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School leadership and multilingualism

Abstract
The purpose of this article is to explore school leaders' perceptions about multilingualism with regard to learning and social integration for minority students in an upper secondary school. The analysis is based on interviews with school leaders and a social advisor. For the analysis, I used traditional methods of qualitative analysis with a to-and-fro process between the field data and key theoretical points. The findings are discussed within an inclusive leadership approach and they suggest that there is little support for the use of minority students' first language for learning. There are also indications of a lack of common vision and shared understanding of multilingualism among the school leaders. The study contributes to the field of research by combining a critical school leadership approach with research on knowledge about multilingualism with regard to learning and the social integration of minority students.

Introduction

This article explores upper secondary school leaders' perceptions about multilingualism with regard to learning and social integration for minority students. Multilingualism refers to the societal level, meaning that one or two languages or a variety of languages are used, for example in education or media, while other languages or a variety of languages are used in local communities and in the home. On an individual basis, multilingualism can be defined in various ways depending on when and where languages are learned, how they are used, the level of language proficiency, and whether a student identifies him or herself with the language and is identified by others as multilingual. Perceptions refer to the school leader's attitude, understanding, and opinion about multilingualism. School leaders' own beliefs about inclusive services for students have been demonstrated to be the best predictor of quality of inclusive schools (Villa, Thousand, Meyers, & Nevin, 1996). In sum, school leaders play an important role with regard to linking the linguistic and the social. Bourdieu developed the metaphor of the market as a linguistic market, a "system of relations of force which determine the price of linguistic products" (Bourdieu in Wacquant, 1989, p. 47).

Multilingualism on the Norwegian "linguistic market"
Norway has sometimes been described as a sociolinguistic paradise, with its linguistic heterogeneity (Røyneland, 2009). For example, the two written varieties of Norwegian (Bokmål and Nynorsk) and Sami (Northern, Lule, and Southern Sami) are official languages (UFD, 2006). In upper secondary school Norwegian-born persons with immigrant parents comprise 9.8 per cent, and Norwegian language and culture is developing and interacting with neighbouring Nordic languages and other minority languages within Norway.

However, English also plays a major role in Norwegian society. Immigrants in Norway meet a rather complex linguistic environment. Thus, minority students who have Norwegian as their second language, and who have little or no experience with English, face considerable challenges adapting to English as a third language.

Challenges and actions for better language stimulation and learning are topics for ongoing discussions about Norwegian education policy. To illustrate, in White Paper no. 23 (2008) *Language Crosses Divides*, the role of the Norwegian language for the development, education, and societal participation of the individual is stressed. However, there is some ambiguity in the report (Hvistendahl, 2009). It suggests a change of policy with regard to the significance of the first language as an auxiliary for learning and social integration. However, although it also stresses that the first language serves as the basis of future language learning, most actions designed to strengthen the level of language competency in the population are directed at Norwegian language education. Moreover, the report does not mention multilingualism in connection with learning (Hvistendahl, 2009). It stresses that learning in the first languages and bilingual subject learning should be for students that are not able to follow training in Norwegian. Hence, first languages of language minorities are denied a role in the classroom except at the beginner level. Although research (Lervåg & Lervag, 2011) indicates that little transfer seemed to occur in the oral language domain, this finding contrasts with the domains of decoding and phonological awareness, where moderate to strong cross-linguistic correlations are found. Provided that the training with bilingualism has an effect on minority students, this raises interesting questions about the school leaders' perceptions of multilingualism in schools.

In sum, I argue that school leaders have a unique mandate regarding the role of multilingualism. In addition to delivering regular educational services, they must also find ways to provide the kind of environment in which rich linguistic and cultural socialization is cultivated. In the next section I situate my study within some relevant international and national studies of school leadership. I then give a brief description of the theoretical framework, followed by the methodological approach. Thereafter I present and discuss the results. Finally, I draw some tentative conclusions and outline possible points of departure for future studies of school leadership in a linguistically diverse school context.

Research on leadership in linguistically diverse schools
This study recognizes the growing body of scholarship that demonstrates the key roles played by school leadership in developing equitable and inclusive schools (Shields, 2011; Skrla & Scheurich, 2001; Theoharis, 2007; Vedøy, 2008). In seeking to develop and enhance social justice and equity, research on inclusive leadership (Andersen & Ottesen, 2011; Ryan, 2006) suggests that schools focus on emphasizing student learning and classroom practice, developing critical consciousness, and promoting dialogue with all involved in school issues. Anderson (2009) introduces advocacy leadership which coincides with and complements inclusive leadership dimensions. Inclusive leadership and advocacy leadership owe much to the work of Freire (1993), who called for personal dialogue relationships to undergird education, because without such relationships education acts to deform rather than to transform (Shields, 2010). Advocacy and inclusive leadership perspectives both require that school leaders take action in order to create a school that is equitable and just while contributing to a broader community. As such, I consider the intersection between advocacy and inclusion to be an important vantage point for understanding school leadership in this study.

In a qualitative study Andersen and Ottesen (2011) have explored the responses of school leaders to the challenges of inclusion in two Norwegian upper secondary schools. The results show that while the school leaders recognized the challenges of inclusion for minority students, the recognition did not become a driving force in their strategic work. Individual teachers were trusted to carry out their teaching practices in ways that would accommodate the needs of all students. Tolo and Lillejord (2006) investigated two Norwegian education policy documents. They asked how the documents may function as guidelines for school leaders with regard to developing a multicultural school, and what challenges the school leaders face when implementing the policy in schools. They concluded that developing a multicultural school ought to be considered a political project, in which those involved at all levels have mutual responsibility for participating in a democratic dialogue. It is outside the scope of this article to examine policy documents. Although there is research about student teacher attitudes and perceptions with regard to multilingualism (Kulbrandstad, 2009), there is little empirical evidence describing how school leaders perceive multilingualism in upper secondary school. In this study I explore how school leaders perceive multilingualism with regard to learning and social integration for minority students, hence the article is a significant contribution to increasing our understanding of school leadership in multi-linguistic contexts.

Before describing the context of the study, I outline the theoretical framework, starting with the rationale for using inclusive leadership as a framework for this analysis.

Theoretical framework – Inclusive leadership and advocacy
A number of researchers have discussed social justice with reference to schools. For instance, Young pointed out,

> A goal of social justice is social equality. It refers primarily to the full participation and inclusion of everyone in a society's major institutions, and the socially supported substantive opportunity for all to develop and exercise their capacities and realize their choices. (Young, 1990, p. ix)

Social justice and good education are intertwined, as the former is fundamental to what the latter is all about (Connell, 1993). School leaders' perceptions about multilingualism with regard to learning and social integration play a significant role for minority students' development in upper secondary schools.

Leading for social justice is a highly emotional endeavour requiring courage, integrity, self-awareness, and critical consciousness (Shields, 2010). This type of work urges school leaders to engage in inclusive practices in order to address issues such as power, language, ethnicity, and culture. For instance, the lack of Norwegian linguistic proficiency may be highly exclusive, but not necessarily an independent excluding factor. The potential for exclusion may be most crucial in combination with other exclusive cultural or structural traits within schools. This may become evident if educators do not modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the achievement of minority students, or if there is a lack of focus on how stereotypes may influence the ways knowledge is constructed (Banks, 2006). An interesting point is how these issues may inter-relate.

In sum, inclusive leadership has similarities with other approaches related to leadership for social justice, which have raised similar issues, although they do not necessarily use the term inclusive leadership. For example, in discussing leadership preparation programs, it has been posited that leaders need to possess "a critical consciousness about social justice" and knowledge of "inclusive practices" and that they need to "create proactively redundant systems of support to maximize student learning" (McKenzie & al., 2008, p. 128). For school leaders this implies focusing on multilingualism in order to ensure the minority students' needs. To illustrate, Shields (2010) emphasizes that school leaders must be able, when necessary, to resist injustice courageously and be activists for change. An inclusive leadership approach addresses questions of moral values and purposes of public education for a community, society, and the world. It has the potential to move the discussion of leadership beyond the tasks and activities as focused on in, for example, distributive leadership approaches (e.g. Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Inclusive leadership has ambitions to address critical reflections which bring in discussions beyond strategic leadership with inspirational, colourful slogans, for example from transformational leadership approaches (e.g. Leithwood & Riehl, 2005).

Inclusive is a complex term. It is inextricably linked to other complex terms such as democracy, power, equality, equity, and relationships. *Exclusive* may be seen as inclusivity's alter ego. They are intimately related, since those who are not included are excluded (Ryan, 2006). Likewise, within a Norwegian school context, Pihl (2001) has called the assumption that inclusion prevents exclusion a paradox, since the latter is a condition for the former. Exclusion encompasses both apparent physical aspects and the more subtle ones, such as difficulty in gaining entry to a school's curriculum experiences and knowledge due to lack of Norwegian linguistic proficiency. School leaders play a significant role when setting directions and taking initiatives to ensure that minority students' languages are included in the curriculum, pedagogy, and leadership activities (Leeman, 2007; Ryan, 2003; Vedøy, 2008; Walker, 2005).

In order to illustrate inclusive advocacy, I use, as Theoharis and Raniere (2011), three contrasting orientations, which I see as not inclusive. Supplementing these scholars, I distinguish between orientations and perceptions. First, an orientation may refer to the direction in which the school leader's thoughts, interests, or tendencies lie, or more metaphorically speaking, to a navigation beacon for indicating a position and direction. Moreover, in this article it is worth discussing the process of becoming accustomed to a relatively new situation or set of surroundings with regard to linguistic and ethnic diversity in school. Second, perceptions may be viewed as the school leader's attitude, understanding, and opinion about multilingualism with regard to learning and social integration for minority students. Thus, perceptions set the ground for the school leader's orientation. Exploring school leaders' perceptions may give insights about what they emphasize, downplay, or ignore.

I analyze the interviews in order to explore and understand how they perceive multilingualism with regard to learning and social integration for minority students. An advocacy orientation mirrors school leaders' perceptions that enhance multilingualism and minority students' learning conditions. Thus I regard this as the preferred orientation. For clarity of presentation, I describe the contrasting leadership orientations based on what the informants reported regarding their practices of advancing inclusive education. Perceptions refer to attitudes or understandings, or thoughts, and the process of interpreting information about multilingualism. Orientations refer to the direction in which the attitudes, understandings, and thoughts are developed or focused. The four orientations are partly constructed through reading the analysis, hence they are empirically driven. At the same time they are theoretically driven because they distinguish between inclusive advocacy, which I refer to as inclusive leadership, and different orientations (The Helpless Orientation, The Bully Orientation, and The Misguided Orientation), which can be regarded as both less effective and not inclusive.

In the following I describe and explore the orientations referred to in this study.

A *deficit orientation* may be identified when poor school performance is explained as "rooted in students' alleged cognitive and motivational deficits, while institutional structures and inequitable schooling arrangement are held exculpatory" (Valencia, 1997, p. 9). Deficit thinking exists when educators hold negative, stereotypic, and counterproductive views about minority students and lower their expectations of these students accordingly.

An othering orientation may be identified in a variety of perceptions. In its barest essence, ethnicity requires a "we" and a "they", since the cultural dimensions of membership in a group are dependent upon a category of the excluded. However, ideas of negation and "otherness" are crucial for delineation, maintenance, the transformation of boundaries, and the possibility for inclusion of minority students in all aspects in school. The term *othering* refers to the ways in which the discourse of a particular group defines other groups in opposition to itself: an "Us and Them" view that constructs an identity for "the Other" and, implicitly, for "the Self" (Woodward, 1997). Othering of another group typically involves maintaining social distance and making value judgements (often negative) based on stereotyped opinions about the group as a whole (Riggins, 1997).

An unintentional orientation may be identified when school leaders espouse an inclusive philosophy but, in translating this into practice, create less inclusion and equitable and socially just learning conditions. A growing body of scholarship on multicultural education has revealed a troubling trend; despite good intentions, practice maintains existing social and political hierarchies (Blair, 2002; Gorski, 2006; Nieto, 2000; Sleeter, 1993). This orientation involves that school leaders believe they are doing meaningful work, but unintentionally they may allocate blame for poor school performance to minority students based on generalizations, labels, or misguided assumptions.

An advocate orientation (Anderson, 2009*)*, contrasting the three former orientations, represents those who embrace their own agency in changing the school structures, policies, and culture. They have developed a sense of responsibility to ensure an equitable education and gain necessary knowledge to support their perceptions, and they advocate for enhancing linguistic minority students' learning conditions.

In the next section, I discuss the methodological approach used to identify the school leaders' perceptions of multilingualism.

Methodological approach: The study and its context

I have conducted a qualitative case study focusing on perceptions of multilingualism in an upper secondary school. The school is located in Fossen, a medium-sized town in southern Norway that has a rapidly increasing immigrant population. Fossen serves a linguistically and culturally diverse population of students which corresponds to the national immigrant population average of approximately 11 per cent. There are on average between 1100 and 1300 students at Fossen. The school could not provide precise numbers on the linguistic origin of their minority students, but the school leaders assumed the largest numbers to be of Arabic, Kurdish, Somali and Balkan origin. The school leadership team comprised one head teacher and nine deputy head teachers, each leading their subject-related department. The duration of their service as school leaders at Fossen spanned from 1 to 20 years. The social advisor was not defined, nor did she define herself, as part of the formal leadership team. However, the head teacher addressed her as a driving force with regard to minority students' learning in particular, which was an important rationale for including her as an informant.

Whereas there were several ethical considerations, the primary concern was to "do no harm" to the informants. Given the concern for sensitivity, I used pseudonyms for each informant. The interview guide consisted of a set of open-ended questions which aimed at identifying the general perceptions and experiences of participants regarding their role as school leaders, their main tasks and responsibilities, the qualities and skills they value as educational leaders, their relationships with the staff and the community of minority students and their parents, and the challenges they encounter as school leaders.

I draw the data from a group interview with the deputy heads, and individual interviews with two of the deputy heads and the social advisor. The interviews lasted between 45 and 90 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed in their entirety. I analysed the data through an iterative process, in which significant testimonies and experiences shared by the participants were highlighted, meaningful words and expressions were identified, and their core meanings were extracted. On the one hand, using an open-ended approach (Patton, 2002) is challenging with regard to generating rapid insights and formulating questions quickly and smoothly during the interviews. On the other hand, it allowed me to establish in-depth communication in order to make use of the immediate responses and increase the concreteness and immediacy of the answers.

The analysis indicated that none of the interviewees fell solely into just one of the orientations. While each of them manifested multiple orientations at different times and in different ways throughout the interview, I have provided general features of each orientation and examples of the kinds of perceptions for each orientation across all of the interviewees.

Findings - Contrasting school leadership orientations

In the following I will provide three contrasting pairs of leadership orientations. Each pair will represent one perception whose primary orientation is that of an advocate, as well as of one of the other contrasting orientations mentioned above (deficit, othering, unintentional), which illuminates indications of exclusive practices. I do this to illustrate the differences, both glaring and subtle, among those school leaders who may seek similar goals, but whose perceptions deviate from advocacy. The following three pairs are representations of the interviewees' dominant orientations.

First Pair: Advocate and Deficit

This section contrasts two deputy head teachers, one whose predominant orientation was advocate, Deputy Ann, and one whose predominant orientation was deficit, Deputy Robin. Moreover, I refer to social adviser Guri, whose predominant orientation was advocate.

In the group interview Deputy Ann stated that she was in favour of translating sections of textbooks, and even whole textbooks, from Norwegian into different languages since there were several minority students who had difficulties understanding parts of the school subjects due to their lack of Norwegian linguistic proficiency. In addition, she referred to the importance of the minority students' need to master the Norwegian language in order to get an apprenticeship contract. Her orientation relates to advocacy, as she displays a sense of responsibility for ensuring that minority students gain access to the curriculum by using their first language to support their learning. Against this, Deputy Robin argued that "a translation of textbooks into the students' first language would imply a shift in the wrong direction." His main argument was that "a prerequisite for being a student in a Norwegian school ought to be that he or she is able to understand what is being taught in that school." From this point of view, he may assume that all minority students are expected to be able to grasp the meaning of what is taught by the teachers and discussed among peer students, as well as written in the school subject textbooks. This may rest on deficit thinking and illustrates an example of blaming the victim (Said & Hitchens, 2001): it implies that the responsibility for the lack of Norwegian language proficiency is the students' willingness to learn Norwegian. On the contrary, Deputy Ann challenged the current structural conditions and demonstrated an inclusive approach by advocating a focus on the students' learning, and on classroom and homework practice. She argued for better learning conditions for minority students from a moral perception tied to empathizing with their lack of ability to grasp the full meaning or parts of the curriculum. Likewise, she was trying to convince her counterparts to change the way they perceive the role of the minority students' first language as an auxiliary for learning: "We cannot give up on these students, we have to try

harder," she contended, displaying courage to trade and bargain for concessions from her colleague.

There were also indications of reluctance among the school leaders to recognize minority students who did not master the Norwegian language. I illustrate this through the individual interview with the social adviser, in which she offered her opinion about what she thought characterized the general perceptions regarding the place of the students' first language:

> Our biggest challenge is how to prevent students who do not speak Norwegian from starting here. That's our focus: How to avoid them. We can have minority students but they have to speak Norwegian. Our focus is that they have no business being here if they cannot speak Norwegian.

Mirroring this view, Deputy Robin recommended that those who have low Norwegian linguistic proficiency were recommended to attend an extra year in a different upper secondary school which offers an introductory program for minority students. On the one hand, this may give students a better start at Fossen. On the other hand, it may also foster perceptions regarding the role of multilingualism, failing to recognize minority students' first language as an auxiliary for learning. Moreover, it may indicate negative, stereotypic, and counterproductive views about minority students and accordingly lower the expectations of these students, thus displaying a deficit orientation.

Deputy Ann and Deputy Robin demonstrated perceptions illustrating more than one orientation. Although Deputy Ann emphasized the need for minority students to understand the school subjects and the concepts used when they enter into apprenticeship, there is a risk that she may also risk othering those students who in fact have sufficient Norwegian language proficiency. Deputy Robin illustrated that he held high expectations for the minority students by believing that they are capable of taking great responsibility for their educational progress. Moreover, he displayed equity-oriented intentions and strong convictions that the school should serve minority students with possibilities for developing their Norwegian language. Nevertheless, he failed to address the question of whether this belief promotes equity and social justice by, for example, questioning whether his orientation was based on a taken-for-granted perception. Assuming that deficit thinking limits access and opportunity for minority students, critical consciousness may contribute to challenging stereotypes and misperceptions. Hence, in that case he did not display an element of inclusive leadership, which would require a development of critical consciousness.

Second Pair: Advocate and Othering

According to the analysis, this contrasting pair is represented by one deputy head teacher operating largely from the advocate orientation, Deputy Susan, and two deputy head teachers who operate from a predominantly othering orientation, Deputy David and Deputy Lillian.

Deputy Susan emphasized the importance of providing the minority students' parents with sufficient information about the different school subjects and programs and with translations of school documents into several languages. She also emphasized the importance of translating invitations to parent meetings and providing the parents with interpreters at the meetings. This may reflect advocating the view that parents ought to participate in influence processes with regard to clarifying role expectations in information exchange, instruction, curriculum, and student behavior (Nordahl, 2007; Ryan, 2006). Moreover, she commented that it is crucial that students be given a realistic perspective of what employers will expect from them in terms of high Norwegian linguistic proficiency when they apply for apprenticeships and jobs. "Here the school has a major role to play; and we must not risk making a fatal mistake in misleading them to believe the opposite," she argued. In addition, she advocates ensuring the inclusion of minority students in civic duties and social improvement, opportunities to expand and grow personally, and participation in society or community. According to Deputy David, the students' use of their first languages posed a challenge to both the staff and the majority students. Minority students speaking their first language when in groups were explicitly reported as problematic since the educators and peer students could not understand what they were talking about. He suggested that "a kind of social worker" would be a good idea, because then it would be possible to have a certain level of control over what was going on internally among the minority students. The following excerpt illustrates the problem he referred to:

> In the classrooms, during recess, in the library or anywhere. You meet them, and you listen to a language that you do not understand. They use their own language, and even if you demand that they speak Norwegian, they seldom do. (Deputy David)

This statement implies an acceptance that minority students ought to avoid using their first language when speaking with co-students having the same first language. Deputy David points at a need to gain control by monitoring minority students, indicating a sense of suspicion, lack of trust, and even fear. In the same manner, Deputy Lillian showed her support of Deputy David with reference to what she considered her own sense of fear: "Maybe some majority students too, feel a bit scared, and think it is threatening, when some tall and dark boys are gathered all in one group, since they are very visible, more visible than a group of Norwegian boys." She added, "These minority students probably do not realize the effect of their appearance." The two school leaders display a dominant orientation of othering.

Deputy David's concern and frustration about not understanding the students' first language, thus complicating the ability of school leaders and teachers to have sufficient opportunities for dialogues with the minority students, could also be understood differently. It could be understood in terms of

a genuine wish to support the minority students' progress, and take their experiences into account as the school creates a curriculum that would allow students to gain sufficient learning outcomes.

Third pair: Advocate and Unintentional
This final pair contrasts Social Advisor Guri, referred to above as predominately representing an advocate orientation, with that of Deputy Ruth and Deputy Ronald, who display a predominately unintentional orientation. Social advisor Guri was concerned about the lack of systematic work to ensure an equal education for linguistic minorities: "There are many minority students at this school who are not provided with the support they need to understand and take advantage of the teaching in the school subjects like Norwegian and English in particular." She contended that those who have low Norwegian linguistic proficiency will have problems with the instruction. Guri voiced opinions about what could be done, but from her experience she expected very little support from the school leadership team. With regard to the challenges Fossen had concerning the linguistic minority students' lack of Norwegian (and English), Guri's felt that very little had been done by the school leadership team. She contended that the school ought to have a greater focus on, and discussions about, methods and development of knowledge regarding how to provide minority students with beneficial teaching and learning conditions. She repeatedly articulated the need for mother-tongue teachers who, in her opinion, would make a significant difference in minority students' learning outcomes. She also recommended that more teachers and school leaders be involved in questions and challenges with regard to linguistic minority students' language development. Within the field of research, and in policy documents, it is emphasized the importance of minority students receiving supportive message on their first language in order to achieve knowledge about the school subjects (Dale & Øzerk, 2009; KD, 2010; OECD, 2009). Social advisor Guri also emphasized the need for organizational changes in order to mobilize enthusiasm about and development of specific knowledge regarding the progress and learning of a second language for minority students. At the same time, she recognized limitations due to the economy and, not least, the lack of a sufficient number of mother-tongue teachers. However, she displayed an advocate orientation by criticizing existing traditions and by arguing for including more educators to discuss strategies for better learning outcomes regarding minority students. Moreover, she pointed at several inclusive leadership dimensions, for instance including teachers with students' first language competency, educating teachers and emphasizing student learning and classroom practice (Ryan, 2006).

Deputy Ruth spoke eloquently about the need for inclusive services and her beliefs about social justice with regard to the inclusion of minority students. Thus, she may adhere to an unintentional orientation with the example of organizing students into groups, a result of the school's integration philosophy.

In order to avoid having students rely on their first language and to ensure that they learn Norwegian, the school considered it wise to separate, for example, four Somalis into different groups. Deputy Ruth pointed to a challenge in trying to legitimize her own stance: "If we put four students with different first languages, and with poor Norwegian linguistic proficiency, in the same group, they will most likely not improve their Norwegian," assuming a negative effect of communicating with each other in Somali. In support of the school's policy, she added, "We should rather integrate them in a group where Norwegian language is the common language," which may indicate that Norwegian is the only language. On the one hand, this practice complied with the demands from the staff that the minority students speak Norwegian instead of their first language. On the other hand, it may give the students fewer opportunities to help each other, using Somali, to understand difficult words and instructions given in Norwegian. Moreover, yet another indication of unintentional orientation may be what Guri characterized as a lack of focus among staff about the school having students who do not sufficiently master Norwegian. Thus the school may lose the opportunity to offer the minority students both adequate Norwegian teaching and the facilities to practice Norwegian. Moreover, the school may offer facilities for the minority students' opportunity to complement their learning by using their first language to better understand the subject content. Deputy Ruth also demonstrated perceptions linked to an advocate orientation. She displayed a concern for the lack of the minority students' use of the language of instruction, and the opportunity to practice and learn Norwegian, which in fact, according to the interviewees, several minority students at Fossen urgently needed.

In the next section I will discuss school leaders' perceptions about multi-lingualism with regard to learning and social integration for minority students at Fossen.

Discussion

The preceding analysis of the interviews display that leading for equity and social justice for minority students is a highly emotional endeavour. Hence, school leaders are urged to engage in inclusive practices in order to address issues such as power, language, critical consciousness about social justice "and knowledge of inclusive practices and to create proactively redundant systems of support to maximize student learning" (McKenzie & al., 2008, p. 128). For school leaders, this implies that schools focus on multilingualism. For example, as Shields (2010) emphasizes, school leaders must be able to, when necessary, resist courageously and be activists for change. Likewise, they ought to be committed to equality, liberty, and democratic struggle. An inclusive leadership approach addresses questions of moral values and the purpose of public

education for a community, society, and the world. Whether the school leaders' orientation towards multilingualism presented above serve as examples of an emphasis on student learning and classroom practice, of the need to address critical reflection, promote dialogue, or, in short, advocate inclusion, equity, and social justice for minority students? The question may not strictly be answered by a "yes" or a "no". Some of the school leaders, including the social advisor, predominantly display an advocacy orientation. This does not exclude other school leaders from advocating inclusion, although I considered them to have a different predominant orientation. However, although all the interviewees persist to include all students, their perceptions of multilingualism imply orientations which may be counterproductive. In contrast, school leaders within an advocate orientation perceived the translation of textbooks and the use of mother-tongue teachers or translators as means to make parts of the curriculum more accessible for minority students. Hence they argued for better learning conditions for minority students, indication advocating inclusive leadership. This demonstrated a reflective attitude rooted in an ethic of critique, which is fundamental for inclusive leaders. The deputy recognized the unique character of multilingualism and understood how an increased focus on the first language of minority students may enhance access to the curriculum. Moreover, by involving minority students' parents and promoting dialogue with those involved in school issues, school leaders demonstrated inclusive leadership. Although these are just reflections through interviews, they have the potential to be taken one step further, resulting in unconventional decisions and inclusive action in the school – actions aimed at taking social justice issues into consideration in order to provide minority students with a more equitable and inclusive learning environment.

However, the data also indicate deficit thinking – some key blind spots that prevent school leaders from being aware of the unique context and its implications with regard to their role. Such a position can have a rather negative impact on minority students, in terms of acquiring language proficiency, getting a job, and becoming a participative citizen. On the other hand, data also indicated the importance of taking action in order to nurture the students' first language.

Moreover, the analysis shows that, despite good intentions, exclusive practices and othering may still be present. A lack of common understanding with regard to the use of the minority students' first language as an auxiliary for learning may be the most prominent outcome. However, that does not necessarily indicate an unwillingness to comply with what has been the Norwegian educators' obligation in Norwegian education policy since 1975: to provide satisfactory and adequate teaching based on the individual's abilities and aptitudes (Engen, 2004). Moreover, this has proved to be an ambition with immense support from educators (Imsen, 2003). Nevertheless, it may imply that there is a lack of shared vision and understanding among the school leaders

concerning multilingualism. This may indicate a lack of focus on dialogue as well as the time and space for critical reflection among the school leaders. It may also be linked to the ambiguity in the policy documents pointed out in the introduction: the ambition to change the policy with regard to the significance of the first language as an auxiliary for learning and social integration versus the fact that the first language of minority students is denied a function in the classroom beyond the beginner level. Additonally, as indicated by some of the school leaders, there seemed to be a widespread perception that the minority students' first language has less value than the Norwegian language. Hence, the students' linguistic experience, both as a skill and a prerequisite for further learning, is not fully recognized nor promoted within the school. However, the recognition of the minority students' first language is of great importance for several reasons. For example, language may not be viewed as a mere tool of understanding or means of communication, but rather as a form of social action or practice intrinsically linked to the minority students' way of life (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Snook, 1990). Thus, language is also a medium of power (Goke-Pariola, 1993), with the potential to yield profit based on how much linguistic capital the minority students possess.

It is reasonable to argue that perceptions of multilingualism among some of the school leaders do not mesh well with inclusive leadership. The analysis suggests that minority students' first language was not given a pivotal role in their learning. Several languages spoken by minority students were not understood by the majority of students and teachers, hence their use led to anxiety among the latter. Working to refuse minority students the right to speak with their co-students using their shared language does not address an ethic of caring (Starratt, 1991). An ethic of caring can create solidarity which is based on mutual trust between educators and students. Vedøy (2008) has shown how school leaders and teachers have obtained a mutual understanding of safety, comfort, trust, and tolerance, and how this set the ground for how the school may work for better learning for all students. An inclusive leadership stance would imply that solidarity based on trust has the potential to diminish the gap between minority students and educators and the majority of students, which did not seem to be the case here. Moreover, when the message, implicit or explicit, communicated to the minority students is "leave your language at the schoolhouse door," the students also leave a central part of who they are – their identities – at the schoolhouse door. If they experience this as rejection, they may be much less likely to participate actively and confidently in classroom instruction; hence, they will have less access to the school curriculum. The effect may well be a practice that does not serve social inclusion, equity education, and social justice.

Conclusion

This study cannot justify the argument that those with the advocate orientation make any difference to the school with regard to inclusion, social justice, or equity for linguistic minority students. Still, the analysis may contribute to throwing light upon aspects of how school leaders may, or may not operate from an inclusive and inherently advocacy orientation in their efforts to lead the school fostering growth and the acceptance of linguistic diversity. I have identified various perceptions, spanning deficit, othering, and unintentional orientations. I have argued that school leader perceptions have several implications for how leaders set directions and take initiatives concerning multilingualism in school. The school leaders' perceptions may influence their orientation, and, hence, results in diverse approaches to learning and teaching practices.

In sum, I have found a lack of a common vision and a shared understanding of multilingualism. I have argued that inclusive leadership provides some signposts for guiding school leadership in a linguistically diverse school. First, it is important to focus on dialogue about inclusive practices with regard to linguistic issues. Second, one must critically examine practice with regard to multilingualism. Third, from an inclusive leadership perspective, this may be achieved through dialogue as a way of being (Buber, 1923). This means that school leaders and teachers must have opportunities to deeply understand and seek agreement or knowledge of different points of departure for understanding the role of multilingualism. Thus, school leaders at Fossen need to provide spaces for themselves in which to critically examine the school's practice with regard to learning conditions for minority students. I have not been able to go beyond the interview context to investigate the practice and possible effects on the school leaders' perceptions. For future research, student voices could be an interesting point of departure. Another highly relevant study would be to compare two or more schools with regard to school leaders' perceptions of linguistic diversity. Moreover, how relevant policy documents contribute to providing school leaders with clarity with regard to multilingualism may also be of great research interest. School leadership as a field of research is highly complex, characterized by different ideological points of departure and contradictory research results that may, or may not be reflected in policy. Consequently, school leaders face considerable challenges with meeting new expectations towards schools.

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