

An Exploration of Teachers' Pedagogy and Perceptions of Their Culturally Diverse Learners in Manitoba (Canada), Norway, and Iceland

KRISTÍN AÐALSTEINSDÓTTIR
GUÐMUNDUR ENGILBERTSSON
RAGNHEIÐUR GUNNBJÖRNSDÓTTIR

ABSTRACT: Multiculturalism is the ideology that ascribes special value to communities comprising people of varied nationalities, cultural backgrounds and religious leanings. The challenges facing a multicultural society are familiar in Canada but relatively new to Scandinavia. The question arises, How do multicultural societies deal with challenges posed by their diversity? More particularly what are the multicultural teaching practices by which these societies seek to incorporate students into a unified yet diverse community which encourages the preservation of the ethnic, cultural and religious values. The object of the present research, conducted in Manitoba (Canada), Norway, and Iceland, was to examine selected teachers' preparation for teaching culturally diverse learners, their ability to meet the individual needs of students, and their perceptions of how their culturally diverse learners adapt to a new cultural community.

RÉSUMÉ: Le multiculturalisme est l'idéologie qui attribue une valeur particulière aux communautés comptant des individus de nationalités, d'origines culturelles et de croyances religieuses variées. Le défi de se retrouver face à une société multiculturelle est familier au Canada, mais relativement nouveau en Scandinavie. Une question se pose, Comment les sociétés multiculturelles font-elles face aux défis soulevés par leur diversité ? Et plus particulièrement, quelles sont les pratiques multiculturelles d'enseignement au moyen desquelles ces sociétés tentent d'inclure les étudiants dans une communauté unifiée, mais également diversifiée, qui encourage la préservation des valeurs ethniques, culturelles et religieuses ? L'objet de cette recherche menée au Manitoba (Canada), en Norvège et en Islande, était d'examiner la préparation d'enseignants travaillant auprès d'apprenants multiculturels, leur capacité à répondre aux besoins individuels des étudiants et leurs perceptions quant à la manière dont leurs apprenants s'adaptent à leur nouvelle communauté culturelle.

Kristin Aðalsteinsdóttir is a Professor at the University of Akureyri, where Guðmundur Engilbertsson is a Lecturer and a Consultant. Ragnheiður Gunnbjörnsdóttir is a Teacher at the Vocational College in Akureyri.

I: The Background to the Project

Multiculturalism—multicultural teaching

For the purpose of our research, a community is deemed “multicultural” when it comprises people of varied nationalities, diverse cultures and differing religious backgrounds—a community of people that possesses divergent experiences, abilities, and skills; “multiculturalism” is the ideology that regards such a community as desirable and worth fostering. A self-aware multicultural community recognises the specificity of its cultural circumstances, a specificity which arises for its citizens’ diverse values, expressions, attitudes, and lifestyles. For such a community to succeed everyone within it, not just the immigrant students and their families, must recognize the nature of that community. Banks claims that a multicultural community recognizes and defends the rights of its constituent groups and expects its citizens to preserve relationships and commitments within their own ethnic groups while participating actively in the broader community. According to Banks, multicultural teaching is marked by three characteristic features: (1) a theoretical teaching approach that aims to create an equal learning opportunity for all students; (2) an ideology that aims to actualize democratic ideas, such as equality, justice, and human rights; and (3) a recognition that the process will have no end, because there will always be inconsistencies between democratic ideals and that which is advanced in schools and in the community (123). In the western world, multiculturalism is held up as an ideal in most countries; and many communities within these countries are indeed multicultural, so we may expect to find the pedagogic practice in these countries to reflect the features just mentioned.

Our own study focuses on three such countries and their teaching practices: Canada, Norway and Iceland. In terms of their multiculturalism policies, these three countries are historically unlike. Ethnic and racial pluralism are prime characteristics of Canada’s inhabitants (Canadian Multiculturalism Act; McLeod). Multi-ethnic communities have existed in Canada for centuries, and many approaches to resolving the issue of unity have been tried — from persecution and even annihilation of minorities to full integration (Canadian Multiculturalism Act; Stephan). Currently Canadian multiculturalism policies embrace a variety of goals. The fundamental principles are to preserve human rights, increase the participation of citizens, emphasize Canadian identity, reinforce Canadian unity, encourage cultural diversity, and eliminate discrimination. Furthermore, this policy affirms the principle of individual freedom of choice and stresses that membership in an ethnic group should not place constraints on such choices

(Mallea; McLeod). Interestingly, Mallea notes that “the policy also reflects a belief that confidence in one’s individual identity, strengthened by a sense of belonging, provides an acceptable and necessary base for national unity” (9).

Norway’s multicultural experience is much shorter, but in the last four decades, Norway has become a fast-growing multicultural society. Norwegian authorities have set a clear course of action on issues regarding immigrants, with the twin goals of securing economic stability and social development (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, Norway). In Iceland, the authorities had yet to address directly the issue of immigrants’ particular needs at the time of our data collection, but in the fall of 2005 an immigration plan was established, the main goal of which is to help foreigners to adjust to the Icelandic community. Both Norway and Iceland are becoming more culturally diverse, and therefore may benefit from the experiences of a country like Canada, which, as was just noted, has been wrestling with the issue of multiculturalism for centuries. Stephan claims that, in making multiculturalism a principle of federal policy in Canada, the government appears to have set a precedent for other countries that find themselves in a similar historical situation. A brief historical overview of policies regarding multiculturalism in the three countries follows.

Canada

Just over 33 million people live in Canada. In the past most immigrants to Canada came from Europe, but in the last few decades, immigration has come from around the world. In the first third of 2005, 75,951 immigrants received Canadian citizenship, which is a 16% increase over the same period in the previous year—the first time that an increase of this magnitude has occurred in recent years. The majority of these immigrants came from China (11,161 people), India (9,142 people), the Philippines (5,353 people), and Pakistan (4,188 people) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada). Very few immigrants are now coming from Europe.

Following Canadian confederation in 1867, emphasis was placed on assimilation as a primary strategy for building the nation, and Anglo-Canadians came to view themselves as the host society (McLeod). In 1971, however, a change took place in federal policy, and assimilation, which had come to be regarded as both an undesirable and an unacceptable goal, was explicitly rejected (Mallea). On October 8, 1971, the government under Prime Minister Trudeau embraced multiculturalism, defining it as the new ideal for Canadian society. Although Canada was to accept two official languages (English and French), it was the view of the Trudeau administration that no single culture should dominate the country and that no ethnic group should have precedence over any other. Canada was to be considered a bilingual nation and a multicultural society, a model deemed best able to assure the cultural freedom of Canadians. Trudeau stated that every ethnic

group had the right to preserve and develop its own culture and values within the Canadian context (McLeod; Mallea).

Since 1971 all Canadian political parties have lent their support to the ideal of multiculturalism, though with varying degrees of enthusiasm, recognizing that it contributes richness to the lives of all Canadians (Mallea). J.C. Young (2006) claims, however, that some ethnic groups, especially those of visible minorities (i.e. non-whites), have received fewer benefits from this policy than others. The position of indigenous Canadians in particular is difficult, he argues, and their unique needs and contributions have yet to be recognized. The treaties that govern the living conditions of this last group work against perfect multiculturalism. But in general the policy is relatively effective and pragmatic.

In 1988, the federal multiculturalism policy was confirmed with the passing of the Multiculturalism Act. While the phrase “within a bilingual framework” was dropped from the title of the act, Canadian multiculturalism remained positioned within the framework of two official languages (Young 2006). Linguistic groups such as Germans, Italians, and Ukrainians, who comprise a significant portion of the Canadian mosaic, receive no comparable language recognition (Aoki et al.), but there is no historical reason why they should. It may be said that the goal of the Canadian government over the past several years has been to encourage immigrants to adjust to the dominant conditions, customs, and mentality.

After the multicultural policy was made official in Canada, the provinces (which bear the responsibility for public education) responded in various ways and at different times to this changing social model. These different approaches reflected their diverse immigration histories. Some provinces, such as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Alberta, implemented extensive changes in strategy, but development was slower in other provinces because, among other things, fewer immigrants were living there (Young 1995).

Young (2006) claims that Canadian teachers are not prepared to teach students of diverse ethnicities. They need to learn how to do so. For example, he suggests that teachers need to know the cultural backgrounds of their students, but more importantly, must learn to know themselves and their own cultures, mentalities, and attitudes. In addition, Orlikow and Young argue that education departments in Canadian universities have shown little initiative in the struggle to achieve equality within the educational system and that scholarly discussion has not sufficiently focused on the issue of multiculturalism. Besides, claims Young (2006), many education departments at universities do not have specialists capable of preparing student teachers to address the needs of international students. To be sure, exceptions exist, for example at the Universities of British Columbia and Toronto, where courses in multicultural education have been a part of the curricula for the last three decades. But Young (2006) speaks of the need for other universities to develop education programs in multiculturalism that will provide specific, accessible teacher training courses in the area.

Norway

In 1991, 5,050 immigrants received Norwegian citizenship. By 2005 that annual intake had increased to 12,655, in a country 4.7 million inhabitants. In the same year 8.3% of the population (387,000 people) held citizenship in another country (Statistics Norway).

Norwegian authorities have followed a clear path in their approach to immigrants, principally aiming at the economic stability and social development of the country. This policy recognizes the absolute need of foreign workers, but seeks to improve their entry into Norwegian society by openly addressing educational and cultural issues that affect them. At the same time, authorities aim to maintain harmony in international relations (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, Norway). The authorities have affirmed that everyone, whatever their origin or sex, shall have the same possibilities and rights in the community in order to develop their strengths. In order to achieve this goal, one needs to work against sexism and racial and ethnic discrimination in the country (NOU).

The educational system in Norway as a whole has undergone many changes in the last decade, including the extension of professional teacher education from three years to four. In a recent resolution relating to changes and challenges in teacher education, the Norwegian parliament determined that the role of teachers is to tend to each and every student so that he/she can reach his/her potential. This policy requires that teachers be capable of taking children seriously and of communicating effectively with them as students; furthermore they must achieve good communications with co-workers and parents. In order to attain this goal, teachers must be mature, responsible individuals who accept the necessity that they be accountable for their actions. Such teachers will possess intuition and knowledge of the learning capacities of students, their culture, and the influence of their culture on their learning ability and on all aspects of their lives (Ministry of Education and Research).

Student teachers in Norway are taught to make an effort to incorporate multicultural awareness into their teaching, and to do this in a variety of ways. In the national curriculum, emphasis is placed on the many changes that have occurred in society and the fact that teacher training needs to tackle those changes. In elementary education, such preparation is addressed in the overall curriculum rather than in specific courses. The University of Oslo offers a Master's program with an emphasis on the multicultural school and on education and development in an international context. Such learning ought to prepare teachers to tackle developmental jobs both at home and abroad, promote their knowledge of a different community, and teach them how they can respond to international and multicultural issues from the viewpoint of pedagogy and teaching theory (Oslo University College).

Iceland

Iceland is one of the least populated countries in the world, with approximately 300,000 inhabitants. The nation has long been unusually homogeneous, but in recent years the number of immigrants has increased rapidly, and the culture has become more diverse. According to Statistics Iceland (2006a), 726 people received Icelandic citizenship in 2005, compared to 161 people in 1991. In 2005, 4.6% of the population was made up of citizens of another country. Since 1981, 13,778 people have received citizenship in Iceland, 3,221 of them from Poland. The annual number of immigrants has been similar in the last few years. In 2005, 903 came from Denmark, 781 from Germany, 771 from the Philippines, and 703 from the former Yugoslavia (Statistics Iceland 2006b).

Icelandic authorities had developed no clear policy on the issue of immigrants at the time of our data collection in 2006. However in the fall of 2005, an immigration plan was established, the main goal of which is to help foreigners adjust to the Icelandic community. The plan recommends priorities and measures to be carried out. In the laws pertaining to kindergarten, compulsory school attendance, and college, it has been emphasized that the role of the school is to reinforce the well-rounded development of students so that they become as prepared as possible to take an active part in a democratic society that is continually evolving (Preschool Act; Compulsory School Act; College Act). With respect to the relationship between teachers and students, the acts say, among other things, that teachers shall develop students' tolerance and reinforce their understanding of the conditions of people and the environment. Furthermore, the intention of the Compulsory School Act is to ensure that every student receives an equal opportunity to study, and to prevent discrimination based on country of origin, sex, residence, profession, religion, or disability.

Until recently, institutions for teacher education in Iceland have not systematically prepared their students for multicultural teaching. But, in the fall of 2002, even before the government's immigration plan came into effect, teaching about multiculturalism had begun, with specific courses in the graduate department of the Iceland University of Education. The multiculturalism program, at the university starts with 15 credits (=30 ECTS [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System] credits). In the fall of 2004, the university offered a 30 credit (=60 ECTS credits) course. Currently, the course is a special program within the M.Ed. program in pedagogical and educational studies. Courses like these indicate real progress, but they reach relatively few students, since only a minority of education students go on to do graduate work.

In the Department of Primary and Lower Secondary Education at the Iceland University of Education, there are specific programs focusing on the multicultural community for all the students, and it is also possible to specialize by choosing individual courses. Specific courses on multiculturalism are not currently offered

in the Faculty of Education at the University of Akureyri, but issues of multiculturalism are dealt with in various courses, such as those in the Modern Studies program.

Inclusive education

Embracing the concept of inclusive education may involve a review of thinking and practice within a school. A change of values and aims for the school may be necessary, including a commitment to broad and balanced curriculum opportunities for all children and systematic procedures for monitoring and reviewing progress in achieving these curricular goals. For these changes to occur, effective leadership is needed (Aðalsteinsdóttir 1992; Ainscow 1991; Ainscow and Hart; Ramasut).

All children have characteristics that distinguish them from other children; they all possess individual abilities and traits. It is not only their abilities and aptitudes that differ, but also their experiences, interests, and attitudes. All children have the same basic needs, but develop in different ways and pick up expertise at different rates (Boland et al.; Tomlinson). Learners teach themselves their individual study habits, depending on their origins and culture (Davidman and Davidman). In the discussion of inclusive schooling, it has been emphasized that all children should be given equal opportunity to grow according to their own competences and abilities, which involves great commitment on the part of their teachers.

Research shows that students who are well aware of their familial origins have greater self-respect and are less prejudiced than those who do not. Knowledge of one's origins increases tolerance for others and inhibits the emergence of prejudice and hatred; such knowledge also enhances students' ability to participate in a multicultural, democratic society (Davidman and Davidman; Tiedt and Tiedt). Gay argue that the goals of good teaching will only be reached if teachers consider what culturally diverse learners bring with them, and the circumstances of learners as they interact with each other. Only teachers who know their students' home circumstances and who respect individuals and the groups to which they belong can bring such considerations to bear (Davidman and Davidman). Pollard and Tann argue that such knowledge increases teachers' sense of security by giving them a choice of what issues and concerns they address; furthermore it encourages a supportive relationship between home and school.

As will be evident, in all of this the attitude of teachers and the environment that they create for learners are of great importance. Teachers are in a key position to help shape the educational paths of their learners. They can minimize prejudice with multicultural teaching that includes systematic methods, good models, the choice of appropriate subjects, equal opportunity for all learners, and relationships

that are recognized in a democratic society (Ainscow 1999; Banks; Davidman and Davidman; Lawrence-Brown).

Learning and teaching

The goal of multicultural teaching is to encourage all children to be attentive, responsible, active members of the society in which they live (Banks). Multicultural education includes the inculcation of certain thoughts and attitudes, of which the most important issue is the acceptance of diversity. Teachers must continually ask themselves if teaching and the thought behind it is multicultural. This applies to teaching methods, ideology, and the process used to meet the learning needs of students; teachers must stimulate learners to develop within themselves the attitudes and understandings that make them capable of taking part in a multicultural, democratic society (Davidman and Davidman). Education includes helping each individual to develop positive self-respect as well as positive beliefs about solidarity with others and fair opportunities for all (Tiedt and Tiedt).

Learning functions well when it takes place in a supportive yet suitably challenging environment. Children need provocative subjects, but when learning involves obstacles that seem insurmountable to them, it becomes intimidating. A hostile learning environment—or one in which overly difficult subject matter makes children to feel unsafe—causes them to experience rejection and to focus on self-defence, retreating into themselves rather than reaching out to learn (Tomlinson). To avoid this students need an environment in which they are exposed to learning that interweaves the educational and the social, and that supports well-rounded development.

If it is to achieve its social as well as pedagogical goals, multicultural teaching must be collaborative, for the ethos of collaboration coincides with and enhances a multicultural vision. Collaborative learning seems to contribute to the overall success of study groups and to support all learners. Such learning contributes to positive relationships and communication between learners and often leads to greater recognition of their various needs. Collaborative learning appears to increase the social, psychological, and intellectual development of all learners (Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec; Davidman and Davidman).

Relationship between school and home

A good relationship between school and home can be a key to successful schoolwork. Epstein claims that good relationships between home and school improve support both at home and at school. Not surprisingly involving parents in their children's learning has a visible positive influence on their studies (Hoover, Otto, and Brissie; Fullan and Stiegelbauer).

Research points to the fact that parents want to take part in their children's learning but are uncertain about how to go about it. Epstein and Janshorn stress that it is the role of teachers to clarify for parents the goals of learning, the role of parents in this learning process, and the best ways to organize a relationship between home and school. Davidman and Davidman emphasize that teachers must take the initiative in demonstrating the benefits of a strong relationship with parents, especially with the parents of international children, and they must work at cultivating this relationship. If such a tradition does not exist in the culture of international students, it may be difficult to establish rapport between the parents of these students and their teachers. Nevertheless every effort must be made to create this collaborative relationship. Nor will students be the only beneficiaries; teachers who cultivate such a connection can connect international parents better to the community and culture in which they live.

II. The Project Itself

The goal

The goal of the research was to procure information on the following subjects:

1. how qualified and prepared teachers are to teach culturally diverse learners;
2. how teachers meet the individual needs of culturally diverse learners; and
3. what are teachers' perceptions of how their culturally diverse learners adapt to a new cultural community.

The method

Having determined the countries in which the research should be conducted—for the reasons set out above—the actual research began in Akureyri, Iceland, by carrying out a pre-survey, in which two focus groups were interviewed. The structure and questions for the pre-survey were based on the literature review. For the main study, information was collected on teachers' beliefs and actions through structured interviews and field notes. The interview themes and questions were based on the literature review and on the results from this pre-survey.

Eighteen teachers were interviewed—six each in Iceland, Norway, and Canada. The teachers had common characteristics. In each country, two of the teachers had taught less than five years, two had taught eleven years or just over eleven years, and two of the teachers in each country had more than twenty years of teaching experience. All the teachers taught primary grades (one through five, that is, six- to eleven-year-olds). The number of culturally diverse children in

each class varied. The children in Manitoba came from five to seven countries; in Norway and Iceland they came from one to three countries. In the interviews, the teachers were asked about their education, their teaching experience, and in what ways they were qualified and prepared to teach culturally diverse learners. They were also asked about the cultural variability within the classes they taught, about equal opportunity, the particular needs of learners, their language abilities, the relationship between teachers and the learners' families, and homework. The interviews, which took about 45 minutes each, were recorded and transcribed by the interviewers. Field notes and events were recorded in the classrooms after the interviews had been carried out. Different sets of events were distinguished, and the researchers tried not to overlook details and to be specific. Descriptive information was written down, such as teacher-pupil dialogues as well as physical situations and explanations of certain events. Reflective information was also included, such as the researcher's personal account of the course of inquiry (Gall, Borg, and Gall).

Implementation

The research was conducted by Associate Professor Kristín Aðalsteinsdóttir; Adjunct Professor Guðmundur Engilbertsson; and Ragnheiður Gunnbjörnsdóttir, special education teacher. The latter two were pursuing Master's degrees at the University of Akureyri at the time the research took place. The list of questions for the interviews was designed after a thorough discussion of the objectives of the research and the theoretical background as well as a pre-survey with a focus group. The question list was reviewed by Dr. Nina Colwill, who was a Guest Professor at the University of Akureyri at the time.

The pre-survey progressed with the help of two focus groups. The first comprised four culturally diverse women who had children in schools in Akureyri: three of them had two children, and one of them had three children. They were asked about their language ability, their ability to help their children with homework, and their experience in the school environment in Iceland and in the country from which they came. They discussed prejudice and the strategies they thought were needed to effect change in schools for culturally diverse children. The second focus group comprised five teachers from a school that had a special division to help immigrants adapt. They discussed how their school accommodates culturally diverse children—specifically, about collaboration, the importance of language skills, the method of learning, school subjects, homework, social circumstances, and culture.

A question list was created for structured interviews to be held with teachers in three schools in Akureyri, Iceland; in six schools in Gjøvik, Norway; and in two schools in Manitoba, Canada. Head teachers in Akureyri assisted in finding interlocutors. In Norway, Jan Tambs-Lyche, a principal in the town of Gjøvik,

requested head teachers to approve the research in their schools. In Canada, the ethics committee of the University of Manitoba granted permission for our research on the condition that informed consent be obtained from the interviewees. In the three countries, we sought interlocutors who had taught in classrooms where there was at least one international student who had been in the classroom less than one year. The interviews took 30-45 minutes and were recorded and typed by the interviewers. At the University of Manitoba, an interview was also conducted with Dr. Jonathan Young, who had been planning multicultural teaching for the Canadian government for many years.

Data analysis

The data from the interviews were analysed according to a method known as *meaning interpretation* (Kvale). Kvale describes five possible ways of proceeding with this method: categorization of meaning, condensation of meaning, structuring of meaning through narratives, interpretation of meaning, and ad hoc methods for generating meaning. We decided to employ the strategy he calls “interpretation of meaning.” We searched individually for the main components in all of the interviews, analyzed the data, and inferred their meaning. Thus, each researcher deduced an overall picture of each part. All conclusions were compared and discussed, and mutual resolutions were determined. The goal was to insure the highest level of credibility for the analyses (Kvale 201-04). Our individual conclusions were, in most cases, in agreement. When analyzing our field notes, we decided to apply interpretational analysis; inferences were needed, and the data were closely examined in order to find constructs, themes, and patterns that might describe the discourse and events in the classrooms (Gall, Borg, and Gall). The data were presented in the structure of the questionnaire.

Validity

It must be kept in mind that this was exploratory research, and the level of validity that it achieved needs to be spelled out. To begin with we should note the limited number of teachers involved: for reasons noted below, six teachers were interviewed in each of the three countries. The process of obtaining official permission was complicated in Manitoba (Canada), where it was only possible to access two schools and to interview three teachers in each school. Access was also restricted in Norway. Fortunately, however, we were able to work in each country with teachers who shared similar teaching experience, as was noted above. Furthermore our interviews with these eighteen teachers were extensive, which allowed for greater depth than is the case with other methods (Kvale). Cohen and Manion claim that although the direct interaction during an interview allows for a greater depth than is the case with other methods of data collection,

it is prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer, because of the human element that is inevitably part of the interview situation. One way to avoid the biases that distort the researcher's picture of the particular reality is to employ more than one method. The more dissimilar the methods, the greater the researcher's confidence in the findings. Therefore, we used field notes to record details of and concerns about the particular interview, as well as the researcher's personal account of the course of inquiry. For the purpose of this research, the researchers kept in mind that the objectivity and credibility of the researcher is essential. "Validity is not only a matter of the method used; the person of the researcher, including her moral integrity, is critical for evaluation of the quality of the scientific knowledge produced" (Kvale 241-42, citing Salner and also Smith.)

Results

Virtually none of the eighteen teachers in the three countries claimed that they had been taught about multiculturalism or multicultural teaching in their teacher training, but all the Canadian teachers, three of the Norwegian teachers, and two of the Icelandic teachers considered themselves to have obtained knowledge of the matter through their own experience.

In Manitoba, two teachers out of six had attended courses about First Nations people and multiculturalism, and all the six teachers were unanimous that they had learned most of what they knew about these culturally diverse groups from working and living in a multicultural environment. Three of these teachers were immigrants themselves and claimed that their experience of belonging to a minority made them better able to understand and meet children's needs, whatever their cultural identity. Although both English and French are official languages in Canada, the teachers interviewed for this study all taught in English.

In Norway, two of the teachers had studied special education, which they believed would come in handy for multicultural teaching, and one of them had attended courses on pedagogy for immigrants. In Iceland, two of the teachers had attended a course that they considered to be beneficial in their multicultural teaching. Both the Norwegian and Icelandic teachers thought that their life experiences and the experience of working with children of diverse origins had provided the greatest benefit to them in meeting the needs of all learners; and they were unanimous that they should have been required to learn about multiculturalism in their compulsory-school years.

Multi-faceted culture

The responses of the Manitoban teachers indicated unmistakable signs of a sense of responsibility. All six were in agreement that the existence of diverse cultural worlds constitutes a special reality in Canada. It was clear from their

answers that they considered international origins to be as normal as native birth. Nevertheless, they differentiated between learners who were born in Canada and those who had recently moved to the country. They claimed that those born in Canada lived an easier life: language did not hold them back, and they often had more disposable income. They agreed, however, that culturally diverse children had great assimilative potential and were ambitious and able, despite language difficulties in the beginning. Any differences that did arise in the school were connected to ethnic traditions: food, holidays, and attire.

These teachers in Manitoba agreed that it was necessary to encourage a sharing of cultures, so that each child could be proud of his/her origin. Teachers need to know about different cultures, and the school needs to make a point of meeting the needs of all children. The course of study has to appeal to everyone, but with particular emphasis on the language learning of students who are not thoroughly grounded in one of the official languages. "Children of different nationalities have the same emotions, and all need moral pedagogy," said one of the teachers. Thus, the classroom atmosphere needs to be characterized by recognition, respect, and helpfulness. As was manifested both in the interviews and the observations, the teachers were unanimous that the teaching of ethics should be incorporated in a variety of ways and with many kinds of lessons, but without an exclusively religious basis.

During their interviews the Norwegian teachers provided different feedback to the questions about diverse cultures in school, and there were suggestions that teachers fail to take responsibility for culturally diverse children. Certain contradictions occurred in the answers of the teachers and also between teachers: while one teacher claimed that he saw it as a matter of course that learners came from other countries, another claimed not to see the value of people of different origins living together. The latter teacher was unconcerned about meeting the needs of culturally diverse learners and claimed that it was just one more thing to do within the school. He added that these learners ought to adjust to Norwegian culture.

Four teachers agreed that a division existed between "these people" and Norwegians. When the relative economic situations of different groups were considered, all the teachers agreed that people of culturally diverse origin lived in greater poverty than Norwegians. A teacher who considered culturally diverse children to have a positive influence on other learners thought it was beneficial to discuss cultural differences based on different religions and customs, since this widened students' perspectives.

Amongst the Norwegian interlocutors there was some agreement that the educational system did not manage well enough in relation to culturally diverse children. Although most of them sensed that culturally diverse learners had adjusted well to life in Norway, half of the teachers spoke of the importance of better recognizing the needs of these students' culture and position. Two of the

teachers understood this to mean discussions about cultural differences and setting learning requirements in accordance with learners' abilities.

Each of the Icelandic teachers considered culturally diverse children to have adapted well to life in Iceland, by which they largely meant that their families had achieved economic success. If the parents of the children had a house and car, it was considered that adjustment had taken place. One of the teachers claimed that this process of adjustment was going remarkably well, indeed immigrants seem better able to improve their circumstances in a short time than Icelandic families do. Three of the teachers claimed to discuss the customs and traditions of the countries that the learners came from. In contrast, insecurity and a lack of understanding among these three teachers toward diverse cultures were apparent in that they did not answer questions, they seemed not to connect the circumstances of the children with their learning, and their communication with parents seemed to be bordering on irresponsible, as has been recounted above.

Equal opportunity

The teachers in Manitoba (Canada) seemed to be very aware that a key issue was to strengthen the self-image of culturally diverse children as much as possible. "When there is a lack of confidence, they are less likely to participate in study or social activities, they communicate less, and they withdraw," said one of the teachers, "and it often takes many years for them to recover if they lose out in this respect." It was mentioned that culturally diverse children seek the company of children of the same origin, thereby isolating themselves from others. All of these teachers claimed that they try to establish a learning environment that is characterized by respect, and three of the teachers deal with diversity by using special study materials for the whole school, called PEACE: P = politeness, E = empathy, A = acts of kindness, C = co-operation, E = everyone counts (see, for example, Gordon). In the field notes, it was obvious that, through teaching, the children were encouraged in various ways to share with others; efforts were made to improve communication, self-awareness, and the self-image of the children.

Four of the Norwegian teachers agreed that the self-image of international children was not good and that this also applied to their parents. They consider it important to learn co-operation in order to strengthen students' social abilities. Yet, one can find contradictions in various issues that surfaced in the interviews. It is difficult, for example, to agree with one teacher who on the one hand described an international student as increasingly given to clowning around, but on the other considered the student's self-image to be good. Five of the teachers offered the opinion that discipline and regularity were necessary conditions for the classroom atmosphere. Reactions to the difficulties experienced by the children sometimes indicated an attempt to create disengagement rather than to strengthen social relationships and activity. Culturally diverse learners appear

to participate in daily activities, but are reserved. Poor language skills create both learning and social hurdles. These results were also recorded in the field notes.

When the Icelandic teachers were asked about equal opportunity for all students to learn, they appeared not to be sufficiently aware of the status of culturally diverse learners. Three teachers indicated difficulties in the class, and four teachers acknowledged a lack of action: nothing was done, although the need was apparent. The Icelandic teachers often used the concepts of self-confidence and self-image but appeared to be referring to self-control. Most of the teachers' answers indicated that they ignore the difficulties of these learners rather than working with them. A good example of this was a teacher who claimed that a culturally diverse child under her supervision had difficulty following the material, acted immaturely, and asked inappropriate questions. The teacher thought that the student lacked the normal self-control to be able to keep quiet in class, but clearly there could be other explanations for the student's behaviour.

The views of the teachers in the three countries are noticeably different. The Manitoban teachers appeared both in the interviews and the class observations to be aware of the status of their learners and they worked hard to maintain equality among them—not by expecting everyone to adapt to a particular culture, but by encouraging everyone to share and to be proud of their origins and thus to make a contribution to Canadian culture. In Norway and in Iceland we noted at once an emphasis on having the children adapt to the school and to the community, and also a failure to initiate any process that might bring this about.

Individual needs

In Manitoba, the teachers typically did not develop an individualized curriculum for children with language difficulties. However, these learners received support, usually within the classroom. All the teachers thought that because of the difficulty in learning a new language, culturally diverse students had different needs than other learners in the class. They needed assistance in learning about predominant customs and traditions, for example, and the best way to assist learners was with various collaborative projects and diverse options. Learners with limited knowledge of English occasionally received special language teaching at the beginning of their schooling, requiring them occasionally to leave the classroom for separate language instruction. Unfortunately that strategy delivered a contradictory message in a school where the emphasis is on unity and respect for individual differences.

In Norway, a great deal of emphasis is placed on encouraging culturally diverse students to learn Norwegian. Teaching most often occurs within the classroom, but sometimes learners are taken from the class for special education. There were different views among the teachers about what was better for the student. Two of the teachers claimed that an individualized curriculum was

developed for the learners and that they initially applied lower standards to culturally diverse children and adapted the subject matter and their standards. As recorded in the field notes, the children often work together in groups, although there is not a specific emphasis on collaborative learning; other teaching methods were also mentioned. One of the teachers considered it better for one of his learners to work alone until he had grasped the language, but this approach resulted in the student withdrawing socially. All the teachers said that culturally diverse learners often suffered from a poor self-image, felt that they knew nothing, and were afraid of making mistakes. Yet none of our findings indicated a systematic approach to tackling such difficulties.

All the Icelandic teachers claimed that they usually created an individualized curriculum for culturally diverse learners, but when the learners received more specialized language training with special education teachers, they followed that plan. However, the teachers appeared not to be very knowledgeable about those plans. In partnership with another teacher one teacher had developed an individualized curriculum with an emphasis on language. Most of the teachers claimed that they often adapted assignments and applied lower standards to culturally diverse learners. One teacher did not have information about the performance of one such learner in subjects other than the ones he himself taught; furthermore, although the child had homework difficulties, he had no information from the parents. Teachers often did not appear to understand that these learners had different needs than other learners. One teacher expressed the view that it was good for such learners to experience extensive collaborative learning and communication, thereby connecting with others and learning the language. Most of these teachers claimed that they used diverse teaching methods and group work, but that it was often difficult to form groups. It was not clear why this was so. The field notes recorded in Norway and Iceland showed that work described as co-operative was often in fact individualized. Although group work was mediated by several factors, for example the composition of groups and task structures, the children seemed to work alone.

Language

In the schools we visited in Manitoba, there was no formal evaluation of the learners' abilities to speak English. Teachers themselves evaluate learners' abilities if they detect signs of study difficulties. However, the schools have skilled staff who are capable of evaluating learners' abilities. All the teachers were well aware that poor language comprehension by culturally diverse children was a problem. Their literacy was often less than that of native-born Canadians, and this was clearly reflected in difficulties in "reading between the lines" and understanding the meaning of written or spoken language, as one of the teachers claimed. These individuals typically had difficulty understanding word games or humour that

challenged their language comprehension. All the teachers claimed that their vocabulary was poor: they did not know the words or appreciate diverse meanings that depended on context. Their vocabulary thus lacked breadth (number of words) and depth (awareness of different possible meanings). The teachers also claimed that such learners learned English in school and their native language either at home and at “Saturday School,” a situation that is common in Canada.

All the Norwegian teachers claimed that the language comprehension of their culturally diverse learners was poor. The children required considerable explanation and assistance regarding words and concepts. They were often in the position of having to guess the meaning of words or text, and awareness of their own abilities was lacking. The teachers claimed that, for these reasons, there was an emphasis on vocabulary and concepts. The interviews with the teachers revealed that, despite their awareness of poor vocabulary and comprehension, the learners’ abilities had not been formally evaluated. It was interesting that most of the teachers included various hesitations in their assessment, often using phrases such as “I consider” or “I think” instead of being sure. They appeared to have weak backgrounds in systematic language learning. Furthermore, because there was a lack of communication among the teachers in the school, they did not appear to be aware of what other teachers did in particular situations. These findings did not emerge among the Canadian teachers.

There were many similar patterns with the Icelandic and Norwegian teachers regarding language. All the Icelandic teachers claimed that children’s comprehension was often poor, that they lacked words to communicate their thoughts, and that their understanding of concepts was typically poor. In one instance, vocabulary had been formally evaluated by a language pathologist, but otherwise, the evaluation was based on the teacher’s own opinion. One Icelandic teacher claimed that the vocabulary of a culturally diverse learner was poor, and the teacher’s assessment was that the student was “borderline dyslexic.” This assessment was not based on a careful diagnosis, and the teacher had made no arrangements for such a diagnosis. The interviews indicated a lack of communication among most of the teachers—for example, the homeroom teacher, other teachers, and special education teachers. The interviews did not indicate that the teachers’ work was systematic.

Poor comprehension and limited vocabulary were observed among the culturally diverse learners in all three countries, and provisions to deal with these problems were in many ways similar in these countries. As noted above, the classes we collected data from in Iceland and Norway had fewer (1-3) culturally diverse learners than the Manitoban classrooms (5-7). Perhaps their relatively low numbers caused them to be regarded as extraordinary and therefore requiring “special education” or special assistance. Culturally diverse learners in the Manitoban schools, on the other hand, might have been less conspicuous

individually because their numbers were greater and because the presence of culturally diverse learners in general is more common in Canada.

Relationship with family

The relationships of the teachers in the three countries with the families of culturally diverse learners appeared to be rather different. The schools in Manitoba had fixed consultation times, three times each year at the school. The relationships of teachers with parents were also as dictated by convenience and often occurred, for example, at the end of the school day. Occasionally, teachers would visit learners at home, in the case of illness, for instance. Although the teachers demonstrated obvious understanding of the parents of their learners, they claimed that it was not their role to address difficulties like anxiety or isolation that may occur in the family; that was the role of others within the school, such as school counselors. All of the teachers spoke about the importance of relationships with parents. One teacher claimed that he enjoyed working with parents and that this work was essential to ensure that the child was comfortable in school.

All the Canadian teachers in Manitoba claimed that culturally diverse parents were sensitive to majority attitudes towards their communities; they were often worried that their child would be looked down upon. The teachers claimed that their culturally diverse learners were often able and ambitious learners and that their families respected learning and encouraged their children to learn. The parents had come to Canada willingly in order to provide their children with better learning opportunities, but they faced many kinds of difficulties in their new country. They were often unable to obtain work that matched their education, lack of language being the greatest hindrance to appropriate employment. This created difficult conditions for the families, in particular for the mothers, who often suffered from isolation in their homes. However, it was clear to us that people who move to Canada tend to have access to a community of people from their own culture and to receive support, either from their extended family or from others in the community.

The six schools in Norway have a specific plan for improving relationships with parents. Four of the teachers mentioned regular fall meetings with all of the classroom parents and private interviews. They have available to them a study that encourages reciprocal communications. However, according to these four teachers, communication only takes place through these formal channels, and it appears that the teachers maintain a certain distance from the parents. It also appeared common that the parents did not place demands on the school, although they placed demands on their children. Two of the teachers claimed to have no communication with the parents.

The Icelandic teachers appeared to demonstrate a lack of responsibility in their communication with the parents. Four of the teachers claimed that they

never asked for information about the learners from the parents, and three had no answers to questions regarding relationships with parents. The schools appeared not to have any plans for how teachers and parents should communicate, and relations between the school and the home were limited, except for parent interviews twice a year. Four teachers claimed that they did not initiate communication with the parents. All of the teachers had little information about the parents' expectations of the school, how parents thought their children felt in school, or if they were worried about their children's schooling.

Homework

In the two Manitoban schools, the intent is to assign the same homework for all learners whether or not they are born in Canada. The teachers agreed that there was variation in parental assistance with homework; in general, the teachers appeared not to rely on such assistance. There did not appear to be much homework, and the teachers claimed that there was no point in assigning homework that went beyond reading and easy assignments, such as grammar or spelling exercises.

In Norway, considerable emphasis was placed on homework in the six schools that were visited. In most instances, daily homework is expected, and often, homework is either assigned to be due on certain days, or a work plan is made for a certain time period, and the learners themselves plan when to finish their work. Some of the teachers expect the parents to help their children, but others claim that they cannot insist on that. It should be mentioned that the school provides assistance with homework. In some cases, language teachers can be asked to go to the learners' homes to assist with the homework.

In the three Icelandic schools, a homework plan is usually issued. Learners have to complete homework before the end of the week, and parents sign when the work is finished. Children who are in daycare after school do some of their homework there and receive assistance. In general, the teachers agreed that parents provided only limited assistance with homework, and therefore it was difficult to expect homework to be completed. In one instance, a teacher claimed that he tried to convince the parents to put their child in daycare at the school to get some assistance with the homework.

The teachers from these three countries have similar experiences regarding homework. Homework is limited by the assistance or encouragement given at home. The solution appears to involve additional assistance from the school in the form of additional lectures, additional school daycare, or even sending teachers to children's homes. The six Icelandic teachers did not appear to be as aware as the Manitoban or Norwegian teachers of the circumstances or abilities of the parents in assisting their children with homework. In the Icelandic schools, there appeared to be a lack of two-way communication between home and school.

Summary

This work was an exploration of teachers' pedagogy and their treatment of culturally diverse learners. It is intended that it should serve as groundwork for future research in the field. The aim of the research was to collect information about (a) how teachers in Manitoba (Canada), Norway, and Iceland are prepared to teach culturally diverse learners, (b) how these teachers meet students' individual needs and (c) what are the teachers' perceptions of how their culturally diverse learners are adapting to a new cultural community. For this purpose, we especially searched for an answer regarding the teachers' visions of different cultures, the learners' positions in the classroom, how learners learn language, the relationships between teachers and parents, and the demands made for homework. The Icelandic and Norwegian schools that were visited had one to three culturally diverse learners per class; in Manitoba (Canada), there were five to seven such learners per class.

None of the eighteen teachers in the three countries said they had received training in multicultural teaching as part of their teacher education. However, all the Canadian teachers, three of the Norwegian teachers, and two of the Icelandic teachers claimed that they had experience in multicultural education through their own teaching experience, through formal education (for example, courses on special educational needs), or through shorter in-service courses. There were considerable differences in the views, planning, and abilities of the teachers in regard to multicultural teaching. There seemed to be a crucial difference between the Canadian teachers and the teachers from the two other countries. The teachers in Manitoba appeared to be better prepared, to have more mature views, and to demonstrate greater responsibility in their teaching, compared to the Norwegian and Icelandic teachers. One can conclude that the abilities of most of the Norwegian and Icelandic teachers to teach culturally diverse children fall short of the demands that are made by the government (Reports of the Storting; Compulsory School Act). Wiest demonstrates the importance of addressing multiculturalism in teacher education and the importance of teachers learning about the culture of other nations in various ways, such as through field trips, courses, and volunteer work and in active communication with people of international origin.

The learning provisions for culturally diverse students in Manitoba involved general teaching in the classroom. It was claimed that the best approach was to assist learners within the classroom with collaboration and diverse tasks. In Norway, special education was emphasized, both in and out of the classroom. The Icelandic teachers appeared to avoid responsibility and to push learners' difficulties away, claiming not know what provisions were available. Both in

Iceland and in Norway, lower standards are applied to culturally diverse learners at the beginning of their schooling than in the Canadian schools.

It may be said that learning enhances quality of life and serves as a key to the future. Learning needs to be appropriately challenging (Tomlinson); therefore, lower standards applied to culturally diverse learners will lower their quality of life compared to that of native-born learners. Decisions about applying lower standards appear to be based on learners' poor language skills and on difficulties in the relationship between the home and school. Instead of limiting students' opportunities for learning and quality of life, it is necessary to nurture these two factors more enthusiastically. Scholars have demonstrated the necessity of schools and teachers appreciating the wealth that diversity encompasses, in order to use it and to appreciate the benefits of cultural pluralism. They speak of not destroying cultural diversity or accepting it half-heartedly. Multicultural education should not be an addition to or implementation of previous approaches to education. It should be both the necessary condition and the main goal of education. The goal of multicultural teaching will not be achieved by a piecemeal approach in which certain strategies are set aside because of difficulties or cultural differences (Parekh; Tiedt and Tiedt).

In the schools in Manitoba, the learning environment is shaped by the purpose of strengthening the self-concept of culturally diverse learners, and they are directly encouraged to become participating partners. All these teachers were better aware of the position of culturally diverse learners than their Icelandic and Norwegian counterparts and they worked systematically to achieve a balanced approach, among other things by routine planning (see, for example, Gordon). Most of the Icelandic and Norwegian teachers were aware that international children suffered from poor self-esteem. The Norwegian teachers considered it significant that learners learned co-operation and worked with social programs. However, contradictions may be discerned from their words; little emphasis seemed to be placed on co-operation in the teaching, according to the classroom data. Ainscow (1999) has demonstrated that students can make a strong contribution to their own learning and social development by working together and helping each other. Learners helping each other is often an unused strategy that can lessen obstacles and increase everyone's potential for better learning and heightened sympathy. Teachers should use their skills to mobilize this unused energy, and they should plan their teaching so that it furthers the social part of learning.

The teachers' answers to questions about integrating culturally diverse learners into a new culture seem to reveal that there are unsolved problems. This applies especially to the Norwegian and Icelandic teachers. To many of their culturally diverse students, language seems to be a real barrier, and the relationships between teachers and parents are restricted or non-existent. The teachers in Manitoba appeared to understand how culturally diverse learners

adapt to a new society. They talk about a rich tradition of immigrants who are proud of their culture and customs, in part because learners' cultures are emphasized in school. The Norwegian and Icelandic teachers, conversely, appeared to deny any responsibility toward the culturally diverse learners, and there were even instances of prejudice. They talked about "these people" and "different people" and about differences between Norwegians or Icelanders and immigrants. Such remarks can indicate prejudice or lack of knowledge and they can become a barrier to interaction and communication (see, for example, Banks; Gay). These teachers did not consider it their role to assist learners in adapting to a new society, and they appeared not to know how it is that they adapt to Norwegian or Icelandic society. One of the Norwegian teachers mentioned that he did not see the value of people of different ethnic groups living in the same country. It appears that these teachers lack understanding and intuition in this regard.

In all of the countries studied, it appeared that culturally diverse learners have difficulty with the language; their ignorance of the meaning of written and spoken language holds them back, especially in the first years after arriving in the country. The teachers in Manitoba evaluate the abilities of their learners, but can also consult specialists within the school. In Norway, the language ability of culturally diverse learners is not evaluated formally in the schools that were visited, and therefore, the basis for language learning is weak. The answers from the Icelandic teachers regarding the evaluation of learners' language skills and the provisions available were characterized by uncertainty. It is noteworthy that the no Icelandic teacher appeared to realize his or her responsibility regarding the children's language ability, and there appears to be a certain lack of connection between classroom teachers and other teachers. The learning, the learning experience, and the knowledge that results are strongly connected to words and vocabulary, and therefore it is important to work systematically and with a sense of responsibility on strengthening language skills. Knowledge is primarily tied to words, so systematic strengthening of vocabulary is a key to learning (Marzano).

Much variation appears in the views of the teachers in the three countries in terms of the significance of communication with parents. In Manitoba, communication appears to be effortless but informal; without communication with parents, schoolwork would not be actualized. The teachers consider working with parents to be the foundation for the child doing well in school. In Norway, a formal relationship with parents is in place; tools such as communication books and fixed meetings are part of school work. Yet it appears that the Norwegian teachers cultivated a remoteness from parents and that this happened, among other things, because "anyway, we can't communicate because of language difficulties," as one of the teachers said. In the Icelandic schools, there appears to be a tangible irresponsibility in communication with parents. Four of the teachers claimed never to have had a relationship with parents of the children in question, and three of them had no answer concerning such associations. They

did not know what worried parents, how parents thought their children felt in the school, or what expectations parents brought to the school experience. Yet scholars have found that the teacher's commitment to a relationship with parents is one of the prerequisites for multicultural teaching (Davidman and Davidman). Epstein claims that good relationships between home and school lead to yet better relationships, providing support both at home and at school. The school is a part of the community, and a good connection between school and home can help to open doors into the wider community. Such a connection can at least increase reciprocal understanding between teachers and parents.

In our interviews in Manitoba (Canada) and Norway, it appeared that the teachers viewed the children's mothers who stayed at home to be the most isolated; the mothers often did not manage to speak the new language and had not found suitable work. This viewpoint appeared in one of the focus groups we approached in Iceland in our pre-survey. Three mothers out of four acknowledged their isolation, and all of them claimed that they had difficulties assisting their children with their homework—even the two who had university degrees. This view did not appear in a focus group with teachers in Iceland. Epstein and Janshorn claim that research shows that parents of culturally diverse learners want to take part in the learning of their children but cannot. Thus, it is the role of the teachers to clarify the goals of homework, speak to parents about their role, and assist them in fulfilling it.

The homework experience of the teachers in the three countries was similar. Homework is often hindered because the parents cannot follow up on what is expected, and thus it is difficult to make effective use of organized homework. This problem could be solved at least partially by the learners doing homework at school—during school care, for example, or by taking additional time, even providing help from the school in the home. In comparison, the Icelandic teachers differ insofar as they seem not to be as aware as the teachers in the other countries about prevailing conditions at home. The Icelandic teachers have not cultivated the relationship with the home, and interpersonal communication is lacking between the home and the teacher.

It may be concluded from our research that all of the participants lack the professional preparation to teach culturally diverse learners, as all of the eighteen teachers in the three countries said they had not received any multicultural education during their teacher training. However, the crucial difference between the teachers lies in the fact that the Manitoban teachers live in a well-established multicultural society, where the rights and needs of immigrants were put into law sooner than they were in Norway and in Iceland. Banks considers such legislation to be a necessary condition for citizens to maintain relationships both within society and within their own ethnic group.

Today, multiculturalism in Canada is about removing barriers of discrimination and ignorance, which stand in the way of acceptance and respect

(Weiner). Scholars (see, for example, Gay; Hare; Aðalsteinsdóttir 2000) have shown that responsible teachers have an unequivocal belief in human dignity and student competence. In their view the different aspects of learning—intellectual and moral, individual and social—need to develop in harmony. They work to support learners and build bridges between learners of different origins. They safeguard good learning by carefully considering the curriculum, the act of teaching itself, the evaluation process, and their attitude towards and conduct with learners. They take seriously differences of opinion and encourage interactive groups and participation to facilitate learning for students. Obviously, they believe that every student can succeed. In dealing with learners, these teachers are empathetic and supportive, personal, interested, understanding, and tolerant, while insisting that learners take responsibility for their own learning, achieve their own results, and provide support for other learners as well.

Acknowledgements

In our research, we relied upon the help of valued assistants, whom we thank. We also want to thank the teachers who were willing to speak with us and the mothers and the teachers who participated in the focus groups; Principal Jan Tambs-Lyche; Dr. Nina Colwill; and staff of the University of Manitoba: Terry Cooke, Dr. Zana Lutfiyya, Dr. Jonathan C. Young, and last but not least our editor, Erla Anderson.

REFERENCES

- Aðalsteinsdóttir, K. 1992. "Heiltæk skólafstefna: leið til skólaþróunar." *Uppeldi og menntun, Tímarit Kennaraháskóla Íslands* 11: 196-206. [A whole school approach: a passage to school development.]
- . 2000. *Small Schools, Interaction and Empathy: A Study of Teachers' Behaviour and Practices, with Emphasis on Effects on Pupils with Special Needs*. Diss. University of Bristol.
- Ainscow, M. 1991. "Effective Schools for All: An Alternative Approach to Special Needs in Education." *Cambridge Journal of Education* 21.3: 293-308.
- . 1999. *Understanding the Development of Inclusive Schools*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Ainscow, M., and S. Hart. 1992. "Moving Practice Forward." *Support for Learning* 7.3: 15-120.

- Aoki, T. 1990. "Whose culture? Whose heritage? Ethnicity within Canadian Social Studies Curricula." *Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education*. Ed. J.R. Mallea and J.C. Young. Ottawa: Carleton University Press. 265-89.
- Banks, J.A. 2002. *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Boland, T. 1999. *The Greater the Differences, the Better the Chances*. Enschede: SLO.
- Canadian Multiculturalism Act: A Guide for Canadians*. 1990. Ottawa: Communications Branch, Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada.
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. 1990. *New Permanent Residents*. Citizenship and Immigration Canada. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/monitor/issue12/02-immigrants.htm> (Accessed September 11, 2006)
- Cohen, L., and L. Manion. 1985. *Research Methods in Education*. 2nd edition. London: Croom Helm.
- College Act nr. 80/1996*. 1996. Reykjavik: Ministry of Education. [Lög um framhaldsskóla.]
- Compulsory School Act nr. 66/1995*. 1995. Reykjavik: Ministry of Education. [Lög um grunnskóla.]
- Davidman, L., and P.T. Davidman. 2001. *Teaching with a Multicultural Perspective: A Practical Guide*. 3rd edition. New York: Longman.
- Epstein, J.L. 1995. "School/Family/Community Partnership: Caring for the Children We Share." *Phi Delta Kappan* 76.9: 701-11.
- Epstein, J.L., and N.R. Janshorn. 2004. "School, Family and Community Partnerships Link the Plan." *The Educational Digest* 69.6: 19-24.
- Fullan, M.G., and S. Stiegelbauer. 1991. *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. London: Cassel Educational Ltd..
- Gall, M.D., W.R. Borg, and, and J.P. Gall. 1996. *Educational Research: An Introduction*. 6th edition. London: Longman.
- Gay, G. 2000. *Culturally Responsive Teaching, Theory, Research and Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gordon, M. 2005. *Roots of Empathy: Changing the World Child by Child*. Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers.
- Hare, W. 1993. *What Makes a Good Teacher*. Ontario: The Althouse Press.
- Hoover, D.K.V., C.B. Otto, and, and J.S. Brissie. 1987. "Parent Involvement. Contributions of Teacher Efficacy, School Socioeconomic Status, and Other School Characteristics." *American Educational Research Journal* 24.3: 417-35.

- Johnson, D.W., R.T. Johnson, and, and E.J. Holubec. 1994. *Cooperative Learning in the Classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Kvale, S. 1996. *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research and Interviewing*. London: Sage Publications.
- Lawrence-Brown, D. 2004. "Differentiated Instruction: Inclusive Strategies for Standards-Based Learning that Benefit the Whole Class." *American Secondary Education* 32.3: 34-62.
- Mallea, J.R. 1990. "Introduction: Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education." *Cultural Diversity and Canadian Education*. Ed. J.R. Mallea and J.C. Young. Ottawa: Carleton University Press.
- Marzano, R.J. 2004. *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- McLeod, K.A. 1981. "Multiculturalism and Multicultural Education: Policy and Practice." *Education and Canadian Multiculturalism: Some Problems and some Solutions*. Ed. D. Dorotich. Yearbook (Canadian Society for the Study of Education, no. 8, 1981). Saskatoon: Canadian Society for the Study of Education.
- Ministry of Education and Research, Norway. 2002. *Endringer og nye utfordringer i lærerutdanningen*. Oslo: Utdannings- og Forskingsdepartementet. [Changes and Innovation in Teacher Training.] <http://odin.dep.no/kd/norsk/dok/regpubl/stmeld/045001-040003/hov003-bn.html> (Accessed September 16, 2006)
- Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, Norway. 2006. *Handlingsplan mot rasisme og diskriminering*. [Strategy against Racism and Discrimination.] <http://odin.dep.no/aid/norsk/tema/innvandring/bn.html> (Accessed September 16, 2006)
- NOU: Norges offentlige utredninger. 2006. *Innvandring og inkludering*. [Immigration and Inclusion.] <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb.html?id=4> (Accessed September 16, 2006)
- Orlikow, L., and J.C Young. 2000. "The Struggle for Change: Teacher Education in Canada." *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Études Ethniques au Canada: Special Edition: Educating Citizens for a Pluralistic Society*. Ed. A. Rasporich and J. Frideres. Ontario: Canadian Ethnic Studies Association. 70-88.
- Oslo University College. 2006. *Masterstudium i flerkulturell og internasjonal utdanning*. [Masters Degree in Multicultural and International Education.] <http://www.hio.no/content/view/full/27137> (Accessed September 16, 2006)

- Parekh, B. 2006. *Rethinking Multiculturalism. Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*. 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillain.
- Pollard, A., and S. Tann. 1993. *Reflective Teaching in the Primary School: A Handbook for the Classroom*. London: Cassell.
- Preschool Act nr. 78/1994. 1994. Reykjavik: Ministry of Education. [Lög um leikskóla.]
- Ramasut, A. 1989. "Paving the Way to Change: Warnock and the 1981 Act." *Whole School Approaches to Special Needs*. Ed. A. Ramasut. London: Falmer Press. 5-18.
- Reports of the Storting, Ministry of Education and Research, Norway. 2002. *Endringer og nye utfordringer i lærerutdanningen*. [Changes and new Challenges in Teacher Education.] <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/regpubl/stmeld/20012002/Stmeld-nr-16-2001-2002-/3.html?id=195543> (Accessed September 16, 2006)
- Salner, M. 1989. "Validity in Human Science Research." *Issues of Validity in Qualitative Research*. Ed. S. Kvale. Lund: Studentlitteratur. 47-72.
- Smith, L.M. 1990. "Ethics in Qualitative Field Research: An Individual Perspective." *Qualitative Inquiry in Education*. Ed. E.W. Eisner and A. Peskin. New York: Teachers College Press. 258-76.
- Statistics Iceland. 2006a. *Veiting íslensks ríkisfangs eftir fyrri ríkisfangi, kyni og aldri 1991-2005*. [Conferral of the Icelandic State from the former State, by Sex and Age 1991-2005.] <http://www.hagstofa.is/> (Accessed September 11, 2006)
- . 2006b. *Hlutfall erlendra ríkisborgara af mannfjölda 1950-2005*. [Percentage of foreign citizens of the population 1950-2005.] <http://www.hagstofa.is/?PageID=626> (Accessed September 11, 2006)
- Statistics Norway. 2006. *Immigration and Immigrants*. http://www.ssb.no/english/subjects/00/00/10/innvandring_en/ (Accessed September 11, 2006)
- Stephan, W. 1981. "Panem et circenses? Ten Years of Multicultural Policy in Canada." *Education and Canadian Multiculturalism: Some Problems and some Solutions*. Ed. D. Dorotich. Yearbook (Canadian Society for the Study of Education, no. 8, 1981). Saskatoon: Canadian Society for the Study of Education.
- Tiedt, P.L., and I.M. Tiedt. 2002. *Multicultural Teaching: A Handbook of Activities, Information and Resources*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Tomlinson, C.A. 1995. *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- . 1999. *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

- Weiner, G. 1990. *The Canadian Multiculturalism Act: A Guide for Canadians*. Ottawa: Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada.
- Wiest, L.R. 1998. "Using Immersion Experiences to Shake Up Preservice Teachers' Views about Cultural Differences." *Journal of Teacher Education* 49.5: 358-65.
- Young, J.C. 1995. "Multicultural and Anti-Racist Teacher Education: A Comparison of Canadian and British Experiences in the 1970s and 1980s." *Multicultural Education—Canada*. Ed. S. Joyce. Ontario: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. 45-64.