

# Cultural literacies 2018

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JyU



# Themes

- What creates 'disjunctures' between what we hope for and what we do...
- How language is used in education
- How language can be used in education

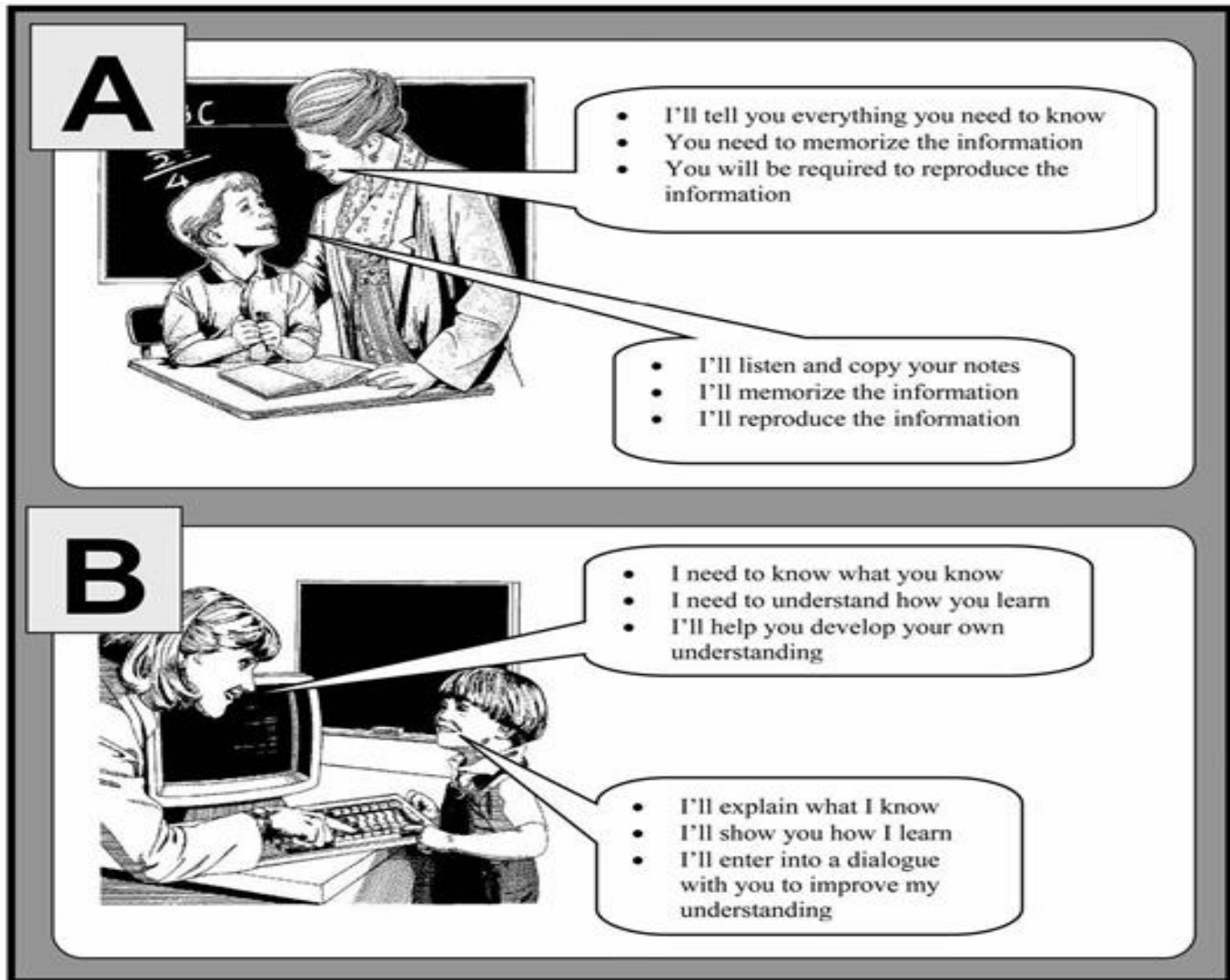


Figure 2. Concept cartoons depicting teacher – student dialogue in an objectivist classroom (A) and a constructivist classroom (B)

		STUDENT APPROACH	
		OBJECTIVIST	CONSTRUCTIVIST
TEACHER APPROACH	CONSTRUCTIVIST	<i>Teacher-student frustration</i>	<i>Meaningful learning</i>
	OBJECTIVIST	<i>Rote learning</i>	<i>Teacher-student frustration</i>

Figure 1. In order for students to develop from rote-learning towards meaningful learning (as indicated by the arrow), there needs to be a complementary transition from an objectivist view of learning towards a constructivist view. To avoid frustration in the classroom, teachers and students need to develop their classroom philosophies in parallel

# A tendency in education?

- “... we seem to be more prone to acting our way into implicit thinking than we are able to think our way explicitly into acting,” and that
- “If we are not aware of what and why and how ..., we cultivate a mindlessness that, in the end, reduces our own humanity and fosters cultural division even when it is not intended” Bruner 1996, 79

# The linguistic genius of babies,

Kuhl 2004

- From citizens of the world to cultural listeners

# Cultural setting as a formative space for language and literacy development

- ... you cannot understand **how people think** unless you take into account the cultural setting and its resources, the very things that give mind its shape and scope. Learning, remembering, talking, imagining: all of them are made possible by participating in a culture (Bruner, 1996: x-xi)

- As the child negotiates and becomes part of the environment, literacy emerges (Dorsey-Gaines & Garnett, 1996: 249) **that is, ways of reading and participating in, making sense of and expressing self develop**

# Features of different educational cultures

- **Story-telling** – way of making sense, abstract conceptualisation
- **Accuracy of reproduction** – rote ultimately most accurate
- **Cheating** – pressure, expectation, 'survival' culture
- **Transience** rather than in one place, reading spaces, need for every individual in the community
- **Text-based** culture, e.g. book exam, basic literacy assumed
- **Use of questions**, e.g. as classroom management (expression of power) rather than engagement of pupil in learning; to check learning
- **Relationships between** members, e.g. community, collective or competitive educational cultures
- **Ascribing positive or negative** values, e.g. 0, maths as words, not numbers



# A couple of examples

- Pupils from refugee camps with 2-3 years of schooling in Finland
  - Motor skills
  - Oral English
  - Interpersonal skills
- Pupil from the Chinese school system
  - Systematic approach
  - Word searches
- Use of textbooks – socialisation so subtle that even teachers can take it for granted

What a beautiful sunrise!



# Linguistic repertoires are ...

IDENTITIES,  
HISTORIES  
& CONTEXTS



ROLES, REGISTERS  
AND ROUTINES

MULTI-MODAL,  
MULTI-LINGUAL

- ... the full range of resources provided by a language are never fully available to one individual (Blommaert, 2010)

# What kind of linguistic repertoire would this kind of setting support?

- From its beginnings, bathed in allegory and multimeaning spirituals, the Black Church became a platform for the whole panorama of Black life (Dorsey-Gaines & Garnett, 1996: 254)
- Broad variety of written and spoken literacies – e.g. weekly information bulletins inc. structure of the service, announcements, lists, reminders; hymnal inc. hymns, doxology, anthems; newsletters inc. articles, stories, reports, scriptures, issues concerning the African-American community, photographs & announcements; letters about meetings and events; fliers; reading aloud to grandparents, reading aloud in church, long prayer meetings, sermons in which the 'minister speaks using standard American English; however, he highlights aspects of his sermons with language born of and shaped by the community' (Dorsey-Gaines & Garnett, 1996: 259)

# Starting with the here-and-now

- The language of school is often different – sometimes very different – from the language of home & communities (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Cazden, 2001)
- The language of school, for example, becomes increasingly abstract and removed from the here-and-now (Lwin & Silver, 2014)
- The language of home is not left outside the classroom but becomes one of the languages of the classroom and pupils need to learn how to use the different language well (Barwell, 2016)

# Languages: labels or resources?

**Äidinkielet 4.8.2017**  
**Jakaumat**  
04.08.2017 13:45:50  
**Äidinkieli->Nimi:**

1.	1
2. akan	2
3. albania	27
4. arabia	60
5. aramea	2
6. armenia	2
7. bengali	4
8. berbenkieli	1
9. bosnia	3
10. bulgaria	2
11. burma	6
12. chin	1
13. dari	1
14. englantti	15
15. farsi	2
16. hindi	1
17. igbo	1
18. italia	2
19. karen	1
20. kayah	3
21. kazakki	1
22. kiina	2
23. kikongo, kongo	2
24. kinyarwanda	1
25. korea	1
26. kreikka	1
27. kurdi	32
28. limbum	1
29. lingala	9
30. makedonia	2

31. mandingo	2
32. mongoli	1
33. myanmar	1
34. nsei	1
35. portugali	1
36. puola	1
37. ranska	3
38. romanian	1
39. somali	50
40. soranin kurdi	4
41. suomi	498
42. tamazigh	1
43. tamili	8
44. thai	4
45. tsetseeni	4
46. tuntematon	12
47. turkki	8
48. turkmeeni	2
49. twi	4
50. venaja	68
51. vietnam	28
52. viro, eesti	64
<b>Yht.</b>	<b>955</b>



Photo: © Eija Aalto

# Language is...

a map...

- of what has been...
- of what is...
- intentions and desires
- of what could be...
- of relationships, experiences and values
- of understanding

part of being human

- emotional
- physical
- cognitive
- social
- cultural

Expressed in different ways

- spoken
- heard
- read
- written
- signed

DIFFERENT FORMS OF LANGUAGE PROVIDE DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES OF LANGUAGE AND DEMAND DIFFERENT LANGUAGE SKILLS

# Characteristics of bilingual children (1):

1. Often **good creative thinkers**, e.g. in tasks which require not the finding of the single correct answer to a question, but where they are asked to imagine a number of possible correct answers
2. Have **greater communicative sensitivity** and are more able to take into account situational factors and to react appropriately ...
3. Often have more advanced **metalinguistic capacities**, that is better analytical skills and cognitive control over linguistic operations ... for example, bilinguals have greater sensitivity to semantic relationships between words



# Characteristics of bilingual children (2)

4. can make better use of **self-regulating mechanisms**, as when they begin a statement and then track back to correct themselves
5. Perform better in tests of **spatial perception** , e.g. more skilled at re-tracing the figures, which seems to indicate greater cognitive clarity and a superior ability to analyse the problem.

- Monolinguals seem to be stronger in learning the knowledge of facts (IK), whereas the bilinguals are better at learning mathematical operations (OK).
- **Informational knowledge** refers to the capacity to memorise, or « knowing that », whereas **operational knowledge** refers to the capacity to apply what one knows to new circumstances, or « knowing how ».  
**Operational knowledge is significant for creativity, whereas informational knowledge serves more as a tool on which creativity must be built up.**

# If... then...?

- In circumstances where appropriate pedagogic strategies coincide with a favourable social environment it is perfectly feasible to build up harmonious bilingual development. Baetens-Beardsmore, 2008: 7
- Then why and how?

# How does learning happen?

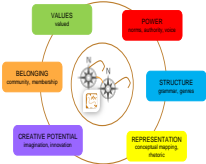


# Socio-cultural explanation (Vygotsky)

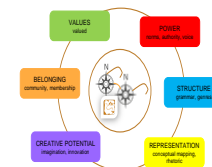
- Learning takes place first on the **social** plane, before it takes place on the **psychological** plane.
- Development can be accelerated with the help of a more expert other.
- Is that the whole story?!

# QUESTIONS

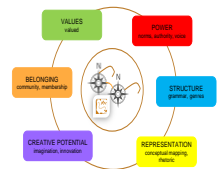
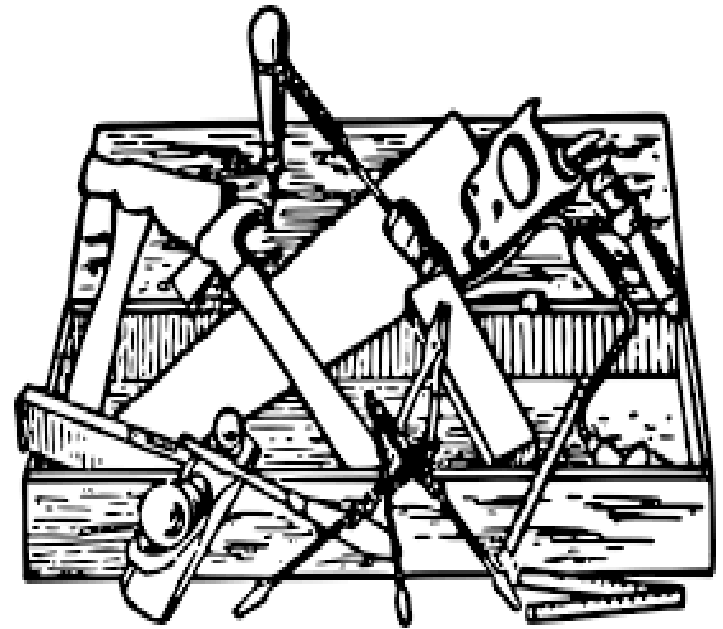
control or  
dialogue?



**DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES:  
ignoring or including?**

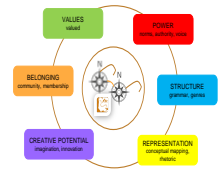
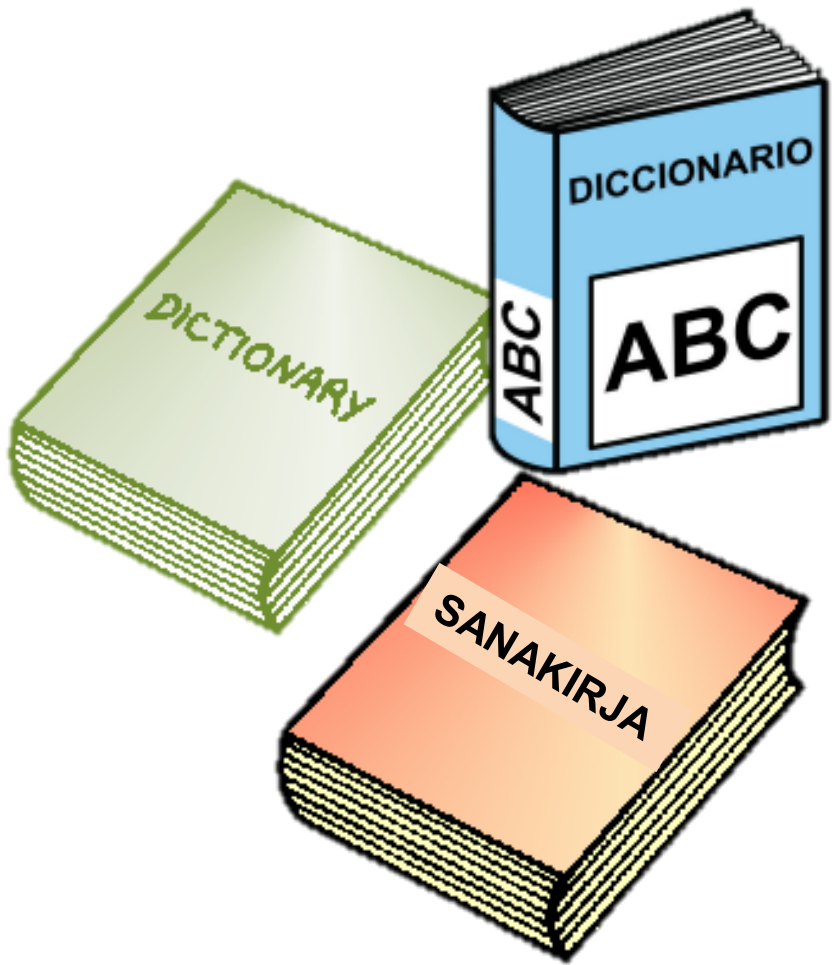


**SCAFFOLDING:**  
reproduction or  
innovation?

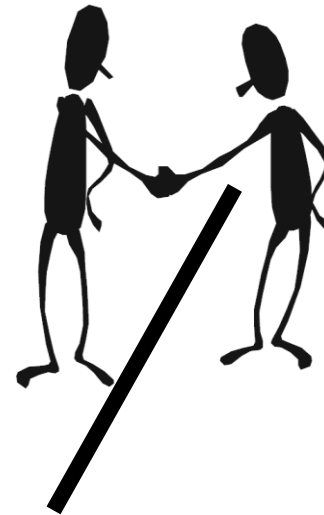
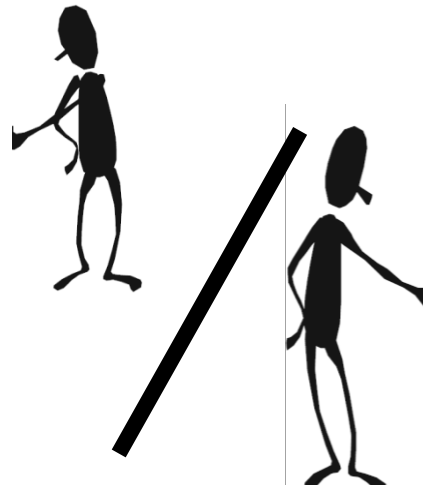




# INTERACTION: mono- or multilingual?

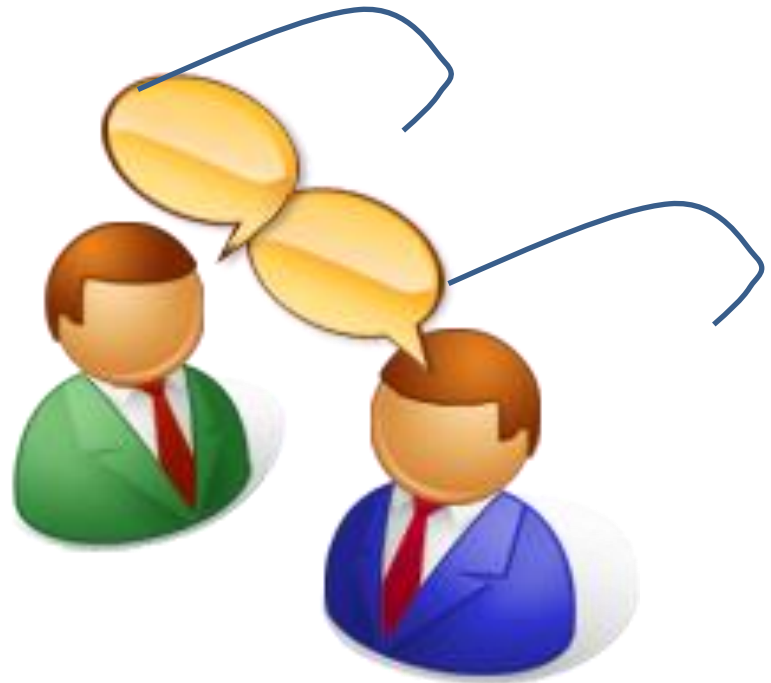


**BOUNDARIES:**  
separation or  
encounter?



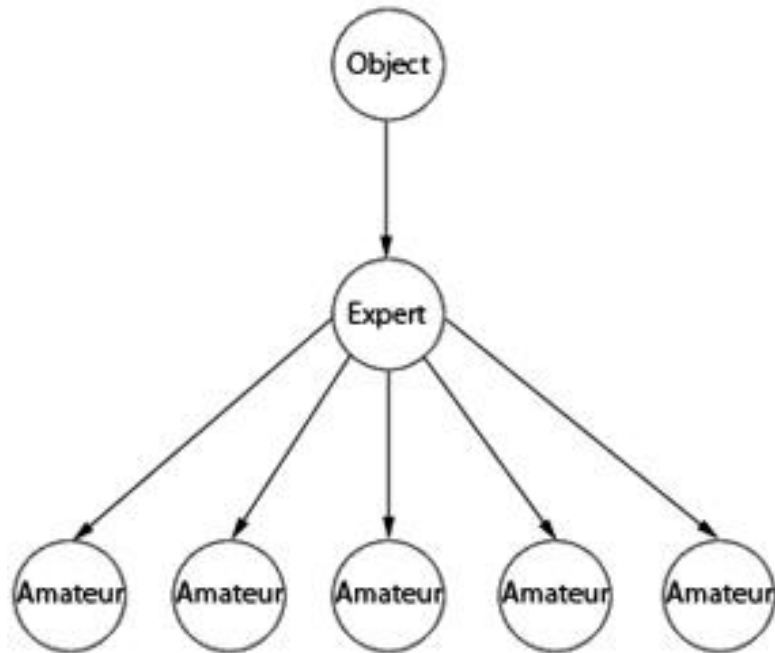
# To be aware that

Language makes  
some ways of saying  
and doing possible,  
and other ways of  
saying and doing  
impossible (Biesta,  
2005)

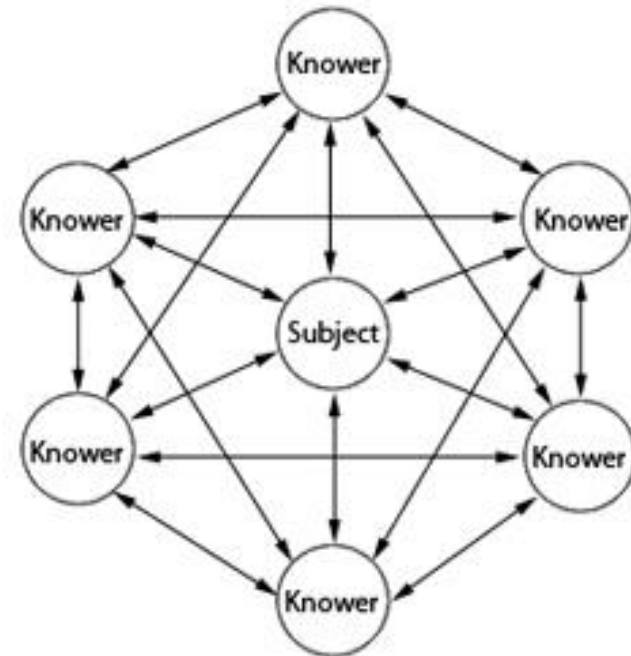


# How we arrange education affects how we use language...

Authority and hierarchical expertise



Community and developing expertise



Community of Truth, Palmer, 2007

# What are the implications of the words that we say?

- Native speakers vs non-native speakers
  - Foreign language
  - Second language
  - Additional language
- Disadvantaged communities
- At-risk communities
- Culturally-deprived

# The Black Church

- From its beginnings, bathed in allegory and multimeaning spirituals, the Black Church became a platform for the whole panorama of Black life (Dorsey-Gaines & Garnett, 1996: 254)
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