multilingualism, we will refer to multilingual territories, states, nations, supra-nations, etc. and their policies to deal with the multiple languages that are spoken within their borders. On the other hand, a microlinguistics perspective of multilingualism would be more related to people's degree of knowledge of several languages, i.e. their level of poliglotization, language contact, linguistic adaptation or lack thereof, etc.

First of all, taking the macro perspective, we can have a look around and see how have modern states dealt with multilingualism in education. What kinds of policies exist and what are the main tendencies all around the world? In practice, we can say that discussions about multilingualism and education tend to be centered around a common place, which is bilingual education. Taking Cummins' text, we can still add another question more: "what can we say with confidence about the effects of bilingual education and the optimal conditions for its

implementation?”. As we were just saying, and as Cummins’ himself acknowledges quoting Hugo Baetens, this is a very complex phenomenon, because we could find tens of variables that have an effect and an impact on it.

As for the implications, we should have it clear in our minds that multilingualism is the rule or the norm, rather than the exception. Indeed, if there are about 6,000 languages spoken in the world nowadays and a bit less than 200 countries, that means that there are at least 30 languages per country. Of course, there are countries that have a higher degree of multilingualism than others. In fact, there seems to be a geographical explanation for that, as David Laitin notes: it is a well-known phenomenon that there are more languages spoken per square kilometer the closer you are to the equator, the higher up you are in the mountains and the longer the growing season. Laitin doesn’t provide an explanation for that, acknowledging that he doesn’t know the reason why this is so, but we can try and guess that it might very well be due to the living conditions. On the one hand, for the equator and the growing season areas, it means that the better the living conditions, the more human groups have tended to remain in those areas. On the other hand, as for the mountain regions, which seem to contradict the previous tendency, we can also have a guess and say that due to the more difficult and harsher conditions, human groups have tended to remain isolated ones from the others; hence linguistic diversity has also appeared naturally there due to the low degree of contact or lack thereof between groups.

So, if multilingualism is the rule rather than the exception, at least from the macrolinguistics point of view, why is it that it is still regarded to be the contrary? Why is it that many states all over the world still nowadays overtly seek to monolingualize their population in the name of national unity and prosperity? Another implication here is that many countries are still impregnated with the ideology of the nation-state construction, which we could trace back to early modern times (late 18<sup>th</sup> century) and the birth of pure liberalism. In that frame, minorities were regarded as inconvenient for the nation and, as such, they had to be transformed into a common identity, which happened to be that of the majority one. Throughout history, we can see many examples of this nation-state building, some of which have had more success in those terms than others. For example, France is usually cited as an example of an accomplished nation-state in that frame, probably because it was where this ideology was originated, with the French

Revolution in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and also because due to that, it is where the harsher policies have been implemented for that aim.

But despite all these long period of minoritization, most of the time followed or together with discrimination and marginalization, there still exist quite a lot of minority communities all over the world. As we were just saying, the very same fact that there are still around 6,000 languages alive nowadays, when there are only 200 countries, proves this. However, we still need to remind ourselves that out of these 6,000 languages that humans still speak, some 90% of them are to some extent endangered of disappearing during our present century, 40% of which are highly endangered. That comes as no surprise if we take into account that 95% of present-day languages are spoken by only a 5% of the population. In other words, 95% of the world's population speaks but a 5% of its languages. This last point here leads us to see that from a micro point of view, the fact that multilingualism is the rule rather than the exception might not be so true. Thus, here is a possible clue for us to understand why it is that multilingualism is regarded as the exception: because the majority of us hold but a very small fraction of the world's linguistic diversity.

Regardless of the fact that this is true, it should not allow us to forget that humans have forever had the ability to learn other people's languages: we have been, above all, traders, conquerors or conquered peoples, and throughout history, we have had the need to become polyglots. Nowadays, this is something that is starting to be highlighted, which is one of the most positive aspects of globalization. If during modern times, everyone tended to spend most of their lives in a monolingual context due to the fact that contacts between different peoples were less frequent (which in turn, helped building up the idea that monolingualism was the rule), nowadays it is every day more apparent that one cannot do with just one language (albeit maybe for those whose native language is English). But even so, the need to speak at least one foreign language is becoming clearer, mainly due to economic incentives. So, the fact that monolingualism is the rule rather than the exception at a micro level might be also starting to change, and that is something positive, to my view.

The problem with these ideological changes is that it takes quite a considerable amount of time to settle down in societies, because they alter directly our imaginary framework, with which we perceive and organize our reality and which, therefore, provide us with a sense of security.

And if there is something that surely globalization does not allow us is time, because as we can see, changes are taking place every time faster and faster. So we need to make an extra effort if we wish to make this new conception of multilingualism settle down in our societies soon and thus give us the chance to be better prepared for the future, both for ourselves and for our future generations, passing on to them as much of linguistic diversity as we can. Because here is yet another implication: diversity is good for humanity, and linguistic diversity in particular is rather a must, more than a good.

Interpreting globalization this way will enable us to better see that we live in a complex reality, that we are part of a whole, which is also part of ourselves (as Edgar Morin puts it), and we will make it a useful tool, rather than a MacDonalidization or Americanization one, as it is usually regarded. We need to prevent it from becoming yet another item on the list of what Carme Junyent calls the “big paradox”, which she words as follows: “why is it that what is good for humanity is counterproductive for diversity, which is in turn good for humanity? Why writing, printing, scholarization, the access of women to the labor market, the improvement of the means of communication and transport, among other things which could be useful to preserve linguistic diversity, and in fact are the pillars that promote the diffusion of big languages, turn out to contribute to linguistic homogenization?” (Junyent, 1998: 41-42).

Why? Because the deeply rooted notion of the nation-state building has downgraded minority languages to low status forms of speech, “dialects” in the most pejorative sense, first of all, or “non-standard” languages later, ungrammatical and incorrect forms, not worth of promotion and therefore, with less rights. And most importantly, it has helped develop the idea that there exists a hierarchy among languages, which from my point of view is the most important element that should be contrasted mainly with an opposed idea, an idea of complementarity or linguistic subsidiarity, meaning that each language has its own space, its own functions, and where a local language can be used, a more global one shouldn’t replace it (Bastardas).

In that respect, we know nowadays, more than anything thanks to Labov’s work, that all languages and all forms of speech are essentially equal, from a sheer linguistics point of view, because they are all the product of human creation, which in turn are biologically determined and thus follow a given set of rules, all forms of speech the same. There are no languages that are

more human than others. The perceivable differences that exist between languages are of an extralinguistic and more than often historical and political nature. And when these differences are said to be internal, i.e. when there are linguists that try to prove that some languages are intrinsically superior to others because of their more adaptive vocabulary or simpler vowel system, then you have an excellent example of what Juan Carlos Moreno Cabrera terms a “linguistic nationalist”.

Therefore, the question of rights, who has right to what, for minorities and minority languages, has had to be redefined and most importantly, liberal political theory has had to revisit its assumptions. Indeed, nowadays there is a more widespread opinion among political theorists that for a state to remain truly neutral in the linguistic and cultural sphere, it has to actively support and give political recognition to its minorities. Otherwise, the supposed “neutrality” means nothing but favoring the majority group, out of pure inertia (see Kymlicka & Patten, 2003; May, 2003).

There we have a very good example of the idea of the complexity that Edgar Morin explains and which we were referring to before. If something reality is, it is complex. We see it almost in every sphere of our lives, even from childhood: in order to be strong and build up healthy bodies, our organism needs to fall ill first of all; in order to win and be happy about that, we need to know that we can lose and we’ll be happier when we win if we’ve experienced ourselves defeat first of all. And so on. So for a state to be neutral and truly liberal, at some point it has to lose its neutrality, somehow. For Morin, that things as evident as that have remained unnoticed for so long highlights only that more than often, the most difficult things to grasp are those that are more clearly evident and self-apparent. And there’s another deeper reason for that to be the case, which is that scientific thought and research has been historically dominated by the Cartesian rational point of view that everything can be atomized and reduced to its parts. Morin criticizes this perspective deeply, as we were just saying. His motto is: the part is in the whole, which in turn is in the part.

Having said all that, we should probably go into the description of the two cases I promised you we’d be looking at, Estonia and Catalonia. But before we go into the details of these cases, let me just briefly mention but another implication associated with multilingualism and education. Acknowledging that all “what we know about bilingual education and mother

tongue development”, as Cummins explains, is true (shortly, that bilingualism has but positive effects rather than the contrary), we also need to realize that at some point, bi-, tri- or multilingual education has certain boundaries. Indeed, and going back to the number of languages still spoken nowadays, how can we expect that every linguistic group of speakers receives education primarily or at least to some extent in their mother tongues? Especially in the case where hundreds of languages are spoken within given boundaries (be it a state, a region or a even a city), we can think of many practical constraints in that sense, like the building of programs and curricula for each and every language, the availability of teachers and teaching materials, or to make it more complicated, how to approach that issue in the case of oral languages.

From my point of view, it means that at some point, we need to come to terms with the fact that we need to make certain concessions and agreements. And this is where the field of language policy gets really important. Cummins brings up the example of Toronto, which claims for itself to be “the most multicultural city in the world”. Nowadays, these Toronto-like types of cities are becoming more and more frequent in the world. A recent survey directed by professor Junyent in Barcelona tried to cense how many languages where spoken in the city, and they are no less than nearly 300. So how can the city of Barcelona or the Catalan government provide each and every inhabitant there with mother tongue education? Practically, it is not feasible. So how do we do it? Most certainly, you can ask me how do we eat this recipe, where you’ve praised the goodness of multilingualism, but in the end, you tell us it’s difficult to put it into practice?

I have already highlighted something important before, when I said we need a change in our perspective and make globalization work positively to end up with the hierarchical vision of languages and spread an egalitarian and complementary one. That’s my main point here today. As we will see in just a minute when I’ll talk more about Estonia and Catalonia in detail, both of them have positive and negative outcomes from their policies regarding multilingualism and education. But there is one thing that both fail to tackle: valorizing diversity as such, as something positive, putting special attention to the issue of language diversity, its relevance and its importance to humanity. All sorts of things that could be “taught” without teaching in one’s mother tongue, things that could be done rather easily through and mostly through a central

figure in the educational background: the teachers. And with this, I am not saying “forget about minority language planning in education” not at all. I am most supportive of teaching through a minority language, especially where it happens to be the language of that particular area or region, as I hope to have made clear by now, but I also acknowledge the fact that in given circumstances, the universality of receiving education in one’s own language is something at least critical and therefore, we should look for other means so that children are not discouraged to leave their languages behind in the name of an uncertain prosperity.

Cummins also talks about the centrality of teachers’ role in his text: “minority language children will benefit academically when teachers create an institutional climate where the linguistic and cultural experience of the whole child is actively accepted and validated” (p.64). We should however be careful and not patronize teachers too much, as John Edwards cleverly points out. We know that many times, school as an institution is blamed for many social deficits, but we should also be aware of the fact that school tends to be a reflection of our society, more than its leader. Due to that, in any cases, teachers usually constitute a very sensitive group of people when being criticized. Having that in mind, though, we surely would find ways to promote this kind of positive attitude among teachers and educators so that the impact that we would expect was obtained and bring about this positive atmosphere that Cummins mentions as being so necessary, in which I agree.

Now let’s start with Estonia. Estonia is a small country in North-Eastern Europe, at the very North of the Baltic Sea, just below Finland, bordering with Russia to the East and Latvia to the South. It is both territorially and demographically a rather small country: it’s a bit more than 45,000 sq km (roughly 17,500 sq mi), with barely 1.4 million inhabitants. Ethnically speaking, the population is quite divided. Estonians form the majority group (around 70% of the population) and non-ethnic Estonians (which most of the time means Russians or russophones arrived during Soviet times) are the minority groups. Linguistically speaking, the two main languages, Estonian and Russian, are not genetically related, and therefore mutually totally incomprehensible. In fact, Estonian is not even an Indo-European language, as most of the languages in Europe are, including Russian. It is a Finno-Ugric language, a sub-branch of the Uralic family, very closely related to Finnish, and not so much to Hungarian and other languages spoken in Northern Russia.



As a country, Estonia re-emerged in 1991-92 from the wreckage of the Soviet Union. Notice that I say “re-emerged”, or if you want, I could say “re-appeared”, because it had been already a country during the inter-war period, that means between the two World Wars. From 1920 to 1940, it had had the status of an independent country and had started its own project of nation-state building, which was abruptly interrupted at the end of WWII, which marks the start of Soviet period. This is very important for us to keep in mind, because it will help us better understand the future policies taken by the country, especially in relation to language and education. It is important for us to take that into account because the official discourse goes on saying that all those long years under Soviet rule were the result of an illegal annexation of Estonia to the USSR and therefore, in order to reestablish the legality of the first period of independence, important measures had to be undertaken. Among those measures, there are the Language Act and the Citizenship Law. According to the former, the only official language of the republic was to be Estonian, which every citizen had the right to use and the duty to know, if he was to be a citizen of the country, something established by the latter law. Those two main legal documents were intended to overcome the diglossic situation derived from the most recent country’s history and the harsh russification period, strengthening the national language position.

However, there is one thing that the new government could not reform as quickly as it might have wanted, or at least as ethnic Estonians might have wanted, and that is the education system. Deriving from Soviet times, the education system in Estonia was a segregated one, where ethnic Estonians studied in Estonian schools and ethnic Russians, in Russian schools. The idea behind that kind of schooling system was that the main core Russian community would not melt with other ethnicities, but rather the contrary would be promoted: that the so-called national minorities would gradually become more and more russified. In 1991, though, when Estonia regained its independence, there were no chances for the new government to establish an all-Estonian education system because of practical reasons: lack of qualified teachers that could give their subjects in Estonian, lack of curricula, lack of materials, etc.

So, the system remained basically unaltered, with ethnic Estonians studying in Estonian-medium schools and non-ethnic Estonians (i.e. Russians) studying mainly in Russian-medium schools; which in turn means that the new national minority of Russian stripe went on enjoying education in their mother tongue, which is something that not many national minorities can be



proud of, as a general rule. And contrary to what might have been expected, younger Russians are learning Estonian properly or rather satisfactorily, in general, especially in contexts where the linguistic environment is more favorable. Regardless of that fact, the Estonian government went on pursuing its objective that education was delivered mainly through Estonian language. The first plan was to shift to purely language immersion programs by the year 2000. Again, due to the lack of material resources, that deadline could not be met. Instead, it was proposed that a partial immersion program was introduced in secondary Russian-medium schools (from grades 10-12, i.e. 15-18 years of age), where 60% of the courses were taught in Estonian and the remaining 40% would be left for Russian. This program has already started to be implemented and will be completed by academic courses 2010/11 to 2011/12.

Needles to say, this particular policy has raised much concern from the Russian minority, which perceive it as yet another more threat to their language and their culture in that country. The truth is that generally speaking, Russians in Estonia are not against learning and publicly using the republic's national language. Many researches show that non-ethnic Estonians have improved their knowledge of Estonian quite considerably in the last few years, so much so that nowadays, Estonian is the unmarked language in Estonia, with the probable exception of the North-Eastern counties, in the border with Russia, where the majority of the population is of Russian background. But in the rest of the country, where the context is predominantly Estonian or mixed, the language that people would speak by default, as a general rule, is Estonian, and more so with the younger generations.

So, why, if minorities are generally learning Estonian properly, should the government still invest more efforts in remodeling the education system? As a matter of fact, we can argue that the change is not so deep, and there is a very good intention behind it, which is to spread the knowledge of the official language even more, especially in those areas where people have lesser chances to hear and use Estonian on an everyday basis, and after all, empower minorities to have equal opportunities and be on an equal footing as the majority group. Moreover, there seems to be a demand from the Russian minority to place their children in Estonian-medium schools, so as to make sure that they will learn the country's official language properly and will have better chances in their future to find a better job, or whatever.

However, as Stephen May points out: “It is clear that a lack of knowledge of a dominant language will limit the options for those who do not speak that language variety, for reasons already outlined. But that is not the only reason why such individuals might find themselves permanently on the lower-rungs of the socio-economic ladder. [...] After all, African Americans have been speaking English for 200 years and yet many still find themselves relegated to urban ghettos.” (May, 2003: 137).

All in all, the situation in Estonia reveals a prototypical situation of confrontation by means of linguistic ideologies, with its specific peculiarities. By strongly favoring the national language, the ethnically driven governments have restituted the previous legal situation and made the national language the unmarked variety, thus reversing the situation resulting from Soviet occupation. But downgrading the language of the so-called “occupants” to the degree of just another foreign language more, like it were English, German or French, has created the feeling among the majority that integration in their society is up to the minorities, that it is they who have to make the effort of learning our language, the national one, because this is our country and we can rule it in the best of our interests.

The national minorities, on their part, have struggled to adapt themselves to their new status of a minority having been the representatives of the dominant majority for a rather long period of time, an abrupt change that was consumed overnight and something that they wouldn’t expect when they migrated from other parts of the Soviet Union to their new homes. Even though some of them might still find it hard and long for the good old times, the fact is that the majority of them have taken a rather pragmatic point of view and adapted quite properly to their new situation, benefiting from the rather good standard of living that Estonia offers them, especially compared to what they would expect in case they decided to move back to Russia, where no one is waiting for them.

In conclusion, the Estonian case demonstrates that even when minorities enjoy the privilege of receiving education in their mother tongue, the sociolinguistic results that we might have expected to obtain might not be so brilliant. Neither is it the case when minorities are not taught in their respective mother tongues, which is the case of Catalonia’s linguistic immersion program, the one which I will end up my presentation with.

Catalonia has never been an independent country as we know them nowadays and as it was the case of Estonia, as we just saw, during the two World Wars. As a nation, though, it has a long history that traces its origins as far as back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century, when it is said to have originated in the border area of nowadays France and Spain, i.e. around the mountains and the valleys of the Pyrenees. Catalonia is nowadays and Autonomous Community within Spain and as such, it enjoys of a certain degree of self-government, most importantly in the spheres of education and language policy, which are of our main interest here.

Similarly to Estonia, Catalonia suffered from an oppressive regime during four decades of the last century, i.e. those years that go immediately from the end of the Spanish Civil War (1939) and the establishment of Franco's dictatorship till the end of the general's death, in 1975. During all those years, all the other Spain's languages were severely prosecuted and reprimanded. As well as in Estonia, Catalonia's most important objectives after Franco's death, culturally speaking, were the reestablishment of the Catalan language as an institutional language, restituting its lost prestige.

Again, parallel to Estonia, Catalonia's demographic landscape was deeply changed during Franco times. The situation in the late 70s was very much different from the one in the 30s, in the sense that it was also quite fragmented and not homogeneous as it had been at the beginning of the century. Here, though, we cannot speak of an ethnical division. At least, from a scholar and academic point of view, this has never been the trend. Rather, we usually speak of differences in the population in terms of their first language, home language or mother tongue, all of them labels that tend to be more confusing than in the case of Estonia, where due to the low degree of mixture in the society, everyone usually remains in a rather homogeneous cultural background. In Catalonia, by contrast, there is a considerable degree of intermarriage between the two main linguistic groups, people have more friends from the other group and in general, the society is rather unified. It is also worth mentioning that Catalan and Spanish are two very close languages, genetically related and therefore, mutually understandable to a high extent.

Given those circumstances, the first autonomous government, strongly committed with the recovery of the language and its status, as we were just saying, enacted laws in that direction already from its first years at work. Thus, after its appointment in 1980, in 1983 the first Language Policy Law was passed, establishing the dual officiality in Catalonia of Catalan and

Spanish. Stemming from that law, in 1985 schools started implementing the linguistic immersion program, by which general education was delivered by means of Catalan primarily. Again, as in Estonia, the idea was that this way, every child in Catalonia would end up scholarization with a perfect command of the two official languages of the Community and therefore, no one could later be discriminated against by means of language proficiency.

The linguistic immersion program has worked quite well, as a matter of fact, and it has received praise and good reviews from many sides, also internationally. The Spanish speaking population in Catalonia almost entirely understands and reads the language, can speak it quite well and can write it to some extent. And needless to say, Catalan speaking children end up their school years with a near native command in Spanish. One of the most important shortcomings of the linguistic immersion program, though, is that it has not changed people's linguistic habits, as it was initially thought that it would do. It was forecasted that the moment people had a better command of the language, they would start using it naturally in almost all situations, but we know that unfortunately this is not the case. We know that to start using a language there are more powerful barriers than one's degree of proficiency in that language, namely ideological ones, and this is something that language policymakers of that time failed to grasp.

Therefore, Catalan is not the unmarked language in Catalonia, as Estonian is in Estonia. The society might be more compact and less ethnically fragmented, but the dominant language of interrelation among speakers of different languages tends to be still predominantly Spanish. And the situation is much more complex nowadays due to the fact that newcomers have arrived from even more different parts of the world, i.e. not only from the rest of the Spanish peninsula. Nowadays there are quite relevant numbers of other minority groups, mainly from Northern Africa (Morocco) and sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe. In the last ten years, the population in Catalonia has grown up in 1 million, so the change has been very drastic and perceivable. But the linguistic habitus, in purely Bourdieu's terminology, of using Spanish as the intergroup language remains unaltered, which is something that worries specially analysts and sociolinguists in particular.

Moreover, even though in the last few years there have appeared discourses (Junyent, Bastardas, Boix, etc.) that break the traditionally deeply rooted idea that there is only two ways out of a linguistic conflict, the idea that bilingualism leads to either language death or full

language recuperation, i.e. that it is just a transitory stage, tends to be still predominant among population in Catalonia, and also among many Catalan scholars and sociolinguists. This means that for most Catalan speakers, for Catalan to advance and move forward, Spanish needs to retreat and lose ground. In fact, the truth is that most of the times, still in many areas of the everyday life, Catalan has much less presence, so there seems to be quite a based reason for that to be the majority's idea, but still, it goes against the complementarity and less hierarchical ideologies about language in general that I would opt for.

With that kind of background, it will come as no surprise for us to note that schools in Catalonia tend to foment a perception that there are languages that are more useful than others, namely those related to official languages of other states or nations, particularly if they are widely used or spoken, as recent investigations show (Comellas, Dooly). Talking about teachers' perception of diversity (either active or teachers-to-be), Melinda Dooly points out that this is often linked to the notions of "problematic", "hard", "difficult" and so on.

But very interestingly, according to Pere Comellas, is that teachers' opinions show a certain kind of incoherence or inconsistency. First of all, they have a different opinion on what would migrants better do with their own languages or if it was them that were to migrate. And second of all, they evaluate differently pupils' knowledge of languages and their knowledge of foreign languages. According to them, it is positive or rather positive for students to have abilities in foreign languages, but it is just a given set of foreign languages that truly matter, not all of them, as we were just saying. Comellas notes that this degree of incoherence is lower in the case of teachers having a higher degree of contact, knowledge and therefore, reflection on that issue. That means that it was the teachers of schools where the higher level of linguistic diversity was found that would hold the more coherent views on that matter.

And with all that, we need not forget the fact that constantly, every now and then, there are voices that raise the issue of linguistic discrimination in the Catalan's linguistic education policy due to the fact that those parents who would like their children to be scholarized in their home language, which means Spanish, cannot do it in public funded schools. But these claims are self-contradictory, because they are arguing for the Spanish minority's right to remain monolingual, something that would automatically put this population in a clearly disadvantageous position in front of their Catalan peers, who would know both Spanish and

Catalan and thus be better prepared, in short, something that they do not wish deep inside themselves. And the truth is that this is a kind of debate that is usually stirred up mostly from outside Catalonia and with perceivable political objectives.

All in all, to summarize our main points here, we have seen first of all that multilingualism is the rule, rather than the exception, at least from a macro perspective, and it is becoming more so day by day at a micro level too. We have seen that therefore, we need to pay attention to this phenomenon in all spheres of our lives mainly to provoke a change in our ideologies about linguistic diversity and our need of this diversity as human beings. One of the most important spheres where we should pay special attention to multilingualism is, of course, education, where we cannot hope to provide every linguistic community formation in its mother tongue mainly, but we can indeed have some influence, especially through teachers' linguistic attitudes and representations.

After having presented the two cases we have seen here, Catalonia and Estonia, we can surely conclude that this is indeed the case, because the two places illustrate two different approaches to multilingualism and education (i.e. mother tongue education for minorities or not), and none of the two has completed its *linguistic normalization*, as we call it in Catalonia. This is by no means to say that this kind of linguistic normalization can be only achieved through education, but having a look at these two cases and comparing them gives us certainly some ground for us to reflect on our topic of discussion and advance in our knowledge of these particular situations.