

Crimes against humanity in education, and applied linguistics – corporate globalisation or geopolitical knowledge glocalisation?

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Abstract

Lately, in several workshops, conferences and reports western-schooled representatives of various sciences, including medical doctors, and representatives of traditional knowledges, including shamans and ‘medicine men/women’, have tried to discuss, debate and clarify the relative validity and reliability of their respective knowledges.

An important precaution is to admit that *all* traditional knowledge is not valid and may be based on myths, ideology and status competitions. It is equally important to admit that some western-based knowledge can be just as invalid. Today, corporate globalisation, for instance competition between pharmaceutical multinationals, creates myths and ideologies, in addition to the knowledge mining, attempts at patenting various aspects of life and other types of exploitation that all of them are guilty of. Much of the knowledge exploited can be centuries old, and it is often more sophisticated and uses more nuanced categories than much of western science, a fact that has been accepted by ICSU, the International Council for Science (www.icsu.org) in a 2002 report.

This leads us to questions of scientific imperialism. In postcolonial theory and analysis of the purpose of bilingual and intercultural education for Indigenous and tribal peoples, according to Susanne Pérez (2009), the issues of not only which language should be the medium but what should be taught in the Indigenous education, in, for instance, physics classes,

should not be reduced to a ‘technical’ question of finding the best indigenous word for ‘cell’ or ‘atmosphere’, but requires discussion of the ideological implications when it is assumed that the introduction of what counts as academic knowledge, reasoning and ‘truths’ is good.

Indigenous peoples, anthropologists and others have questioned this truth, but their efforts were branded as ‘ethno-academic’, for instance ethno-mathematics, ethno-biology, ethno-medicine, and ethno-astronomy. But why is some knowledge classified as ‘ethnic’ in contrast to ‘pure’ knowledge, as in ‘pure mathematics’? “Nowadays, ‘ethno-’ is used in a quite liberal way (...), in order to indicate that the investigation of a particular field of study (as biology or astronomy), is made from the perspective of and based on the knowledge of a ‘traditional’ non-occidental society” (Urton 2003: 21).

By classifying non-occidental knowledge as ‘traditional’ or ‘local wisdom’, it is fixed in time and space.

At the same time, [concepts such as] ‘abstract’, ‘neutral’, ‘pure science’ or ‘universal knowledge’ hide the fact that all knowledge is produced *by somebody, at a certain time in history and at a certain place in history*. By defining academic knowledge as time- and spaceless, Western scientists are trying to hide their own philosophical foundations (Urton 2003: 21).

‘[T]he ‘history’ of knowledge is marked geo-historically, geo-politically and geo-culturally; it has a value, colour and a place “of origin” ’ (Walsh 2004: 2). Thus when indigenous epistemologies, philosophies and ways of ‘doing science’ are questioned and reduced to ‘local wisdom’, or ‘ethno-sciences’ by occidental scientists, they are actually reproducing colonial and neocolonial power relations. It is a colonisation of knowledge. Access to occidental academic knowledge is presented as access to the ‘modern world’ and ‘development’, which ultimately reproduces the bonds of colonialism” (Pérez 2009: 213).

These questions have been discussed among Indigenous peoples and non-western scientists for a long time. But it seems that these discussions in many “mainstream” (another loaded term) subfields of applied linguistics (e.g. ESL or bilingual education) are either at their very beginning or, if they have been part of the discourse, they have not changed the ways these fields act or even see themselves. With support from such fields, linguistic genocide in education and crimes against humanity are still being committed, with the perpetrators in most cases not even being aware of how what they are legitimating or doing might be labelled.

The paper will discuss some of these issues of scientific and other neo-imperialism within some subfields of applied linguistics in a holistic way, with arguments from education, sociology, human rights law, biodiversity studies, and studies about the maintenance of endangered languages as living languages (see Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar 2010).

Crimes against humanity in education, and applied linguistics – corporate globalisation or geopolitical knowledge glocalisation?¹

Tove Skutnabb-Kangas

Globalization. The effort to standardize consumer habits, values, and ways of thinking that contributes to the development of global markets, greater efficiencies and profits; politically, it is based on neo-liberal values and assumptions that justify this latest expression of Western colonization; undermines local economies, traditions of self-sufficiency, and the non-monetized aspects of local cultures; a source of poverty as it requires participating in a money economy even when automation makes work even more scarce; environmentally destructive and an overwhelming force in the process of enclosure of the commons (from Chet Bowers’ online EcoJustice Dictionary, at <http://www.cabowers.net/dicterm/CAdict016.php>).

Linguistic diversity. The nearly 6000 languages still spoken (many barely existing) today are now being threatened by economic, technological and ideological globalization; linguistic diversity contributes to biodiversity by encoding in the vocabulary and ways of thinking knowledge of local ecosystems—and thus how to live within their limits and possibilities; linguistic diversity is also the basis of the diversity of the world’s commons which are now being threatened by Western educational reforms that promote a constructivist and transformative approach to learning, and by the combination

of liberal ideology and technological development that have as their goal the creation of a world monoculture (from Chet Bowers' online EcoJustice Dictionary, at <http://www.cabowers.net/dicterm/CAdict020.php>).

Biodiversity. The natural world is multi-layered and interdependent—from the ecology of micro-organisms to the ecology of plants, animals, and humans; renewal of species is dependent upon the diversity of living systems; biodiversity is the basis of life and to undermine it is to undermine life itself; the opposite of an anthropocentric way of thinking (from Chet Bowers' online EcoJustice Dictionary, at <http://www.cabowers.net/dicterm/CAdict002.php>).

Anthropocentrism. A way of thinking of the natural world as a resource to be exploited for human purposes; the fate of the environment as separate from the fate of humans; humans as rational while the environment is viewed as wild and in need of being brought under rational control—or replaced by an artificial environment created by scientific and technological experts; a key feature of Western thinking that can be traced back to the Book of Genesis (from Chet Bowers' online EcoJustice Dictionary, at <http://www.cabowers.net/dicterm/CAdict001.php>).

EcoJustice. The aspects of ecojustice that should be the focus of educational reforms at both the university and public level are connected with the need to reduce the impact of the industrial/consumer dependent culture on everyday life while at the same time ensuring that people are not impoverished and limited in terms of equal opportunity; the five aspects of ecojustice that have special significance for educational reformers include the following (1) eliminating the causes of eco-racism, (2) ending the North's exploitation and cultural colonization of the South (Third World cultures), (3) revitalizing the commons in order to achieve a healthier balance between market and non-market aspects of community life, (4) ensure that the prospects of future generations are not diminished by the hubris and ideology that drives the globalization of the West's industrial culture, (5) reducing the threat to what Vandana Shiva refers to as "earth democracy" —that is, the right of natural systems to reproduce themselves rather than to have their existence contingent upon the demands of humans; ecojustice provides the larger moral and conceptual framework for understanding how to achieve the goals of social justice (from Chet Bowers' online EcoJustice Dictionary, at <http://www.cabowers.net/dicterm/CAdict010.php>).

"Indigenous peoples still experience racism, poor health and disproportionate poverty. In many societies, their languages, religions and cultural traditions are stigmatized and shunned. The first-ever United Nations report on the *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* in January 2010 set out some alarming statistics. In some countries, indigenous peoples are 600 times more likely to contract tuberculosis than the general population. In others, an indigenous child can expect to die 20 years before his or her non-indigenous compatriots" (from *UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message for the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, in New York, 9 August 2010*).

UNESCO's The Traditional Knowledge Institute:

"Today, traditional knowledge is in danger and its disappearance would not only cause the loss of people's capability to keep and pass on the artistic and natural heritage, but also of an extraordinary source of knowledge and cultural diversity from which appropriate innovative solutions can be derived today and in the future." http://www.lowtechmagazine.com/2010/07/unesco-sets-up-international-traditional-knowledge-database.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+typepad%2Fkrisdedecker%2Flowtechmagazineenglish+%28Low-tech+Magazine%29

The Okanagan word for "our place on the land" and "our language" is the same. We think of our language as the language of the land. This means that the land has taught us our language². The way we survived is to speak the language that the land offered us as its teachings. To know all the plants, animals, seasons, and geography is to construct language for them.

We also refer to the land and our bodies with the same root syllable. This means that the flesh that is our body is pieces of the land that came to us through the things that this land is. The soil, the water, the air, and all the other life forms contributed parts to be our flesh. We are our land/place. Not to know and to celebrate this is to be without language and without land. It is to be dis-placed ... I know what it feels like to be an endangered species on my land, to see the land dying with us. It is my body that is being torn, deforested, and poisoned by "development". Every fish, plant, insect, bird, and animal that disappears is part of me dying. I know all their names, and I touch them with my spirit (Jeannette Armstrong 1996: 465-466, 470).

1. Introduction

Much of today's Indigenous and minority education not only prevents the maintenance and development of the world's languages but may also participate in crimes against humanity and even linguistic genocide, as these are defined in various United Nations and international law documents. It is important for the future of the planet to maintain all the languages in the world: much of the most sophisticated knowledge about how to live sustainably, in balance with the ecosystem, is encoded in them.

But why is it so difficult to discuss the challenges involved in the acceptance of these simple facts? How and why do some subfields of applied linguistics/sociolinguistics function so as to contribute to the difficulties rather than help resolve them? Could we work more constructively, to support the maintenance and development of linguistic diversity (which is related to the maintenance of biodiversity), especially in education?

These are some of the issues I propose to discuss, against the epistemological background of the colonisation of knowledges sketched in the abstract of my presentation.

2. Why is the maintenance of all the languages in the world important for the future of the planet? The relationship between biodiversity and linguistic and cultural diversity

Current estimates of the number of species, products of some 3.5 billion years of evolution, range from 5 to 30 million, with a best working estimate of 8 to 14 million; of these, only around 1.8 million have been described (http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/species/red_list/review/). Biologists have described around 1.5 million terrestrial plants and animals and of them only some 2.5% have been assessed for endangerment. The *State of the World's Species Factsheets* (downloadable from http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/species/red_list/about_the_red_list/) give figures for endangerment for the various categories. The Census of Marine Life (<http://www.coml.org/>), a 10-year project with over 360 researchers around the globe, started in 2000, estimates that around 230,000 species of marine animals have been described; this may be only a fifth of the total number. In each of the 25 regions studied there is a major collapse of what were usually very abundant stocks of fish, crabs or crustaceans; only 5-10% are left of those observed earlier. Loss or degradation of habitat, pollution cause by waste, oil spills and chemicals, overfishing, results of climate change such as invasive species, rising water temperatures, acidification and growth of low-oxygen areas where nothing can live, are some of the major culprits.

Ten years ago it was still possible to say that languages were being killed off at a much faster pace than biodiversity; this seems no longer to be the case³. Both are disappearing extremely rapidly, and we humans and our actions are the main cause. Jeannette Armstrong (1986; see above) describes the pain it causes, and the relationship.

Luisa Maffi, the founder of the international NGO Terralingua (www.terralingua.org) describes the relationship between nature and culture, between biodiversity and linguistic and cultural diversity, in the following way:

Like other species, humans are an intrinsic part of the natural environment. Throughout the history of our species, humans have always made use of and modified the natural environment in response to their material and non-material needs. At the same time, human cultures have adapted to the natural environment in which they have developed, and thus have been influenced and shaped by this adaptation process. Cultural beliefs, values, institutions, knowledge systems, languages and practices manifest this mutual relationship (Maffi 2010: 4).

Many international organisations, including UN-related organisations such as United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP, www.unep.org), United Nations Development Program (UNDP, www.undp.org), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, www.iucn.org/), etc, and international NGOs have embraced the knowledge (see a list of organisations in the Appendix of Maffi & Woodley 2010). As an example, Trace Foundation which works with Tibetan issues (<http://www.trace.org>), organises, as part of the UN-declared International Year of Biodiversity, a two-day event in September 2010, called “*Interdependent Diversities: The Relationship between Language, Culture, and Ecology*”. They describe the background and the event as follows (www.trace.org/events/events.html):

Each language is a unique key to a community’s world view and culture and plays a central role in transmitting historically-developed knowledge about specific, biologically-diverse environments. There is an increasing awareness and recognition of linguistic, cultural, and biodiversity as inter-related and mutually supporting aspects of the diversity of life. As such, the crises affecting these aspects—from biological extinction to disappearing languages—appear to converge and even drive each other on. Understanding the integrated nature of these crises is essential to working towards solutions. ... In this event, we will examine the relationship between linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity from the perspectives of traditional land use, livelihoods, and medical knowledge.

Gonzalo Oviedo is the Senior Adviser on Social Policy for the IUCN (see above), the organisation that, among other things, keeps the Red List of Threatened Species (www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/species/red_list/about_the_red_list/). He sums up some of the reasons for the importance of maintaining linguistic diversity, in his Foreword to Luisa Maffi’s and Ellen Woodley’s path-breaking book (2010) *Biocultural Diversity Conservation. A Global Sourcebook*:

As it is known to biologists, diversity contributes to ecosystems’ resilience – and there are growing indications that the same applies to human cultures. As the prevailing economic models and political systems continue to promote standardized, homogenous responses to the needs and challenges of development and conservation, we lose diversity. We also lose resilience, as many people find themselves increasingly alienated from their cultural strengths – the knowledge and practices for survival and adaptation accumulated through generations. Policies and practices that better understand the profound links between nature and culture, and the value of diversity to resilience, can support creativity, encourage better-adapted responses and empower people to value their identity and knowledge (Oviedo 2010: xi).

The mutual relationship is described in our book for UNESCO (Skutnabb-Kangas, Maffi & Harmon 2003; see also Harmon 2002). Some two thirds of the world’s languages (as they are described in the Ethnologue, www.ethnologue.org) are Indigenous/tribal. The fate of these languages is of utmost importance for the whole world, not “only” the speakers, not as a curiosity for linguists to study and archive (see

Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 237-238 on archivists) but because of the biocultural and other knowledge encoded in them:

The traditional Native peoples hold the key to the reversal of the processes in Western Civilization which threaten unimaginable future suffering and destruction. Spiritualism is the highest form of political consciousness. And we, the Native peoples of the Western Hemisphere, are among the world's surviving proprietors of that kind of consciousness. We are here to impart that message (from *A Basic Call to Consciousness*, the Haudenosaunee address to the Western world, presented to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, October 1977).

3. Do parents and grandparents have a real choice when deciding whether or not to transmit their Indigenous or minority language to their children??

Just as biological species are disappearing, today mainly as a result of human action, so are languages. The last Eyak speaker, Marie Smith, died in Alaska in January 2008. The last speaker of Andamanese Bo, Boa Senior, died in India in January 2010. The Andamanese languages are described as being some 65,000 years old (see Anvita Abbi's Andamanese website <http://www.andamanese.net/>). Why are there no more any Eyak or Andamanese Bo speakers? Why did Marie and Boa not transmit their languages to their children? Why do most Canadian and Californian and Australian Indigenous parents not speak their languages to their children? Why are most third generation immigrant minorities to the USA and UK monolingual in English? Isn't it up to parents to choose what language(s) to speak to their children and what language(s) their school should be in? Are parents not responsible, because they have chosen to kill their mother tongues or not to transfer them to their children? Some often heard claims, from many parents AND researchers, can be summed up as follows:

Obviously the parents have seen that it is better for their children to learn the big dominant language (even at the cost of the mother tongue)? The small languages have not been able to adapt to the modern world. They are useless on the labour market. That must be why they are being left behind. They have had their life-span and are giving space to more useful languages? The parents are themselves voluntarily killing the languages!!! And the youngsters want to be modern, urban, oriented towards cultural hybridity, with a multicultural lifestyle in friendships, music, the arts, eating and dress – they are not interested in traditional languages and knowledges.

Aren't these claims correct? NO! One example comes from Michelle Cocks (2010), from the South African project "The Significance of Non-Timber Forest Product Utilization and Cultural Practices in Rural and Urban Households: Implications for Biocultural Diversity". The study

demonstrated that the use and value attached to natural-resource-based goods remains significant despite increasing urbanization in the study area. In urban areas, 96 plant species are used regularly, and 85 per cent of these are used for cultural purposes... even [in] wealthy households... [T]his indicates that the use of natural resources transcends both economic status and the rural-urban divide (Cocks 2010: 42).

The following excerpt from a youth-produced radio programme, "Hopi Teens Worry about Loss of Culture", also counteracts the claims that the parents would have left the languages voluntarily and that young people would not be interested in them. Austin

Coochyamptewa is a Hopi youngster, trying to relearn the language from his grandmother. Here he and his grandmother, Eloise Coochyamptewa are describing about why she did not teach Hopi to her children. A friend, Alrye Polequaptewa, called “the Hopi boy”, also participates. He is the only one in the school who is really fluent in Hopi. Other friends also chip in. In several places (which I have not marked), Hopi is spoken (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=122018480>):

Robert Siegel, host: This year, the boys' cross country team at Hopi Junior Senior High School won its 20th consecutive Arizona state championship. But on the Hopi reservation in the high plains of Northeastern Arizona, teens are worried about losing more than races. Fewer and fewer young people there can speak Hopi. And many worry that with the language they'll also lose their culture. Youth Radio brings us this story from Hopi Junior Senior High School in Keams Canyon, Arizona. It's called Last Words.

Austin Coochyamptewa: Since the beginning we have been taught about the end. When our language dies, we are told that the world will begin dying with it.

“Hopi boy”, Mr. Alrye Polequaptewa: We have a prophecy that one night lost brothers will awaken from the dead, then they'll draw a line from one end of the village to the other. One by one they will line us up and then they will ask us, [Hopi spoken, then translated into English]. Are you Hopi? Can you speak the Hopi language? And if you cannot respond back in fluent Hopi, they will place us on the right side of the line. And soon after that they will cut our throats. This is what we call our judgment day.

Austin: This is our school, the Hopi Junior Senior High School. Our Hopi language is dying and me and most of my friends are struggling to speak it.

First friend, Ms. Leandra Calnimpitewa: When I talk to my friends we speak English, we don't like speak our Hopi language. Because some of my friends aren't Hopi, others are, but they don't really know how to speak it.

Eloise: This problem isn't new to our generation. I'm 66 years old.

Austin: Hopis stopped learning our language...

Eloise: I wasn't allowed to speak my language.

Austin: ... when they were punished for speaking it in schools.

Eloise: You're afraid, you're ashamed and you're crying and they tell you to stop crying and hit you but how can you stop crying when they hit you.

Austin: That's what happened to my grandmother, Eloise Coochyamptewa... She stopped teaching her children...

Eloise: I regret it now.

Austin: ... to protect them from suffering the same humiliation that she had to endure when she was in school.

Eloise: I remember holding on to a fence, just crying, and then my dad will be dragging me to the classroom. It was so scary to sit there. That's what happened to me. That's why I didn't teach my kids.

Austin: Remember the part, remember when we were sitting there doing laundry and I asked you, how do you say this, how do you say that, what's the word for up, down, where did you go, things like that.

Eloise: Oh yeah. And I told him even if you can't pronounce it right, at least I'll know what you're trying to say. You know, that way, I can help you, I can correct you. I just hope it don't die, don't die, because that's the only thing we have right now is our language and our ceremonies but it's not too late. It's not too late.

Austin: At our school there's only one student who is fluent in Hopi.

Second friend, Ms. ROCHELLE LOMAYAKTEWA: His name is Alrye Polequaptewa.

Third friend, Mr. PAUL QUAMAHONGNEWA: And everyone calls him Hopi boy.

Second friend: Hopi boy.

Austin: Hopi boy.

“Hopi boy”, Mr. POLEQUAPTEWA: (Foreign language spoken) You never forget a language that you first learn.

Austin: The thing that makes Alrye different from everyone else is that his parents forced him to speak Hopi.

“Hopi boy”: I learned the language from my parents when I was just a (Foreign language spoken), a little baby. That's all they talk to me in was Hopi. And Hopi, it was supposed to be the first language you'll ever learn.

Second friend: Some people made fun of Alrye when we were younger because he had a traditional haircut and spoke the language so well.

“Hopi boy”: Number one Hopi boy coming through the door, I guess, they admired me, but I thought they were like teasing me.

Third friend: I kind of looked up to him because he knew Hopi and I started to learn words from him and I started learning and learning and learning and learning. It just started popping in my head and I started getting an idea of what people were talking about.

“Hopi boy”: Later on as I wondered, why be like them when I can be myself and be different. And then I did that and I became a role model.

Unidentified Group: (Foreign language spoken) [i.e. the youngsters speak Hopi with Austin's grandmother]

Austin: The land of the Hopi is the center of the universe. We have lived on these three mesas for generations and all that while are people that have been speaking the Hopi language but now everybody says our language is dying.

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But even those with good intentions, for instance the producers of the radio programme, *Last Words*, National Public Radio, present the Hopi youngsters' situation as either/or. Indigenous youth “have to” EITHER preserve their culture, including the language, OR adopt a modern lifestyle.

Likewise Jan Blommaert, in his article criticizing a Linguistic Human Rights – LHRs – approach, presents the medium of education as a matter of either/or choices, where choosing L1 promotion is seen as preventing upward mobility:

For nearly 1,000 years, the Hopi people have lived on the same three mesas, land now considered part of northeastern Arizona. For all that time, they have been speaking the Hopi language, which is slowly dying. There are many hurdles standing in the way of preserving Hopi, including, for Hopi teens, *the choice between preserving their culture and adopting a modern lifestyle*. (Copyright © 2009 National Public Radio®, 29 December 2009, emphasis added).

The choice for English/French *rather than* indigenous languages in education is at the grassroots level often motivated by means of discourses of ‘getting out of here’ and towards particular centres – metropolitan areas – where upward social mobility at least looks possible... L1 promotion⁴ is thus seen as an instrument *preventing* a way out of real marginalization and amounting to keeping people in their marginalized places (Blommaert 2004: 60; emphases added).

First, “postmodernists like Blommaert and others have a fantastic capacity for reversing cause and effect. It is not linguistic marginalization which causes social, economic and political marginalization, and is therefore factored in when parents ‘make choices’. It is the other way round (or at least the connection needs to be understood dialectically). It is cultural, economic, political deprivation and dispossession which produces linguistic dispossession which in turn produces inequalities” (Kabel 2010). Secondly, in fact, an “LHR approach”, as I know it, promotes bilingualism and multilingualism as educational goals, never monolingualism, and sees the learning of BOTH mother tongues AND official languages as LHRs. Blommaert is fighting windmills/ strawpeople.... Presenting it as an “either/or” choice constructs consent about “both/and” as impossible, by not even mentioning both/and as a possibility. Still, it is perfectly possible to combine (as, for instance, the Saami examples below shows and as we have shown in many articles in García et al. 2006, Mohanty et al. 2009, Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas 2010).

SomBy is a Saami rockband. Their first album "Čáhppes Lasttat" was released in May 2008. In the spring 2009, SomBy won the Saami Grand Prix. This made SomBy

very popular as Saami artists. In Oktober 2009, SomBy got a culture award from the Saami Parliament of Finland for promoting the Saami culture and language. SomBy's successful year continued in Netherlands on 31.10.2009, when the band won Liet International, an international song contest for minority languages in Europe.

Currently SomBy is preparing a new album. A single with two new songs was released 2.12.2009. It hit the official Finnish single chart's top 10. SomBy's album "Alas Eana" was released on 24th Februari 2010.

<http://www.myspace.com/sombyfinland>. Hear them:

http://www.territorioscuola.com/youtube/view.php?video=Oa64CsYprjA&feature=youtu.be_gdata&title=SomBy%3A+the+winner+of+Liet+International+2009. The young rock stars in SomBy perform in the traditional Saami costumes. They can be seen in my pdf presentation that is based on this paper, on my home page, www.Tove-Skutnabb-Kangas.org where also several generations of Saami are shown in the traditional costumes.

Going back to the Hopi situation and why elders stopped speaking the language, I have personally heard stories similar to the Hopi hundreds of times, from Indigenous peoples from all over the world, people who have been relating their own experience - but most often from people in those countries in the West where the harsh assimilation has been going on for over a century and a half. Grandparents have chosen differently, but they have to be really courageous to choose the both/and alternative. In November 2009 I had dinner in the home of an old Saami⁵ couple. He was 86, she 78. Their earlier spouses had died long ago. The 78-year old woman had not spoken any Saami to her children, and now they are really blaming her. She was crying when telling this to me, saying she of course thought she was doing what was best for her children; she was trying to save them from the shame - and now she gets the blame. The husband HAD spoken Saami to his children and has now multilingual grandchildren⁶.

But most parents have no choice! The Hopi grandparents certainly did not. For a choice to exist,

- alternatives need to exist. Mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MLE) does not exist today for most ITM (Indigenous/Tribal or Minority) children - they HAVE to accept dominant-language-medium education

- parents need to have solid, research-based knowledge about the long-term consequences of their choices

- parents need to know that all languages are fit for education, and that either/or is a false ideology. Children can learn BOTH their own language AND one or several dominant languages well if the education is organised to make this possible.

The United Nation's 2004 Human Development Report

(<http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>) linked cultural liberty to language rights and human development. It argued that there is

no more powerful means of 'encouraging' individuals to assimilate to a dominant culture than having the economic, social and political returns stacked against their mother tongue. Such assimilation is not freely chosen if the choice is between one's mother tongue and one's future.

In fact, the term "choice" itself "is a misnomer. The whole logic of choice is predicated on the fact that human beings are rational seekers of self-interest and base their decisions on rational calculation and free will" (Kabel 2010). People weigh different alternative strategies and choose the one that maximises their benefits and profit. One type of 'proof' of the absence of a link between language and identity presented by the myth-makers criticizing what they call essentialism builds on

rational-choice theory: If the link between identity and language were strong, the benefits of maintaining a mother tongue would weigh more than the benefits of shifting to a dominant language. The ‘exponentially increasing phenomenon of language shift’ can only be explained by ‘the absence of a link between identity and particular languages’, Stephen May writes (2005: 328-329). Kabel calls rational-choice theory

sacred liberal dogma. The fact of the matter is that parents ‘make choices’ with regard to languages under enormous structural constraints. Some of these constraints may too flagrantly palpable to simply ignore: violence, dispossession, threat to life ... while others may be beyond the conscious awareness of the actors themselves. Also, given the overwhelming amount indoctrination and propaganda as well the systemic violence that they are subjected to, parents can hardly be said to be meaningfully ‘choosing’. (Kabel 2010).

Many of the stories about “choice” leading to assimilation are extremely painful. But as the old Hopi woman says: it's not too late. For several of the Saami languages, things have really changed - but it is still a constant struggle (see, e.g. McCarthy, Skutnabb-Kangas & Magga 2008; Magga & Skutnabb-Kangas 2003, 2008). It is wonderful to see how much strength and knowledge there is now! Researchers can influence these choices by legitimating some and delegitimizing others in terms of the likely results in achieving the goals that parents want (e.g. learning both languages well and achieving in school), on the basis of research results, AND their own ideologies, i.e. awareness of and openness about where their knowledges come from. I have met people at seminars who attended seminars and lectures with me 40 years ago. We talk about how different it was then, with the assimilationist ideology penetrating everything (as it still does in most parts of the world). When they, after my seminars, had decided to speak, for instance, Saami to their children, it was unusual - and very courageous. Now they have multilingual grandchildren! Miklós Kontra writes in his latest book (2010) about “socially useful linguistics”. “Socially potentially harmful linguistics” delegitimizes choices which support the maintenance of the world’s linguistic and cultural diversity.

Presenting mother-tongue-based multilingual education, MLE, and support for Indigenous/ Tribal /Minority (ITM) mother tongues as something that *prevents* upward mobility is real deception and shows that researchers doing it know very little about both economic theories and education.

One can here use as a starting point economics Nobel Prize laureate Amartya Sen's (1985) conceptualisation of poverty as “capability deprivation”:

Even the relevance of low incomes, meagre possessions, and other aspects of what are standardly seen as economic poverty relates ultimately to their role in curtailing capabilities (that is, their role in severely restricting the choices people have) ... Poverty is, thus, ultimately a matter of ‘capability deprivation’ (Dreze & Sen 1996: 10-11).

Thus, “poverty is no longer to be viewed simply in terms of generating economic growth; expansion of human capabilities can be viewed as a more basic objective of development (Misra & Mohanty 2000b: 263).

Since the loci of poverty, and of intervention, are in Sen's view, economic, social and psychological, and measures have to be taken in each of these areas, the central question in reducing poverty is:

What is the most critical (and cost effective) input to change the conditions of poverty, or rather, to expand human capabilities?” (Misra & Mohanty 2000b: 265). There is “a general consensus among

the economists, psychologists and other social scientists that education is perhaps the most crucial input” (ibid.).

Thus *if* poverty is understood as “both a set of contextual conditions as well as certain processes which together give rise to typical performance of the poor and the disadvantaged” in school, and *if* of “all different aspects of such performance, cognitive and intellectual functions have been held in high priority as these happen to be closely associated with upward socio-economic mobility of the poor” (Misra & Mohanty 2000a: 135-136), *then* we have to look for the type of division of labour between both/all languages in education that guarantees the best possible development of these “cognitive and intellectual functions” which enhance children’s “human capabilities” (Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar 2010: 68-69).

Submersion education through the medium of dominant languages is subtractive; it happens at the cost of ITM children learning the mother tongues, rather than additively, learning a dominant language *and* other languages *in addition to* the mother tongue(s). Submersion education of ITM children today is not enhancing but rather curtailing these functions (e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas 1984, 2000, Skutnabb-Kangas & Mohanty 2009, Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar 2010). Thus it deprives children of the choices and freedom that are associated with the necessary capabilities. Today’s ITM education represents capability deprivation⁷, including identity deprivation.

And imagining that those organising submersion education do not know it is naïve. Blaming parents or blaming teachers and demanding more high-stakes testing (as in connection with the USA’s No Child Left Behind) solves no problems, as long as the economic, social and political problems of unequal distribution of power and resources are not tackled. Former director of research in the International Monetary Fund, professor Raghuram G. Rajan, having stated that the percentage of USA youth now finishing secondary education is lower today than in 1970, includes in his latest book *Fault Line* (2010) in suggestions for more and better education also better food for poor children. As Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) show in their book on why more inequality is bad for everyone, including the rich, USA and Britain belong to the absolutely most unequal ones of the rich countries – and their educational achievement is consistently among the lowest one (see, e.g. their Figure 8.1., page 106). Of course for example high quality teacher training is “a good thing” for children’s educational achievement, but, as Stephen Krashen states,

The heavy focus on measuring teacher quality can give the false impression that teacher quality is everything. Study after study, however, has shown that poverty is a stronger factor than teacher quality in predicting achievement. The best teachers in the world will have limited impact when children are undernourished, have high levels of lead in their bodies, live in noisy and dangerous environments, get too little sleep, and have no access to reading material (Krashen 2010).

There is no reason to believe that educational authorities would be in any way “nicer” than other policy makers.

Historically, Indigenous (and minority) parents have not “chosen” for the children to learn the dominant languages *at the cost* of the mother tongues. Their languages may have disappeared as a result of linguistic genocide. This linguicide continues today in most of the world.

4. Much of today's Indigenous and minority education may participate in crimes against humanity and even linguistic genocide – why is this difficult to discuss seriously?

Can most Indigenous and minority education in the world be claimed to participate in committing linguistic and cultural genocide, according to the genocide definitions in the UN Genocide Convention? The United Nations *International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*⁸ has five definitions of genocide. At least two of them, possibly three, are relevant for Indigenous and minority education:

Article II(e): 'forcibly transferring children of the group to another group'; and Article II(b): 'causing serious bodily *or mental* harm to members of the group'; (emphasis added).

Can this education also be seen as a crime against humanity? Robert Dunbar (human rights lawyer) and I have explored these questions in several publications. An Expert paper written for the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (Magga et al. 2005), looked at violations of the (human) right to education. The Expert paper contains sociological and legal argumentation where we show that to educate Indigenous/tribal and minority (ITM) children through a dominant language in a submersion or even early-exit transitional programme violates the human right to education. This right is encoded in many international human rights documents, also in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*⁹ (Art. 29). The Convention has been ratified by ALL other UN member states except two: Somalia and the USA...

Subtractive dominant-language medium education for ITM children

- prevents access to education, because of the linguistic, pedagogical and psychological barriers it creates. Thus it violates the right to education;
- often curtails the development of the children's capabilities, and perpetuates thus poverty (see economics Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and the argumentation based on him above);

- is organized *against solid research evidence* about how best to reach high levels of bilingualism or multilingualism and how to enable these children to achieve academically in school.

In our second Expert paper (Dunbar & Skutnabb-Kangas 2008), we again considered the possibility that such subtractive educational policies, implemented in the full knowledge of their devastating effects on those who suffer them, may constitute international crimes, including genocide, within the meaning of the United Nations' 1948 *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (the "Genocide Convention") and other international documents. That States persist in such subtractive policies, given such knowledge, can, we conclude, *from an educational and sociological point of view* be described as a form of linguistic and cultural genocide. My 2000 book (818 pages) gives hundreds of examples of this.

Dominant-language medium education for ITM children can cause serious physical and mental harm. Subtractive dominant-language medium education for ITM children can have harmful consequences

- socially, psychologically, economically, politically:
- very serious mental harm: social dislocation, psychological, cognitive, linguistic and educational harm, and, partially through this, also economic, social and political marginalization

- often also serious physical harm, e.g. in residential schools, and as a long-term result of marginalisation - e.g. alcoholism, suicides, incest, violence, illnesses, short life-span.

Our 2008 paper contains legal argumentation which shows that forcibly (i.e. when alternatives do not exist) educating ITM children in a dominant language in submersion and even early-exit transitional programmes is *at least sociologically and educationally genocide*. We need some more court cases to ascertain the precise interpretations of some concepts in the Genocide Convention's definitions. In any case this education might be legally labeled a crime against humanity. Our conclusion in the second Expert paper is:

The various forms of subtractive education to which indigenous children have been and continue to be subject results in very serious and often permanent harmful mental and physical consequences. It is now at odds with and in clear violation of a range of human rights standards, and in our view amount to ongoing violations of fundamental rights. It is at odds with contemporary standards of minority protection. In our view, the concept of "crime against humanity" is less restrictive [than genocide], and can also be applied to these forms of education. In our view, the destructive consequences of subtractive education, not only for indigenous languages and cultures but also in terms of the lives of indigenous people/s, are now clear. The concept of "crimes against humanity" provides a good basis for an evolution that will ultimately lead to the stigmatisation through law of subtractive educational practices and policies.

In our new book (Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar 2010; downloadable on the internet), we consider the extent to which the various forms of submersion education practiced both earlier and today by States could be considered to give rise to *international criminal responsibility*, exploring the application of the legal concepts of genocide, and of crimes against humanity.

The term 'crime against humanity', first used in the modern context in respect of the massacres of Ottoman Turkey's Armenians of 1915, was translated into international legal principle in 1945. Although long associated with armed conflict, it is now accepted that they can also be perpetrated in times of peace, and can now be seen as part of customary international law. Although the concept is "sweeping", it has a number of common features. First, they are "particularly odious offences in that they constitute a serious attack on human dignity or a grave humiliation or degradation of one or more persons". Second, they are not isolated or sporadic events, but "are part of a widespread or systematic practice of atrocities that either form part of government policy or are tolerated, condoned, or acquiesced in by a government". Third, such crimes can be perpetrated in time of war or in peace. Fourth, they are committed against civilians or, under customary international law, enemy combatants in armed conflicts (Cassese, 2008, 98-101). The most complete description of what constitute "crimes against humanity" is now set out in the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court* of 17 July, 1998 (the "ICC Statute") (<http://untreaty.un.org/cod/icc/statute/romefra.htm>). In our book (which the very short description above is based on), we note the existence of a range of barriers to the application of either concept to forms of submersion education, in the absence of concrete court cases that could clarify some of the concepts. But we also note, particularly in relation to the concept of crimes against humanity, that the law is not particularly clear and is constantly evolving, which may make the application of at least some concepts of international *criminal* law to submersion education possible as the law develops.

"Given that the current language and education policies and their genocidal effects represent continuities of colonial policies, colonial regimes have to be held

accountable for some of the enduring devastating consequences of their policies. From a legal and moral perspective, some form of reparation and restorative justice needs to be established” (Kabel 2010). Investigating the extent to which international law can apply to ITM education is a step in this direction.

The historical physical violence from the hundreds of years of colonization and imperialism continues today. In many countries, states are still trying to kill languages through direct physical violence towards the speakers, which is often sanctioned by laws in the country. Turkey is a prominent example – and Turkey would not be able to continue the atrocities without the unconditional US military and diplomatic support, just as the Kurdish predicament has to be seen historically as a partial result of British (and later post-colonial and Cold War) machination¹⁰.

When the Kurdish artist Rojda sang a Kurdish song at a "Culture and Arts Festival" in Diyarbakır in May 2009, some people in the audience displayed banners of the PPK [militant Kurdistan Workers' Party] and Abdullah Öcalan [imprisoned leader of the PKK] and shouted slogans. Rojda received a one year and eight month prison sentence under charges of "spreading propaganda for an illegal organization"¹¹. If we were in Turkey and some of you displayed banners about freeing Öcalan while I show Rojda's performance, I could also be prosecuted.

Four Kurdish politicians in Turkey, including two mayors, are on trial on the grounds of having addressed their electorate in Kurdish in the run-up to the local elections on 29 March 2009¹². Turkey's application for EU membership has only resulted in negligible EU insistence that Turkey's human rights abuses cease.

In Turkish Kurdistan, in Burma (e.g. the Karen), in Sri Lanka (e.g. the Tamils), in China (e.g. the Uyghurs, the Tibetans, etc), and other countries, people, including children, are imprisoned, tortured, beaten up or killed, for demanding simple basic linguistic human rights. In all these contexts, OF COURSE, also because they are demanding other human rights. But demanding the right to learn and maintain their languages and cultures, IN ADDITION to learning an/the official language, a central demand for all the groups, is seen as a crime.

In an article about Tibetan-Chinese bilingual education (Wan & Zhang 2007, 128-129), an investigation from 1996 (Wan & Wang 1997) is reported. It revealed that

most bilingual speakers are emotionally attached to their native language and have a strong desire to maintain it. While holding this attitude toward their native language, they rationally accept the social and economic significance of Chinese. They firmly reject the idea to replace Tibetan with Chinese.

And almost 90% of the Tibetans say that it would hurt "if Tibetan is completely abolished and only Chinese is allowed in teaching", while only 10.9% choose the alternative "It is good to students" (Wan & Zhang 2007, 134). The last figure might be even lower if the researchers had been Tibetan themselves.

In addition to *physical* violence (and sometimes instead of it), today there is *structural and ideological violence*. *Structurally*: schools are organised so that Indigenous/tribal and minority mother tongues are excluded. *Ideologically*: ITM languages and culture are *stigmatised*, power languages are *glorified*, and their relationship is *rationalised*. Either /or, instead of both /and /and. “We” are “helping” “them”, and they want it, for their own good. They benefit (we claim...). And if “they” somehow refuse assimilation, refuse this linguistic and cultural dispossession (Harvey 2005a, b) and resist consenting (Herman & Chomsky 1988) to the “old” ideological stigmatisation, glorification and rationalization, a colonial heritage, in step

the “new” gurus, telling them that they have no mother tongues, that languages do not exist, and that they are basing themselves on outmoded theories.

I will mention a couple of examples of the present-day structural and ideological violence. The area where the Uyghur people (an estimated 10-15 million; the official figure is 8.5 million) live was occupied by Communist China in 1949, and has since then been seen as part of China. They experience a combination of structural, ideological and physical violence in China’s attempts at killing their language

The State-sponsored systematic linguistic and cultural assimilation process that the Uyghur people are currently being subjected to started in early 1990’s and has all the ingredients of cultural genocide described in Skutnabb-Kangas 2000. Some examples include stopping the use of Uyghur language as the medium of education from kindergarten to university, creating residential schools everywhere and far away from home and moving the Uyghur students to those schools, and sending the Uyghur middle and high school students to schools in the inner Chinese proper (Han Chinese regions) thousands of kilometers away from the Uyghur homeland (Bilge Tarim, pseudonym, personal communication, March 2009, quoted in Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar 2010: 55).

Uyghur teachers are being removed; monolingual Chinese teachers replace them even in Kindergarten and daycare; teachers are being fired for peaceful opposition and wanting to promote the Uyghur language:

All the Uyghur elementary and middle school teachers were forced to take Han Chinese language tests after about 2006, and those who “were not qualified” were laid off, transferred to other jobs, or forced to retire early. They are all very experienced teachers, usually having 20-30 years of teaching experience. The positions of those teachers were filled with Han Chinese people who were born and went to schools in Han Chinese regions of China, who do not speak a single word of Uyghur, and who do not understand Uyghurs and their homeland. The Uyghur kids are losing self-esteem and self-confidence, are not able to learn any subjects, and the government only cares about their learning of the Han Chinese language; the rest doesn’t matter for them. That is, the Uyghur kids are now being educated to be qualified slaves who master the Han Chinese language but nothing else. Many Uyghur teachers were fired from their jobs for peacefully expressing opposition to the so-called “bilingual education”, and for signing a petition to promote the use of Uyghur language in official government dealings and on government websites (ibid., 55-56).

Even harsher assimilationist measures have just been announced¹³.

Singapore’s language campaigns, including the “Speak Mandarin” campaign were also using ideological violence: glorification and stigmatization, as we can see in the quotes where all other Chinese languages are called dialects: “Mandarin is a developing language; on the other hand, dialect is a stagnant language“ (Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew, *The Straits Times*, 10 Jan 1980). “Unlike Mandarin which ‘has cultural value and will also have economic value twenty years later, dialects have no economic value in Singapore. Their cultural value is also very low’ (ibid., 17 Oct 1980). “Dialect will hinder the learning of the child if he uses dialect ... To speak dialect with your child is to ruin his future” (ibid., 17 Nov 1980; all three quotes are from Lim 2009, p. 55).

The Turkish ideologies of genocide vis-à-vis Kurds are very similar to earlier USA physically genocidal (Indigenous peoples) and culturally and linguistically genocidal assimilationist (immigrants) policies. There are also some similarities with the present-day gurus’ insistence that languages do not exist (as distinct, countable entities); that they are inventions of outsiders, or that extensive “mixing” and “code-switching” and performing many languages simultaneously makes it impossible to talk about distinct “languages”. All the concepts used above concepts of course presuppose that the entities one “mixes”, or “switches” from and to, or “performs” can at some level be analytically separated, even if we who do this daily may not always think of them as

separate entities. In Turkey, the existence of the Kurds and their languages are not only stigmatised but have often been outright denigrated:

‘We have *no* ethnic minorities’, a ‘high official in Ankara’ told Alan Cowell of *The New York Times* in February 1990”. “In May 1989, the National Security Council launched a campaign *denying the existence of a distinct Kurdish nation and a Kurdish language*. Pamphlets were issued and distributed to schools in the south-east, claiming that Kurdish is not a distinct language, but a dialect of Turkish”. “There is no such thing as the Kurdish people or nation. They are merely carriers of Turkish culture and habits. The *imagined* region proposed as the new Kurdistan is the region that was settled by the *proto-Turks ... Kurdish is a border dialect of Turkish*” – (Professor Dr. Orhan Turkdogan). “In response to [former Mayor of Diyarbakir] Mehdi Zana’s insistence on speaking Kurdish, Military Prosecutor Vedat Erkan stated that there was *no* such language as Kurdish in the Turkish state. In his words, *Kurdish is not a language. It is a heap of words*. It is a restricted mass of words *from words of pure Turkish origin which developed from ancient Turkish*. Spoken by an insignificant number and encouraged by hostile forces outside the nation, calling this Kurdish is no indication that a separate Kurdish race and Kurdish language exists among the Turkish citizens living on Turkish soil’ (all quotes from Skutnabb-Kangas & Fernandes 2008).

Hopi, Saami, Kurds, Uyghurs and Tibetans (and others mentioned) want their children to learn BOTH their mother tongues (e.g. Hopi, Saami, Kurdish, Uyghur and Tibetan), AND a dominant language in the country (e.g. English, Finnish/Norwegian/Russian/Swedish, Turkish, or Chinese). They do not want to be forced to choose between either the mother tongue or the dominant language. This would be perfectly possible if schools did not participate in linguistic genocide. Kurds in South Kurdistan (“Iraqi Kurdistan”) now receive their education through the medium of Kurdish, but the main linguistic minorities in South Kurdistan also have their primary education through the medium of their own languages (see Skutnabb-Kangas & Fernandes 2008). The Ánar Saami on the Finnish side of Sápmi (the Saami country) who have maximally 400 speakers, have languages nests and mother tongue medium teaching in the first grades. In the pdf mentioned earlier that is based on this paper, I show a delegation of Ánar Saami children speaking with the Finnish president Tarja Halonen (and her husband) – the children demand more Ánar Saami medium textbooks.

So, still, regardless of physical violence, parents want BOTH /AND. Most Indigenous/tribal and minority parents OF COURSE want their children to learn the power language in the country - it is needed for good (or often: any) jobs and for democratic (or even “undemocratic”) participation in society. Most of them ALSO want the children to learn their mother tongue(s).

The most important PEDAGOGICAL reason for both languages disappearing and for “illiteracy” in the world is the wrong medium of teaching. Indigenous and minority children and children from dominated groups are mostly taught in dominant languages, *subtractively*. They have few Linguistic Human Rights (LHRs). Subtractive teaching in many if not most cases shows poor results in terms of both content and language learning – there are hundreds of books and thousands of articles showing this. It can also kill languages in a few generations.

Just two quotes from Kathleen Heugh about early-exit transitional programmes, a somewhat more gentle way of submersion than starting directly in a dominant language:

- Early transition to the international language of wider communication/ILWC across Africa
- Poor literacy in L1 and L2
- Poor numeracy/mathematics & science
- High failure and drop-out rates

- High costs/ wastage of expenditure

If learners switch from an African MT to FL/L2 medium, they may seem to do well until half way through grade/year 4. After this, progress slows down and the gap between L1 and L2 learner achievement steadily widens. We now know from comprehensive studies in Second Language Acquisition [...] in Scandinavia, Australia, Russian Federation, India, North America, and, especially in Africa that it takes 6 - 8 years to learn enough L2 to be able to learn through the L2 (Heugh 2009; see Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas 2010 for her references).

On the other hand, mother-tongue based multilingual education, MLE, shows consistently good results. We have enough knowledge about the basic principles of how MLE can be organized, even if contextualization is always needed – there is no one-size-fits-all model (see, e.g. articles in García et al. 2008, Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 2009, Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas 2010, and the recommendations in Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar 2010). Also organizations such as UNESCO (e.g. 2003, 2008, 2010a, Institute for Lifelong Learning, UNESCO 2010b), Unicef (<http://www.unicef.org/>; search for MLE), Save the Children (e.g. 2009) and many others are now promoting mother-tongue-based MLE. The most important educational LHR is an absolute right to mother tongue medium teaching in non-fee state schools (see Skutnabb-Kangas 2009: 56). And OF COURSE this does not mean “monolingual” teaching, the way the critics of what they call the LHRs approach accuse us of (see, e.g. Freeland & Patrick, 2004). In mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MLE) a dominant language is taught as a subject, and it may become a medium of education at least partially in later grades (preferably not during the first 6-8 years), depending on the local context (see also Skutnabb-Kangas & Mohanty 2009).

And there are good evaluations of MLE. A uniquely broad one, encompassing a whole country, comes from Ethiopia. Ethiopia has had an innovative and progressive national education policy, based on 8 years of mother-tongue medium (MTM) education, combined with teaching other languages (the national language, Amharic, and English) as subjects. Regions have the authority to make their own decentralized implementation plans. Some regions transfer to English medium already after 4 or 6 years. There is an efficient collection of system-wide assessment data. A study across all the regions was commissioned by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (Heugh, Kathleen, Benson, Carol, Berhanu, Bogale & Mekonnen, Alemu Gebre Yohannes, 22 January 2007). The country-wide evaluation data show very clear patterns of learner achievement at Grade/Year 8, 10 and 12. The Grade 8 data show that those learners who have 8 years of MTM education plus English as a subject perform better across the curriculum (including in English) than those with 6 years or 4 years of mother tongue medium. The exception is the capital of Ethiopia where children hear and use English outside school and get slightly better results in English than rural children, despite fewer years of MTM education. The results are described and updated, and compared with several other countries, in articles in Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas 2010.

Still, MLE is not used on a large scale. Physical and ideological violence against speakers of ITM languages, especially in education, linguistic and cultural genocide and crimes against humanity, continue. In the end it may result in most languages of the world being killed – and with them much of the precious knowledge about how to live in balance with a changing ecosystem. While the killing of biodiversity, ecocide, gets a lot of attention, discussions about linguicide are almost non-existent. The reactions to pointing it out are both emotional diatribes against the messengers, rather than serious discussions about the content, and serious and consistent

misrepresentations of what those of us who work with LHRs and MLE stand for. In addition, much of what is said about multiple, changing linguistic, ethnic and cultural identities, non-boundedness of languages/variants/dialects, both/and/and, and many other issues, by many eager researchers seems to be, in François Grin's terms (2004: 71), reinventing the wheel¹⁴. Linguistic Human Rights (LHRs) in education are ONE necessary (but not sufficient) prerequisite in the struggle to prevent linguistic genocide and crimes against humanity.

5. Some research in subfields of applied linguistics/ sociolinguistics functions so as to contribute to the difficulties rather than help resolve them. How could researchers work more constructively, together with Indigenous peoples and minorities, to support the maintenance and development of linguistic diversity, especially in education?

There are, as has already become clear, many researcher voices questioning concepts such as “mother tongue” and “language”, claiming that treating them as in any way discrete and countable is to essentialise them. This boundedness belongs according to them to an outmoded ideology which smacks of purism, glorification of authenticity and a forcible construction *for* these people (not *by* them) of a romanticised traditional ethnolinguistic identity that prevents progress, change, modernization, social mobility and dialogue. Pennycook's latest concept – to replace not only concepts such as monolingualism but bilingualism and multilingualism, is “metrolingualism”. The “metrolingual undermines retrolingual mono/multilingual dichotomies” (Otsuji & Pennycook 2010: 245). The metrosexual man “takes pride in his appearance, enjoys clothes, shopping, skin products, jewellery, and good food, and engages in practices that distinguish him from the retrosexual (the old-fashioned male)” (ibid.¹⁵). In the same way, in the “metrolingualism” discourse, what is termed “retrolingual” is then presented as old-fashioned and obsolete. The “dilemmas posed by language and globalization” (Pennycook 2010: 30.1) require leaving these outmoded concepts behind, it is claimed; they are claimed to isolate people, and, most importantly, not to allow discussing languages as performance (rather than as static, bounded, objects which the “retrolingualism” is claimed to do). Language economist François Grin has remarked that some sociolinguistics seems to be in the business of reinventing the wheel (2004: 71). I agree. Fluid boundaries between languages, constant changes in languages and cultures, multiple identities, doing language, all are something that, for instance, many Indian sociolinguists and psycholinguists (Khubchandani, Pattanayak, Annamalai, Dua, Mohanty, Dasgupta, etc)¹⁶ have been describing for decades – there is nothing new in the sudden “western” realizations of it. Ajit Mohanty's formulation sums it up in his description of India:

the fluidity of perceived boundaries between languages, smooth and complementary functional allocation of languages into different domains of use, multiplicity of linguistic identities and early multilingual socialization (Mohanty et al. 1999).

It is tempting to enthuse about these “new” fads. But often it seems to necessitate a less-than-true description of both “the world” and other researchers' work.

“...a program aimed at stimulating or promoting these local languages (invariably mother tongues of apparently inherently monolingual and monocultural people¹⁷) ties the speakers of these languages to a

place and reinforces the presumed fixed connection between people and their environment” (Blommaert 2004: 59).

Criticising what he calls the locality and territoriality of a linguistic human rights approach, where “authors appear to assume the spatial ‘fixedness’ of people, languages and places” (Blommaert 2004: 56), Blommaert presents, as an example, the first lines of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, an agreement between states, “which are here presented as territorially bounded entities...” (ibid.).

Earlier Blommaert has stated: “The world does not fit the linguistic rights paradigm. And now we can do two things: either insist on the correctness of our thesis, or try to understand the reasons why it does not work. I opt for the second tactic” (ibid.: 55). For a researcher who claims the latter option, not accepting that states are territorial entities for the purposes of what they can promise to do in parts of international law, (or the fact that certain types of biodiversities exist in bounded areas), some more “understanding” is possibly needed.

We can see the same lack of understanding the premises of international law in, for example, Freeland & Patrick 2004: 5-6). Of course one can dream of a different world where international organizations such as the United Nations are not dependent on negotiating agreement with states – but theory which is completely alienated from the “real” world of power relations and does not participate in the struggles attempting to change this “real” world in the direction of just a tiny bit more equality is not of much use. Working with LHRs is in many cases connected with these real struggles – here too, it is both/and.

When decisions are made on which languages to choose for education, in the media, etc, what criteria are legitimate to apply to resolve real dilemmas equitably? Political power, sensible pragmatism, research concerns, ethics (see also Phillipson 2003)? LHRs are a necessary but not sufficient tool for educators concerned with language who want to contribute. The articulation of human rights is a paradigm case of thinkers formulating principles in the hope of influencing representatives of the state (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 2008: 10).

States *are* often reluctant, the UN systems *are* weak, and there is an overall gap between proclamations and implementation, as, for instance, Neville Alexander has repeatedly stressed (e.g. 2006). But many postmodernists ignore the continued existence of state power in the modern world, and the ramifications of influential global forces. Pennycook often writes as though hip-hoppers are more influential than the World Bank and transnational companies, and Blommaert, Canagarajah and others give the impression that successfully negotiating about one’s English on the street or in the classroom in Africa or Asia is enough for getting a good job. However, lately some realities of state or labour market power may have started entering the consciousness of some:

Just as elements of linguistic and cultural fixity may be mobilised as part of metrolingualism, so metrolingual language use may have to confront its static nemesis, the fixed identity regulations of institutional modernity: when judgments in law courts, educational systems, asylum tribunals, job interviews or hospital waiting rooms are brought to bear on metrolingual language use, the full discriminatory apparatus of the state all too often works against such fluidity (Otsuji & Pennycook 2010: 247).

Coming back to some of the claims, is it not true, then, that ties to local identity-building-blocks such as languages prevent people from partaking in the “global”

world? ¹⁸. This is another myth. In a book called *New World of Indigenous Resistance. Noam Chomsky and voices from North, South and Central America*, Meyer & Maldonado 2010 (see also our review of it, Pérez et al. 2010), Benjamín Maldonado Alvarado criticizes Chomsky (and this critique would be even harsher in relation to the researchers quoted above) for holding

‘the erroneous view that *comunalidad* inevitably reduces or seeks to reduce itself to that which is local. Or even worse, that it excludes anything from the outside, or anything global, regardless of how valuable, useful and necessary it might be. This view holds that those who appreciate communal ways and fight to strengthen them want to isolate their people from the world, and lock themselves up in a nonexistent world free of evil’ (Maldonado 2010: 368). He continues: ‘Isolation or purism is not at all what the communalists have in mind. Rather, they focus on the need to equip their people to circulate in the world, confident in their identity and with a strong sense of belonging to their community. In other words, they strive to overcome the vulnerability and dependence generated by postmodern nomadism’ (ibid.).

I agree totally. And mother tongues are mostly an important aspect of that strong identity. Still,

Mother tongues as concepts and claiming them is seen as ‘outmoded’ (Canagarajah 2005: 443), ‘irrelevant’, ‘quaint’ or ‘antedeluvian’ (May 2005: 321) and worse. By negating or ridiculing mother tongues as a concept these researchers may support the invisibilisation of ITM mother tongues in precisely those areas where the transfer of ITM languages to the next generations is decided, e.g. schools. At the same time, these non-nominalising myth-maker researchers often pose as (leftist and/or post-post-modern) advocates for Indigenous peoples and/or minorities (Skutnabb-Kangas 2009: 46).

Jodi Byrd, citizen of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, discusses the defamation of native voices in postcolonial scholarship, through casting Indigenous peoples as “relics or remnants of a distant, conquered past” (2006: 83). She sees postcolonial theories as “situated on a precipice between providing a forum to consider the colonization of Indigenous People on a global, international scale and becoming yet another means through which Western academia discredits and invisibilizes indigenous world-views” (ibid., 84). The theory “appears depoliticized in its emphasis on the ‘post’ and its declaration that ‘the era of formal colonialism is over’” (ibid., 86) whereas “the Native decolonial struggles in the USA are still ongoing” (ibid.), with a federal policy that “systematically dismantles the sovereignty and treaty rights of Native nations, forcibly appropriates their lands, and degrades Native cultures and languages, through forced assimilation, relocation, and allotment” (ibid.).

One can discern a similar policy towards ITMs in most parts of the world, with states and/or transnational companies forcibly appropriating ITM lands, and preventing the intergenerational transfer of their languages, helped by the partial legitimation of the forced assimilation by many researchers. Byrd pleads for a transformation of “the postcolonial to account for those processes through which the discursive colonialism of Native peoples remain intact even within theories developed to challenge Western hegemony” (ibid.).

“Globalisation” needs some more deconstruction too¹⁹. Pierre Bourdieu discusses the French discourse which, glorifying the French society as ‘the presumed incarnation of the Rights of Man’ saw ‘the inheritance of the French Revolution ... as the model for all possible revolutions’. Building on this example, Bourdieu (2001: 96-97) describes today's globalisation as

“a pseudo-concept that is both descriptive and prescriptive, which has replaced ‘modernisation’ that was long used in the social sciences in the USA as a euphemistic way of imposing a naively ethnocentric evolutionary model by means of which different societies were classified according to their distance from the economically most advanced society, i.e. American society”. [...], and states that it” ... incarnates the most accomplished form of *the imperialism of the universal*, which consists of one society (USA) universalising its own particularity covertly as a universal model.”

In addition to more general examples, there are many statements by both USA and British power-holders, including many researchers, about the globality of the English language that fit this statement about universalizing their particularity covertly as a universal model and claiming that monoloyalties and monolingualism are the desirable norm:

The project of establishing English as the language of power, globally and locally, is central to this empire. The ‘manifest destiny’ that colonial Americans arrogated to themselves has been explicitly linked, since the early nineteenth century, to English being established globally: “English is destined to be in the next and succeeding centuries more generally the language of the world than Latin was in the last or French in the present age” (John Adams to Congress, 1780, cited in Bailey 1992: 103). “The whole world should adopt the American system. The American system can survive in America only if it becomes a world system.” (President Harry Truman, 1947, cited in Pieterse 2004: 131) (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 2010: 80).

The U.S. Council for Foreign Relations envisaged in 1944 ‘a global economy, dominated by U.S. corporate interests’ where the USA ‘would need to dominate economically and militarily’ because ‘the U.S. national interest required free access to the markets and raw materials of this area’ (quoted in Korten 1996: 21). Condoleezza Rice, President G.W. Bush’s foreign affairs advisor, stated in *Campaign 2000. Promoting the national interest*: ‘The rest of the world is best served by the USA pursuing its own interests because American values are universal’. Corporate globalization is made easier by denying positive boundedness, here meaning solidarity with and ties to languages, cultures, landscapes.

When TNCs [transnational companies] and post-modernist nomads today move freely from country to country, without solidarity or ties (or mother tongues or ethnic identities), when the corporate globalisation, with post-modern ideologies, ‘celebrates the liberation from passionate attachments to any specific piece of territory’ (Barnet & Cavanagh 1994: 21), and tries to make obsolete the pre-modern states which (like USA or Japan) cling to vertical relations, attached to territories (= their own states), are they then also paving the way for a less hierarchical, more equal world? Is it taking us closer to the universal consciousness that ‘poets, philosophers, and prophets have dreamed through the ages’ (Barnet & Cavanagh 1994: 21). Quite the opposite. Today’s globalisation is creating still more powerful global vertical relations, without even the pretention of democratic control, or ‘duties that go with rights’ (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 451-452).

But are those who want to promote numerically small languages, many spoken in the country, hopelessly out of date? Ours is a world where several countries (e.g. Brazil, India, the USA) are already heavily urbanised, with 65-85% of the people living in cities, a world where urbanisation is accelerating in most of those countries where more or less all global population growth is happening and where the percentage of youth is highest (see Skutnabb-Kangas & Heugh 2010 for some statistics). In the future world, who needs the biodiversity-maintaining knowledge encoded in the small ITM languages?

Greenpeace International and the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC) published on November 28, 2008 their *Energy [R]evolution Report. A sustainable*

*global energy outlook*²⁰. On its front page, it has a question that I have also asked many times:

Will we look into the eyes
of our children and confess

that we had the **opportunity**,
but lacked the **courage**?
that we had the **technology**,
but lacked the **vision**?

Referring to this and several other reports that he participated in writing, the Danish engineer. Dr. Klaus Illum²¹ asks the Danish politicians whether they have read the literature documenting the future prospects for oil. Most vehicles that use oil (cars, trucks, buses, ships) will no longer function in 40 year's time. The alternative fuels now experimented with, including palm and other oils, ethanol, straw, electricity, algae, bacteria, etc., are unsustainable – and there are and will be no technological fixes (e.g. aspects of bioengineering seem more hazardous as a cure than the “illness”). International trade in food will hardly exist for my grandchildren and great grandchildren, because long-distance transport will be reserved only for the most important cargo, including those metals and minerals that are necessary for some agricultural, military and communication purposes (and China will control most of them anyway). You have to grow your food locally (as Robert Phillipson, my husband, and I do to a large extent already), with local grazing for animals (no Brazilian soya for Danish pigs), local fertilizers, etc. Cities have to grow their own food²². The transition to the post-oil world has already started in many places (e.g. www.transitionnetwork.org).

Still, a lot of planning and research goes on as if this was not known. This includes those intellectual games which, by disinventing but NOT reinventing/reconstituting languages undermine the maintenance of those endangered languages which have encoded precious knowledges about how to not only live more sustainably but how to survive when oil-based transport and consumerist life-styles in general crash (refer to the Haudenosaunee address at the end of Section 2). These scientist games remind me of the “good theories” that the Slovene philosopher Slavoj Zizek advocates in an interview with Sean O’Hagan (2010: 23): “My analysis of the film ‘Avatar’ is sheer bluff. When I wrote it, I had not seen the film myself, but I am a good Hegelian: If you have a good theory, you can perfectly well forget everything about reality...”

The intention with earlier and today’s physical violence and today’s structural and ideological violence has been and still is very clear: to maintain unjust divisions of power and resources, locally and globally. It was equally clear for Winston Churchill in 1941 and George Kennan in 1948. Churchill:

We have engrossed to ourselves an altogether disproportionate share of the wealth and traffic of the world. We have got all we want in territory, and our claim to be left in the unmolested enjoyment of vast and splendid possessions, mainly acquired by violence, largely maintained by force, often seems less reasonable to others than to us (quoted in Darwin 2009).

The power to control language offers far better prizes than taking away people’s provinces or lands or grinding them down in exploitation. The empires of the future are the empires of the mind (Winston Churchill, when receiving an honorary degree at Harvard University, 6 September 1943).

Guidelines for USA foreign policy from 1948 Bretton Woods, to World Bank & IMF to GATT to WTO are equally clear. George Kennan, the main USA negotiator for the

Bretton Woods instruments, wrote in the aftermath of the passing of the first parts of the United Nations Bill of Rights (he did change some of his views later, though):

We have 50% of the world's wealth, but only 6,3% of its population. In this situation, *our real job* in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which permit us to *maintain this position of disparity*. To do so, we have to dispense with all sentimentality ... we should *cease thinking about human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization* (quoted in Pilger 1998: 59; emphases added).

This is how critical scholar Mark Curtis analyses the role of Britain and other powerful states in relation to eradicating or promoting poverty:

One basic fact [is] that the mass poverty and destitution that exist in much of the Third World are direct products of the structure of the international system. Moreover, an elementary truth is that the world's powerful states have pursued policies with regard to the Third World which knowingly promote poverty. It is clear that the policies they have encouraged or imposed on the Third World - in the earlier postwar period following military intervention and in the later period through the international financial institutions - have betrayed no institutional interest in eradicating poverty or in promoting a form of economic development meaningful to the poor. Rather, policies have been imposed with the understanding that they will not contribute to these ends (Curtis 1995: 236).

The history of British foreign policy is partly one of complicity in some of the world's worst horrors. If we were honest, we would see Britain's role in the world to a large extent as a story of crimes against humanity. Currently, contrary to the extraordinary rhetoric of New Labour leaders and other elites, policies are continuing on this traditional course, systematically making the world more abusive of human rights as well as more unequal and less secure (Curtis 2003: 432).

The work of many sociolinguists/applied linguists is irrelevant from the point of view of the world's major problems even where it *could* address them. In Ahmed Kabel's (2010) view

... most research in applied linguistics is out of synch with the real issues as perceived by social actors. This ivory tower syndrome is rife in even some of the self-appointed embarrassingly depoliticized critical strand of the discipline. Even worse, some recent scholarship has been after embarrassingly soft targets (flows, hip-hop...). The concepts, paradigms and theories that we employ are either completely irrelevant or dangerous. What is needed is a more activist stance informed by socially and politically accountable forms of knowledge and research.

This work is in no way dangerous to those global and local corporate forces that are driving the negative, wasteful, consumerist, growthist²³, destructive globalisation. Priyamvada Gopal teaches postcolonial studies at Cambridge University. She criticises western researchers and journalists for misrepresenting reality: earlier in the colonial tradition by degrading the part of the world which was outside the West; now increasingly through a more fashionable model which involves the incorporation of "them" in modernity through teaching "them" how to live in a global present (Gopal 2010). Even if she is using Afghanistan as an example, her theorizing applies more generally, also to the fashionable "language-disinventing" research, as well as the ELT-business (see Phillipson 2009, 2010, and the BAAL 2010 colloquium *Is British ELT in existential crisis?* organised by Robert Phillipson). We "retro-people" must become metro, and be grateful to those who teach us and gracefully allow us to leave behind our "outmoded" ideas.

Fortunately, all researchers do not want to jump this bandwagon, and have other ideas about what today's post-post-modernity requires. Kathleen Heugh's and my

edited book (2010) wants to do what I, basing myself mainly on Sandra Harding (1998), advocated in the Introduction of my 2000 book (xxviii-xxx):

From many quarters researchers have noted shifts in research focus and attention during recent years, 'from centres to margins, from the homogenous to the heterogenous, from the national to the transnational: borders are no longer the end point but the starting point', as Patrick Stevenson (1998: 102) puts it in his review of the quadrilingual book about language policy in border regions, edited by Roland Marti (1996). In standpoint theories the subordinated borderline positions are turned into resources. When research starts off from the experience and lives of 'people who have been disadvantaged by the dominant conceptual framework' (Harding 1998: 90) (disadvantaged because they have been excluded by these frameworks), the Other starts not only speaking back²⁴ (criticizing normal science) and not only creating alternative frameworks (which revalidate the resources of the disadvantaged) but creating *constructive* chaos.

Harding discusses two strands in earlier scholarship on 'difference' that both (radical) feminist and postcolonial standpoint theories are bringing together. I would like to label the two perspectives an '*inside-outside*' perspective (Harding's horizontal one), and a '*below-above*' perspective (the vertical one).

On the one hand there is the tradition noting and studying cultural differences *horizontally*. This could be, for instance, looking at female-male differences, or ethnic (minority and/or majority) groups' cultural differences, trying to describe, explain and understand the ideologies, behaviours and feelings the way the people themselves see and experience them, in addition to describing them from the outside. But in this tradition there is a risk of tending to

lose sight of the global political economy and unequal relations it creates between cultures, as well as of pervasive power relations such as gender relations that create similarities and alliances between, on the one hand, those who can exercise economic and political power and, on the other hand, those who are the object of others' power exercises (ibid., 91).

The other strand looks at vertical, hierarchical differences, focusing on power relations. The risk here is to overemphasize in a binary way discrete categories of 'the powerful' and 'the powerless' and homogenise the differences **within** the categories (ibid., 91).

To start from the standpoint of the marginalised can **combine** the inside-outside and below-above perspectives. This does not mean that the theorising necessarily uses the discourses and conceptualisations which the marginalised themselves use - after all, they are participating in the hegemonising discourses too. Neither does the theorizing necessarily accept their articulation of problems as **by definition** more valid than others - experiences of oppression do not necessarily and certainly not automatically 'generate counterhegemonic analyses' (ibid., 158-9), as Paulo Freire has also often noted. This does **not** mean, however, that the views 'from the margins' should not be made central, as the quote below claims:

Indian people have survived efforts at cultural genocide time and again. Regrettably, the assault on Indian cultures includes the perpetuation of false images by non-Indian historians. This being the case, there can be no Indian history, until Indians write it... Deliberate, gross misrepresentations of native cultures cannot be excused. Indians are still working to overcome historical propaganda, and when they do, it will be the Euro-American tradition of history that must be revised, not Indian history. Indian history should be facilitated, not fabricated (Jackson 1987: 107).

But standpoint theorists criticize the claims of objectivism which insist that the only alternative to a 'view from nowhere' (a positivistic 'objective' view posing as neutral) is a special interest bias - which leads to value relativism²⁵. In contrast, 'standpoint epistemologies propose that institutionalized power imbalances give the act of starting off from marginalized lives a critical edge for formulating new questions that can expand everyone's knowledge about institutionalized power and its effects' (Harding 1998: 159).

Let us exemplify with one of the many possible questions, about the universality of 'progress' which is a central element in 'Western civilisation'. In development theory there has been a 'development' of successive paradigms, from seeing underdeveloped countries as primitive and savage, through evolutionary and modernism theories (where the countries are 'developing') to core-periphery and dependency theories, to world systems theories (Wallerstein 1990a,b) and beyond (e.g. Appadurai

1990). Still, in **all** of them there seems to be a strand about the self-evidence of evolution and progress as necessary and positive, 'a tendency when non-Indians write "Indian history" which has long bothered me ... the implicit "up from darkness" strain of thought ... the view of the inevitability of "enlightenment" or "progress"', as noted by Professor Alfonso Ortiz, himself Pueblo (quoted in Costo 1987: 25). He continues (ibid., 26):

Historians and anthropologists who write in this vein treat Indian tribal peoples as if they were also grinding, inevitably, inexorably, up the stepladder of progressive enlightenment and toward greater complexity. To insist on perceiving something that is not there is to distort the true experience of these people.

... perhaps we Indian people who survived with the essences of our cultures intact really want to make contributions first and foremost to the continued survival and perpetuation of these cultures, rather than to something called "civilization", which is, after all, alien to our traditional cultures, and usually antagonistic to them as well.

“The devaluation and delegitimation of local knowledges are symptomatic of the knowledge feudalism and triumphalist hegemony of secular, white-supremacist, capitalist modernity, which epitomizes the inherent coloniality of Western knowledge”, Ahmed Kabel writes (2010). In order to make a break with the colonisation of knowledge, Susanne Pérez (2009: 213-214) uses Catherine Walsh’ proposed construction of an ‘epistemic interculturality’:

(...) the construction of new epistemological frames that incorporate and negotiate occidental and non-occidental knowledges, indigenous but also black (and their theoretical and lived bases, from the past but also from the present), always maintaining as fundamental the necessity of confronting coloniality of power to which these knowledges have been submitted (Walsh 2004: 4, quoted in Pérez 2009: 213).

Susanne Pérez has used Walsh’ three steps as a tool for reflection in a Peruvian programme in Indigenous teacher training sessions that she has participated in planning and conducting:

- To recognise that knowledge has a value, colour, gender and place of origin and hence, the place from which you think *is* important.
- To recover, re-value and apply ancestral knowledges, but also to question the temporality and locality attributed to them and that tries to reduce them to ‘ancestral wisdom’ rather than ‘knowledge’. (from Walsh 2004: 6, quoted in Pérez 2009: 214).

I have earlier looked at general suggestion from linguistically, biologically and sociologically oriented researchers on how to conceptualise some of the world’s big sustainability challenges (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 657). It seems to me that they are more relevant than ever. It is also possible to place some of the research I have mentioned in the schemes.

Bioregionalists who try to extract basic tenets for a sustainable life, both from nature and from earlier, often more balanced ways of interacting with (the rest of) nature, are sure that, in order to have a chance of saving the planet, we have to 'abandon the notion of controlling and remaking the world in the name of global monoculture' (Sale 1996: 472). Many of them advocate self-reliance at the level of bioregions. Sale (1996: 475) summarizes the basic tenets of the bioregional and industrio-scientific paradigms as follows (Table 1):

Table 1. Basic tenets of the bioregional and industrio-scientific paradigms (Sale 1996: 475)

	BIOREGIONAL PARADIGM	INDUSTRIO-SCIENTIFIC PARADIGM
Scale	Region Community	State Nation/World

Economy	Conservation Stability Self-Sufficiency Cooperation	Exploitation Change/Progress Global Economy Competition
Polity	Decentralization Complementarity Diversity	Centralization Hierarchy Uniformity
Society	Symbiosis Evolution Division	Polarization Growth/Violence Monoculture

It seems to me that the language deconstructing research has lately started to advocate for the bioregional paradigm in terms of Scale (Region and Community, instead of State) and to some extent Polity (Decentralization and Diversity, instead of Centralization and Uniformity). But because most of their ideals are about independent individuals, and they do not generally work with Economy – and seem to be directly against Stability and several aspects of Self-Sufficiency), the *results* can be expected to stay on the Industrio-Scientific paradigm’s side in terms of both Economy and Society.

Further to a multidisciplinary historian/sociologist, Jared Diamond. He

examines in the chapter 'The Golden Age That Never Was' in his 1992 book the evidence for people and cultures before us having completely ruined the prerequisites for their own life by destroying their habitats or having exterminated large numbers of species. This has happened in many places and it makes the 'supposed past Golden Age of environmentalism look increasingly mythical' (Diamond 1998: 335). If we want to learn from it, and not make it happen on a global basis (this is our obvious risk today), we better heed his advice. Diamond claims (ibid., 335-336) that

small long-established, egalitarian societies tend to evolve conservationist practices, because they've had plenty of time to get to know their local environment and to perceive their own self-interest. Instead, damage is likely to occur when people suddenly colonize an unfamiliar environment (like the first Maoris and Eastern Islanders); or when people advance along a new frontier (like the first Indians to reach America), so that they can just move beyond the frontier when they've damaged the region behind; or when people acquire a new technology whose destructive power they haven't had time to appreciate (like modern new Guineans, now devastating pigeon populations with shotguns). Damage is also likely in centralized states that concentrate wealth in the hands of rulers who are out of touch with their environment.

As we can see, we have the perfect global prerequisites for ruining our planet beyond repair. Long-established small societies are breaking up, and people encounter new environments, with urbanisation and migration. New technologies are more destructive than ever, and results of biochemical and other experiments are taken into use before we know anything about the long-term effects on nature or people. We have growing gaps and alienated elites. And we do not have the new planets to move to when we have damaged this one... (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 657-658).

Again, with the language de-constructors’ rapid time-scale and their glorification of change, breaking up, new encounters, nomadic youth alienated from any roots, we see legitimation of ideas and behaviours that have been identified by Diamond as global prerequisites for ruining our planet.

Finally, I move to early Giddens²⁶. He identified the three main environments of threat in premodern and modern cultures, and went then on to discuss the four dimensions of high consequence risks of modernity. I have put these in table form:

Table 2. Environments of risk and threat (based on Giddens 2000)

A. Pre-modern cultures	B. Modern cultures	C. The four dimensions of high
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		<i>consequence risks of modernity</i>
1. Threats and dangers emanating from nature: prevalence of infectious diseases, climatic unreliability, floods or other natural disasters	1. Threats and dangers emanating from the reflexivity of modernity	1. <i>Growth of totalitarian power</i>
2. The threat of human violence from marauding armies, local warlords, brigands, or robbers	2. The threat of human violence from the industrialisation of war	2. <i>Nuclear conflict or large-scale war</i>
3. Risk of falling from religious grace or of malicious magical influence	3. The threat of personal meaninglessness deriving from the reflexivity of modernity as applied to the self	3. <i>Ecological decay or disaster</i>
		4. <i>Collapse of economic growth mechanisms</i>

It is interesting that nature as a causal factor in pre-modern times (A1) has come back in the modernity risks in a big way (C3), and much more so than what Giddens could know in 2000. Likewise, the physical violence of A2 is continuing, but much of today's war activities, both inter-state (e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan) and intra-state (e.g. the Kurdish, Tibetan and Uyghur cases mentioned above) are attempts to promote and also hide C1, the growth of totalitarian power. Differences in languages, ethnicities and religions are used as scapegoats and often labeled as reasons for conflict, to mask economic and political reasons and power plays. And C4 is what we have been experiencing since Giddens wrote, and this will continue; economic growth based on exploitation of nature is not sustainable, as has been mentioned above.

In counteracting the risks of modernity, Giddens(1990) postulates an important role for *social movements* which he relates to the four dimensions: 1. free speech/ democratic movements; 2. peace movements; 3. ecological movements (counterculture); and 4. labour movements (ibid., 159). These might, in the *contours of a post-modern order*, lead to 1. multilayered democratic participation; 2. demilitarisation; 3. humanisation of technology; and 4. a post-scarcity system (p. 164). The dimensions of this system could be 1. coordinated global order; 2. transcendence of war; 3. system of planetary care; and 4. socialised economic organisation (p. 166). And, finally, Giddens' dimensions of *utopian realism* are 1. life politics (politics of self-actualisation); 2. politicisation of the global; 3. emancipatory politics (politics of inequality); and 4. politicisation of the local.

As we can see, there are many similarities in how language and culture-oriented, biologically oriented and sociologically oriented researchers see some of the main problems in today's world, and also possible alternatives (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 659-670).

One of the questions is: to what extent does research in our areas support any of the social movements that are trying to counteract the risks of modernity? Today, linguistic and cultural homogenisation "seem to be at the core of the growing spread of free market nomadism and the ensuing ideological chaos which precludes joint action and legitimates it with the help of sophisticated intellectual games" (ibid., 660). This homogenisation is, paradoxically, I am afraid, legitimated by some of the language-de-constructionist intellectual games, despite their rhetoric of diversities.

Susanne Pérez (email 25 August 2010) hypothesizes that many

Western(ised) sociolinguists and others arguing against the territoriality of languages or cultural identities have been socialised into what C.A. Bowers calls "antropocentrism", and have systematically, throughout their entire education, been alienated from nature through their textbooks and curricular goals, and especially through (the use of) modern technologies. In other

words, every newborn is potentially “indigenous”, but through a systematic alienation process (internalised in many families, but especially) throughout schooling children learn to place human beings in the centre of their thinking. Thus, plants, animals, climate, etc. are all instruments to human beings’ well-being. Furthermore, the constant introduction of “universality” as a useful tool to describe natural phenomena, historical periods etc. also creates a mental dis-connection between language, territory and (non-human) nature. Bowers proposes an “ecologically just” curriculum in order to re-integrate human beings into nature.

Compare this with Four Arrows (Jacobs/ Four Arrows 2006: 18) and Bracho (2006: 33):

...no single race or people can lay claim to “Indigenous wisdom”. It lives deep within the heart of every living creature. Anyone who remains deeply aware of the rhythms of the natural world can remember it.

When we speak of the originally or ancestrally Indigenous, it should be clear that, for us, being “Indigenous is about more than skin color or race. It is a state of consciousness that embodies an intimate and respectful communion with Mother Nature and its laws; a respect for place and a way of seeing the world.

Four Arrows also writes about “a long overdue scholarly challenge to the educational and ideological hegemony that constitutes what might be thought of as a “fourth wave of killing the Indigenous” (Jacobs/Four Arrows 2006: 20). The first wave was the genocidal physical attacks by European invaders, “based in greed and rationalized by Christian fundamentalism” (ibid.); the second one by “politicians, courts, lawyers, the military and corporations ... intended to control Indigenous land, water, language, culture, identity, and sovereignty. Academics have led the third wave of the attack with ‘scholarly’ publications that erroneously attack the philosophies, worldviews, and histories of Indigenous peoples” (ibid.).

A Canadian project, *Supporting traditional health practices in urban areas: indigenous theory for First Nations health in Canada*, addresses the “health impacts of colonization and subsequent discontinuity between migrating indigenous peoples and their traditional territories” (Marsden 2010: 88). It sums up many of the issues discussed in this presentation:

One focus of this study was the transmission of indigenous worldviews, which are seen to arise from multi-millennial sustainable relationships between specific humans, plants, animals, waters and lands. These worldviews contain whole knowledge systems, embedded in language, values, practices and material goods, which – when intact – produce ecological and socio-cultural resilience to adversity, and conservation of biological diversity. The transmission of such traditional knowledge systems is seen as vital to the maintenance of sustainable cultural continuity and bioregional management systems. These systems are renewed throughout the life cycle, through health-related spiritual teachings and ceremonies (e.g. birthing, coming of age, dying) that reinforce indigenous identification with Mother Earth and all the beings living upon her (Marsden 2010: 88-89).

Most human rights (including many suggestions for linguistic human rights²⁷) suggest or grant rights only to humans, not the rest of nature, and they express few duties. At the request of Bolivia, backed by nine other Latin American countries, the UN approved a resolution in December 2009 to develop a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth. Likewise, the UN General Assembly approved in April 2010 President Evo Morales’s initiative to create International Mother Earth Day to protect the rights of Mother Earth, Pachamama²⁸ and of all living beings. So far, this is words only. But words count. Frank Bracho, a Venezuelan scholar and diplomat “of partly Arawak heritage” presents, as part of the heritage of Indigenous wisdom, “The Law of

Complementary Poles”, which holds that what are apparently opposites actually are complementary” (Bracho 2006: 42). Maybe the recent realisation of some language-deconstructionists of the necessity to “accommodate both fixity and fluidity in [the] approach to mobile language use” (Otsuji & Pennycook 2010: 252) can be seen as a step in the direction of complementarity?

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² The relationship between language and land is seen as sacred. Most non-indigenous people need a lot of guidance to even start understanding the primacy of land in it. One example from Australia. None of the Aboriginal people participating in the reclaiming of the Awabakal language were descendants of the Awabakal (the last speakers died before 1900) but came from other areas and peoples. Still, they speak about 'our language' and 'our identity' in connection with Awabakal. In Rob Amery's words (1998: 94) 'the revival of Awabakal seems to be based primarily on the association of the language with the land, the language of the place in which a group of Aboriginal people of diverse origins now live'.

³ “The Index of Linguistic Diversity (ILD) is a new quantitative measure of trends in linguistic diversity. To derive the ILD we created a database of time-series data on language demographics, which we believe to be the world’s largest. So far, the database contains information from nine editions of Ethnologue and five other compendia of speaker numbers. The initial version of the ILD, which draws solely on the Ethnologue subset of these data, is based on a representative random sample of 1,500 of the world’s 7,299 languages (as listed in the 2005 edition). At the global level, the ILD measures how far, on average, the world’s languages deviate from a hypothetical situation of stability in which each language is neither increasing nor decreasing its share of the total population of the grouping. The ILD can also be used to assess trends at various subglobal groupings. Key findings:

- Globally, linguistic diversity declined 20% over the period 1970–2005.
- The diversity of the world’s indigenous languages declined 21%.
- Regionally, indigenous linguistic diversity declined over 60% in the Americas, 30% in the Pacific (including Australia), and almost 20% in Africa” (from the abstract of Harmon & Loh 2010; the whole report can be downloaded from <http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/lcd/2010/>; see www.Terralingua.org for measures of biodiversity and comparisons).

⁴ In the published version (2004), Blommaert has qualified his claim that promoting L1 can be seen as preventing a way out of marginalisation, by adding: “if performed within a monoglot strategy (i.e. a strategy aimed at constructing ‘full monolingualism’ and rejecting bilingualism as a road to language attrition and language death)”. This was not in the original 2002 version in Ghent.

⁵ The Saami live in northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. They are the only Indigenous peoples in the European Union – so called “Lapps” in colonial language.

⁶ For some more examples, see, e.g. the UC Davis lecture in May 2010 on my home page, http://www.tove-skutnabb-kangas.org/en/lectures_events.html; see also Aikio-Puoskari 2005, 2009, and Aikio-Puoskari & Skutnabb-Kangas 2007.

⁷ Capability deprivation dovetails neatly with Phillipson's (2009) interpretation, following Harvey, of continental Europeans who replace their national language by English in their research publication or teaching as not experiencing 'domain loss', the conventional liberal term, but rather linguistic capital dispossession.

⁸ E793, 1948; 78 U.N.T.S. 277, entered into force Jan. 12, 1951; for the full text, see <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/x1cpcpg.htm>.

⁹ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>.

¹⁰ USA is a great friend of Turkey (NATO ally; Lockheed Martin weapon contracts; oil pipes through Turkey, etc); so is UK (e.g. weapons exports; see Skutnabb-Kangas & Fernandes 2008).

¹¹ Originally the prosecutor demanded a sentence of twice five years (Bawer ÇAKIR <<http://bianet.org/yazar/bawer-cakir>> Bianet, 29 March 2010).

¹² Erol ÖNDEROĞLU <<http://bianet.org/yazar/erol-onderoglu>> *Bianet*, 02 April 2010

¹³ The Government of East Turkistan (ET) (official name: Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) has just announced a "Mid and Long Term Education Plan" on September 10, 2010, in which they stated the following:

"1. By 2012, fully implement the "bilingual preparation classes" almost everywhere in ET. The enrollment of pre-school age kids in these classes is mandatory, and they learn Han language for 2 years before starting the elementary first grade. Teach all classes except literature in Han language starting the elementary first grade.

2. By 2015, fully implement the "bilingual education" almost everywhere in ET. What the Chinese government means by "bilingual education" is the "Han language education" as I explained before.

3. By 2020, fully achieve the Han language literacy in almost everywhere in ET, including both reading and writing.

4. Strengthen the work in the areas of building "bilingual day care centers", merging Uyghur language elementary and middle schools with Han language ones, and closing down the existing Uyghur schools all together.

5. Teaching all classes in Han language except Uyghur literature in colleges.

6. Gradually increase the number of Uyghur students who go to schools in Han Chinese region (thousands of Kilometers away from home) to more than 10,000 by 2014." The title of the Chinese document, 新疆维吾尔自治区中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要(2010—2020年), means "The outline of the 2010 - 2020 Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region mid-term and long-term education reform and development plans". The Chinese version is posted at

http://www.tianshannet.com/news/content/2010-09/10/content_5228398.htm

The "Tianshannet.com" is an official website of the XUAR government.

"In addition to the above, the Chinese government is doing the following as well:

- Continuously moving large number of Han Chinese population into ET (Uyghur population has already been reduced to a minority in ET),

- Severely restricting all types of Uyghur religious activities (Uyghur adults now need to register with the government before going to Friday pray),

- Prohibiting Uyghur students from wearing traditional clothes on elementary, middle and high school campuses, and punishing severely those who violate this rule (recently one Uyghur man was sentenced to 6 years of prison for having mustache,

http://www.rfa.org/uyghur/xewerler/tepsili_xewer/saqal-qoyghan-uyghur-jazalandi-09132010203827.html),

- Prohibiting Uyghurs from conducting celebration activities during their traditional festivals and forcing Uyghur students of all age groups and teachers to dance Han Chinese dances during Han Chinese festivals,

- Forcing all middle school students to attend residential schools,

- Severely punishing those elementary school kid parents who want to transfer their kids from Han language schools to Uyghur language ones,

- Taking away the lands and the orchards of the Uyghur peasants and re-distributing them to the Han Chinese immigrants
- and much more.

Uyghurs in ET are now living under state-sponsored terroristic regime. And, as you can see, what the Chinese government is trying to do is total assimilation of the Uyghur people, or total transformation of the Uyghur people into Han Chinese people within a very short period of time” (source for the last part: Bilge Tarim, pseudonym [I know the identity of the person but cannot disclose it for security reasons], email 20 September 2010).

¹⁴ This is true of many political scientists too who write about LHRs, as for instance, Kontra Miklós (2010: 26-27) noted in 2004: "In the last several years some political scientists have entered the language rights literature arena with their papers, e.g. Kymlicka and Patten 2003, Patten 2001 and 2003. Earlier, political scientists did not publish anything on language rights, and this shows on their current publications. In some cases they discuss language issues with the layman's simplifications. One of the major issues is personal rights vs. collective rights. (...) Kymlicka and Patten (2003) admit that in the past, political scientists thought that the linguistic diversity which endangers the stability of states would disappear as a result of modernization and state-building. Now they recognize that this assumption was wrong. (...)" (translation by Kontra).

¹⁵ While Otsuji and Pennycook distance themselves somewhat from this “affluent consumerism or a focus on fashion”, they still see affiliations with the “connections to the city” and “the centrality of style” (ibid., 245).

¹⁶ See my Big Bibliography at <http://www.tove-skutnabb-kangas.org/en/Tove-Skutnabb-Kangas-Bibliography.html> for references to their writings – the relevant ones are too numerous to be listed here.

¹⁷ Strawpeople again – very few adult Indigenous people are monolingual and/or monocultural; the fact that most would not be able to earn a living if they did not learn other languages and cultures has certainly forced most of them to be able to manage in many languages (that many of them see as useful anyway). Their linguistic repertoires are often much richer and more varied than those of most dominant-language people. Just one example of who the monolinguals are: 'According to the official census data of 1989, there are some 120 million Russians in the Russian Federation. Only 726,450 (0.637%) of them know another language of the former USSR. 11,802,537 Russians live in [...] Soviet Socialist Republics. Only 84,427 (0.7163%) of them fluently speak the official language of the Republic where they live'. On the other hand, the total number of native speakers of the majority languages of the 'title nations' (the Chuvash in the Chuvashian Republic, the Yakuts in Saha-Yakutia, etc) in 1989 was 9,708,632. Of these, 7,766,761, i.e. 79,99%, speak Russian fluently (Leontiev 1995: 199; see also Leontiev 1994).

¹⁸ Skutnabb-Kangas 2009 has a more thorough presentation of many of these myths, counteracting them one by one.

¹⁹ Even this quote only scratches at the surface of the many manifestations and consequences of what is loosely labelled as globalisation.

²⁰ Downloadable from <http://www.greenpeace.org/denmark/press/rapporteur-og-dokumenter/new-global-energy-r-evolution>.

²¹ In an article in the daily *Information* 6 August 2010, called “Kan det betale sig at overleve, hr. finansminister? [Can it pay off to survive, Mr. Secretary of Finance].

²² Rooftops and any small patches “wastelands” are already being used extensively for food production in many places, and with non-polluting vehicles (e.g. bikes) the food is edible. Ecovillages (<http://gen.ecovillage.org/>) and permaculture (e.g.

<http://www.inpermcou.org/> - but search on "permaculture" on a search machine) are growing rapidly.

²³ Michael Halliday discussed growthism already in his seminal lecture "New Ways of Meaning: the Challenge to Applied Linguistics", held at the AILA conference in Thessaloniki, Greece (1990). He was one of the pioneers of eco-critical discourse analysis.

²⁴. 'Speaking back' thus does *not* mean correcting the obvious mistakes in 'normal science', even if this is also necessary. An example. John Johnson, curator, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (California), claims in an interview as a matter of course that the Chumash in California took scalps in inter-tribal wars (Johnson 1987: 202). (He also claims that there 'was no forced labor. It was an exchange, glass beads for labor' (ibid., 203). See Soft Box 3.16 for this). James A. Lewis, historian, himself an 'Indian of Delaware ancestry' (Lewis 1987: 96) comments on Johnson (ibid., 86): 'I cannot believe that he would be so ignorant about California Indians as to have made this observation. California Indians did not take scalps. The taking of scalps originated on the east coast when Governor Kieft of New Amsterdam offered a bounty on Indian heads. He later changed that to ears, but found he was paying double too often, so finally settled on scalps. It was not a native custom, and was never practiced by California Indians. In the East, Indians later adopted this custom.'

²⁵. In the end it can lead to the almost hysterically funny - and serious - incident with Alan Sokal writing a nonsense article posing as the latest multidisciplinary genius and getting this fraud article accepted by a serious scientific journal. See the Sokal & Bricmont 1997 book *Impostures intellectuelles*.

²⁶ After the early 1990s, Giddens seems to have changed so much in an opportunist direction that his advice to Tony Blair can be seen as partially responsible for disastrous results externally (wars) and internally (widened inequality). One can also see this change in his later books. Thus I am only endorsing some of his early writings. There are comments on how Giddens' categories can be applied to minority education in Skutnabb-Kangas 2000: 559-560, that this short presentation is based on.

²⁷ One exception is Sándor Szilazyi (2003; see also Kontra 2009); another was Alexei Leontiev (e.g. 1995). I certainly endorse both.

²⁸ *Pachamama* is a goddess revered by the indigenous people of the [Andes](#). Pachamama is usually translated as "Mother Earth" but a more literal translation would be "Mother world" (in [Aymara](#) and [Quechua](#) mama = [mother](#) / pacha = [world](#) or [land](#); and later spread fairly modern as the [cosmos](#) or the [universe](#)) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pachamama>).