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Fostering equity in a multicultural and multilingual classroom through cooperative learning

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a programme designed to deepen knowledge regarding diversity and to sustain equality and equity in participation during class activities in high socio-linguistic diversity classrooms. We investigated a four-stage programme integrating all students' heritage languages in cooperative school activities in one 4th grade class in the French-speaking canton of Geneva in Switzerland. Activities that the teacher engaged in included: a) activities devoted to openness to others, b) activities devoted to linguistic diversity, c) activities devoted to cultural diversity, d) cooperative activities, relying on heritage languages and personal family stories. The three first stages aimed to help students feel accepted and comfortable when participating in multilingual cooperative activities. Feedback from the teacher, students and parents indicated that this programme found its place in the regular curriculum and participants appreciated it. This programme also improved students' sense of belonging to the class and a feeling of relatedness.

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Introduction

Primary schools in Geneva have a high degree of sociolinguistic diversity, with 160 nationalities reported for 2014 by The Geneva Education Research Office (Service de Recherche en Education, SRED). Forty-two percent of all students speak a first language different from the language of instruction, which is French, and from 14.9% to 58.1% students are allophone (they do not speak the language of instruction, i.e. French in our case). Linguistic diversity is associated with socio-economic diversity, since families vary from international functionaries or diplomats to people of low socioeconomic background (Schwob 2011). More precisely, 20% of parents were senior managers and executives, 43% were self-employed, employees and middle managers, and 37% were workers or had no indication of occupation in 2015 (SRED). Faced with this diversity, teachers often find themselves powerless to provide an education that meets the needs of all students.

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Implementation of intercultural education implies that teachers manage the skills and knowledge that children bring into the classroom, create opportunities to work in heterogeneous groups, and ensure equal participation in the learning processes (Batelaan and Van hoof 2006). Intercultural education underscores that otherness or strangeness is seen as a possibility for the enrichment and for personal and social growth (Gundara and Portera 2008). The values of diversity and equality are consistently underlined (Batelaan and Van hoof 2006; Verkuyten and Thijs 2013; Bash 2014). Taking diversity into account implies bringing knowledge regarding differences in order to develop understanding, mutual recognition and positive acceptance of others; equality refers to tolerance by stressing the negative consequences of discrimination (Verkuyten and Thijs 2013). As far as Geneva teachers are concerned (Akkari, Loomis, and Bauer 2011), they mostly welcome diversity; however, they do not focus on awareness of discrimination and creating equal opportunities in the classroom. Even if they are invited to use their students' language and culture as resources, they are not comfortable with having linguistic diversity present in teaching.

In addition, intercultural education points to the need to go further than the promotion of cultural diversity, and underlines the importance of equity and inclusion (Berry and Sam 2013), in line with inclusive education (Potvin 2014), stressing the equality of outcomes and success: The promotion of equitable participation of all groups is important. In order to empower students marginalised by the education, develop intercultural competence and make students responsible for their learning, activities need to draw attention to status and equal access issues. For that purpose, cooperative learning is perceived as a suitable teaching strategy (Batelaan 2000). The official department in charge of education across Swiss cantons (CDIP) proposes to take the heterogeneity of the learning group as a potential to be exploited to stimulate and improve learning, by recommending a cooperative learning approach (Rüesch 2001).

Cooperative learning supports democracy in the classroom (Ferguson-Patrick and Jolliffe 2018) and is useful in the intercultural classroom (Bash 2014; Sharan 2017; Potvin 2014). Cooperative learning creates an environment where students are likely to value themselves as well as others, and argue for the integration of all students' resources and to respect all contributions in order to achieve learning goals (Sharan 2017). While proposing to include all students in learning, cooperative learning improves academic outcomes (Slavin 2015), motivation (Johnson et al. 2014), student relationships (Van Ryzin and Roseth 2018), social and emotional learning while ensuring equity, fundamental to an intercultural classroom (Ferguson-Patrick and Jolliffe 2018). In this paper, we analyse one programme that integrates knowledge regarding diversity, the value of equality and equitable participation, by testing an

intervention with multilingual cooperative activities that rely on students' heritage languages.

Supporting knowledge of diversity

In order to draw on the diversity of students, teachers may bring some knowledge that helps students be open to others and to diversity. This knowledge constitutes the base to support positive attitudes (Verkuyten and Thijs 2013). It may concern both diversity in general and in the context of the classroom.

Openness to others

Openness to others implies recognition and positive acceptance. Cooperative learning's propositions for preparing students to cooperate (Topping et al. 2017) are relevant for these purposes, by offering opportunities for students to get to know each other (Ferguson-Patrick and Jolliffe 2018) and sustain a positive climate, develop cooperative skills, and by having students reflect on group processing (Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec 2008). In an intercultural context, it is important to create conditions that ensure safety for students to participate (Batelaan and Van hoof 2006). Interpersonal communication and helping skills, developed through cooperation, support a sense of community, explicit discussions of cooperative values, social competences and cooperative skills that orient students towards acceptance of diversity (Sharan 2017).

Openness to diversity

Irrespective of the linguistic reality of the classroom, programmes that awaken students to linguistic diversity motivate them to learn other languages. In the Canton of Geneva, some didactic proposals for Education and Openness to Languages at School (Perregaux et al. 2003) are integrated into the official curriculum and several pedagogical resources are available to teachers who wish to use them (Buchs, Sanchez-Mazas, and Zurbruggen 2019). This openness to other languages is based on listening, observing and comparing oral or written texts in different languages in classroom activities. They provide opportunities for students to work in the language of instruction through other languages and to develop meta-linguistic skills as well as reflexion on language, so students may develop the knowledge and skills needed to welcome new and unfamiliar languages. Even if these programmes develop intercultural skills through exposure to other ways of saying, doing, and thinking, these didactic proposals are mainly integrated into French and language curriculum. In our programme, we decided to add some additional activities in relation to citizenship education, in order to reinforce openness to intercultural diversity as well. It

could be useful, as many Genevan teachers do not feel adequately prepared for working with students from different cultural and ethnic groups (Akkari, Loomis, and Bauer 2011).

Openness to diversity in the classroom

In contexts of strong sociolinguistic diversity in the classroom, the use of students' heritage language gives students opportunities to recognise and appreciate the richness of differences in the classroom (Ferguson-Patrick and Jolliffe 2018). When these programmes are anchored in the languages spoken by families, they put the language of instruction and families' languages on an equal footing and convey the institutional appreciation of the heritage languages. Integrating activities based on heritage languages enables students to sustain cross-cultural communication and gain multicultural communication competencies (Gay 2002).

In addition, by inviting students to build on their knowledge and skills in their heritage languages, these programmes recognise the importance of heritage language background for the development of linguistic competences (Coste, Moore, and Zarate 2009), display students' plurilingual skills in the classroom, and promote their engagement in school tasks (Buchs et al. 2018). It can also help students find meaningful connections between the curriculum and their personal worlds that can help them learn more easily and thoroughly (Gay 2002).

Supporting equality

Cooperative activities

By proposing interactive learning, cooperative pedagogy favours the social integration of every student through class activities (Sharan 2010b). Working in a small team can help students who are not at ease to speak more easily and supports the development of their language skills. Cooperative learning principles, like positive interdependence and individual responsibility, help teachers structure group work in order that all students participate (Slavin 2014; Johnson and Johnson 2015; Gillies 2015; Ferguson-Patrick and Jolliffe 2018; Sharan 2010a). Cooperative learning may also structure turn-taking, so each student has an opportunity to contribute (Kagan 2013).

Teachers' regulations

During cooperative work, teachers have opportunities to listen and observe students working together, so they can identify students' resources and difficulties (Topping et al. 2017). It gives a chance to propose interactive

regulations directed to small groups and to individual students, based on these observations. When teachers support students in group work so that all students participate and are considered, problems of hierarchical distance in the relationship of teachers to certain children may be alleviated (Bash 2014).

Supporting equity

In the context of cooperative learning, it is easier for the teacher to differentiate the work inside the group depending on students' needs, while maintaining collective work and common objectives for all the students (Buchs 2017). This differentiation is a way to support equity for all students, either by assigning specific roles or tasks or specific feedback.

In addition, Sharan (2014) underlines the necessity of integrating students' cultural and personal resources in teaching by addressing two directions. The first one urges to design curricular knowledge relevant to all groups (i.e., dominant, subordinate or minority groups) in line with Gay (2002). Regarding the content, cooperative learning activities should involve knowledge that reflects the backgrounds and experience of all students (Bash 2014). Moreover, cooperative learning is an instructional strategy aligned with some students' background, seeing group functions as a 'mutual aid society' (Gay 2002).

The second direction invites teachers to design appropriate learning tasks that address status issues (Cohen, Brody, and Sapon-Shevin 2004; Cohen 1994). In the classroom, status among peers creates competence expectations (Cohen 1994) that lead students to be more or less invited to participate, and more or less allowed to contribute to group work, and more or less at ease in intervening. Heterogeneous classrooms require considering status problems in order to sustain equitable participation (Cohen 1994; Pescarmona 2014). Because student participation determines their learning, appropriate tasks should support the participation and learning of those whose status may place them in a precarious position within the group (Cohen and Lotan 1997). This is especially relevant to students who have not acquired basic social and/or academic skills, or who have little competencies in the language of instruction (Cohen et al. 1999).

In order to support all students' participation, teachers need to reinforce their competency expectancies. Cooperative activities involving multiple skills represent an efficient way to alter expectations of students by providing opportunities for meaningful participation and by assigning roles according to students' specific skills. This offers an opportunity to publicly highlight the relevance of students' contributions to the activity (Cohen 1994). As none of the children possess all the required abilities but each has some, cooperation is necessary to solve the task.

An integrative programme

In line with previous classroom interventions, we proposed an integrative programme in order to support classroom cohesion and promote equitable student participation in regular academic activities, with special attention to status treatment (Buchs, Sanchez-Mazas, and Zurbriggen 2019; Buchs, Sanchez-Mazas, Margas, et al. 2019, Buchs et al. 2018, 2015). We have integrated factors important in strengthening equity within a context of diversity (Batelaan 2000). First, openness to others, languages, and cultures is a step towards classroom cohesion. Second, cooperative activities ensure that each student can contribute to the activity and that each one's contribution is essential to achieve the team's common goal. Third, relying on students' heritage languages and cultural references favour students' integration in the learning process and creates activities that require multiple skills: no student, or even the teacher, can master all languages, but everyone has skills and/or knowledge in their own language, which make it possible to highlight the value of students' skills in their heritage language. Based on these principles, we proposed the implementation of multi-lingual cooperative activities, taking into account the linguistic diversity in the class.

Because the implementation of effective cooperative procedures is rather complex (Jolliffe 2015; Ferguson-Patrick and Jolliffe 2018) and requires a reorganisation of learning situations (Gillies and Ashman 2003), teachers may experience difficulties in implementation (Sharan 2010a) or even reluctance (Batelaan and Van hoof 2006). In the Geneva region, teachers particularly mention two important difficulties (Buchs et al. 2017): structuring school activities that are relevant to the curriculum, and freeing up time needed to structure cooperative learning. Moreover, even when teachers acknowledge the importance of addressing status problems in their classes, they feel challenged by the task of implementation, based on their own professional experience and educational purposes and contexts (Pescarmona 2015). It is therefore important to propose specific activities that teachers can implement, and to accompany them in the process. Therefore, we proposed a research-based intervention with one teacher, in order to collaboratively construct activities integrated into the regular curriculum.

The targeted intervention

We worked with a fourth-grade teacher who implemented the programme in her class, which was representative of the diversity in Geneva schools. The class is part of one institution combining 3 schools that represent the socio-cultural and linguistic diversity in an international district of Geneva (54.8% of students do not speak the language of instruction, approximately 40 languages are spoken by close to 800 students). The programme was set up in one of the

schools with 53% foreign students, of which close to 10% came from an asylum seekers' centre. At the beginning of the year the project was presented to parents, who were asked to fill out a questionnaire about the language students speak with their mother, father and other members of the family. Out of the 19 students, 6 were French-speaking unilingual, 8 students had two languages in their home environment, 4 students had three languages, and one student had 4 languages. We also asked about the degree of oral and written mastery in all the languages, so we could choose a language students were comfortable with.

A four-stage programme

In order to sustain equity within the context of linguistic diversity, we devised a psychosocial intervention based on cooperative activities that involve all students' heritage languages. We collaborated with the teacher in developing the whole programme: our initial propositions were discussed with the teacher and we developed the activities along with the materials according to the teacher's feedback. Following Cohen's (1994) proposals, these activities are multiple ability tasks that allow students to show specific status characteristics; they also support a set of expectations for competence from all students (Cohen and Lotan 1997). As seen above, these higher expectations should support students' subsequent participation in classroom activities. Cooperative activities should encourage students, especially those with low participation rates, to engage on an equal footing with others; and multilingual activities involving the heritage languages of the students are particularly relevant for plurilingual and not French-speakers students (2021), as we will present below.

In order to move smoothly towards these multilingual cooperative activities, we proposed some preliminary activities, from September to February: activities devoted to openness to others by reinforcing class buildings and cooperative climate (from September) and activities devoted to openness to linguistic and cultural diversity (December-February). This preparation was designed to help students feel accepted and comfortable in participating and in dealing with issues of competitiveness (Gundara and Sharma 2013).

From March to June, we designed multilingual cooperative activities. The cooperative structure ensured that all students' contributions were essential to achieve the team's common goal. The content of the activities required students to bring their own unique resources to the tasks: some activities were based on a text translated into each heritage language; other activities involved words offered by parents in their own language, as well as parents' story about a personal learning situation. These activities made it possible to highlight the value of students' skills in their native language and publicly attribute competence. This programme relies on several practices and instructional strategies (Allison and Rehm 2007), identified as valuable and effective with learners in

culturally diverse classrooms: cooperative learning is largely present; the stories can be seen as case studies reflecting real-life experiences of diverse students; activities involve dual language printed materials and the participation of students' and parents' cultures in classroom activities. Thus, these activities may reinforce connections with personal and family's stories and support a sense of learning. Moreover, sharing their stories gives students opportunities to solidify feelings of inclusion (Baloché 2014). In the next sections, we present an overview of the programme and examples of the activities.

Openness to others

In addition to activities permitting students to get to know one another, the teacher prepares them for cooperation. Cooperative routines and cooperative school activities are introduced as part of the curriculum. The teacher explicitly develops targeted cooperative skills and proposes cooperative activities in mathematics and in the French curriculum, by introducing specific roles and complementary resources. In this way, pupils and teachers gradually acquire the skills needed for cooperative work.

Openness to linguistic diversity

First, a cooperative game is proposed that involves a series of questions about different languages. The students move around the class to find as many classmates as possible who can answer the questions. Then the teacher leads a whole class discussion regarding languages (true/false questions): There are about 200 languages on the African continent; in English, nearly 30 words out of 100 come from French; in German, a sentence may end with a verb). Second, homework requires students' examples of some polite ways to ask for something and to say 'thank you' in their heritage language(s). They teach each other in small heterogeneous teams, in their heritage languages. The teacher then leads a collective discussion regarding students' observations on languages present in the class. These activities are integrated into the French and language curriculum.

Openness to cultural diversity

After working on each student's route to school, the class works collectively on a film depicting a child's route to school in Kyrgyzstan. The teacher leads discussions on the location, and three themes to think about while watching the video: the route to school and potential difficulties, the supplies for the class and the organisation of teaching in a class in the video.

Then, students work in small cooperative groups on three new videos: each student has a role to help the team and responsibility to record the elements relating to one of the themes. Responsibilities are rotated for each video. At the end, the teacher leads a class wide reflection regarding citizens and political actions, children's civic obligations and rights. These activities, that lasted 8 periods of 45 minutes, were integrated into the following subjects: French

(production and comprehension), geography (localisation and orientation), and social sciences (citizenship education), curriculum.

Multilingual cooperative activities

Based on the self-reported level of oral and written mastery, we selected the following languages: Arabic, Bengali, Brazilian, English, French, German, Pashto, Tagalog, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish from South America, and Spanish spoken in Spanish. For students with multiple languages, we chose the language students are more comfortable with. For two students, the material was also translated into English; during the activities they could choose the language they preferred.

Before the activities, students had some preparation at home with their family in order to be comfortable with the linguistic material in their own heritage language, and to reinforce their linguistic skills. Students worked in different small teams, heterogeneous regarding the languages. In each activity, we differentiate the instructions so French-speaking students could also make a valuable contribution (in some activities, they learnt the Braille alphabet and taught it to their peers, in others they contributed rules of French structure). The cooperative structure of turn-taking (each student has the responsibility to initiate one of the answers while the other complete and comment) and cooperative learning principles (cooperative skills, group processing, complementary roles with positive interdependence) ensured that the contributions of all students were possible, necessary and valuable. The three activities (A, B and C) were fully integrated into the languages and French curriculum and citizenship education.

A. Activities based on one written text regarding a typical day in school in 1955 in the Swiss countryside. The text proposes personal recollections of what a woman experienced in school at that time. We have chosen this kind of personal story in order to make parents comfortable when we ask them, after that, to write down personal recollections of a learning situation. The activity follows different stages:

Preparation at home

For homework, students worked on one translated version along with the French version of the text. In collaboration with their family, students tried to understand the text as much as possible, and practiced pronouncing highlighted words that would be used in the classroom. Students summarised what the text was about, how the school day was described in the text, and reflect on what may be surprising for them. In addition, students prepared to identify how some targeted nominal group (determiner + noun) was spelled, what they sound like in their singular and plural forms and what the gender was of the words. In addition, they reflected on

the grammatical structure of the sentence in their language (beginning, ending and punctuation). French-speaking unilingual students chose to read the text in whichever language they wanted and worked on the target nominal groups in Braille, thanks to the specific alphabet. The homework prepared students to contribute to the group's work afterwards and to transmit to the family the teacher's interest in the heritage languages that would be used in regular academic activities. It also introduced the idea of a personal story regarding a learning task that would be presented afterwards.

Joint summary in small teams

When they returned to class, students took turns sharing their ideas about the text. Students jointly answered one additional question relating to the three themes they had previously worked on. Each student had the responsibility of one of the themes. Additional individually rotated responsibilities were introduced in relation to the grammatical and spelling difficulties of the French language (spelling verb according to the subject, plural agreements and endings, punctuation, etc.). Once an agreement was reached, each student took responsibility for typing one part; each student was in charge of checking the whole text after that.

Peer teaching of targeted nominal groups

In small teams of three, students taught each other the targeted words they had worked on at home. Each student learned to pronounce and to write the nominal groups in the partners' language so that she/he could present it to the class.

Reflection in plural form and grammatical gender of targeted nominal groups in heritage languages

Teams discussed the grammatical gender and the plural form of the targeted nominal groups in their teammates' heritage language. They prepared a joint summary by turn-taking; each student was responsible for writing one of the answers. The teacher then led a whole class discussion to summarise the teams' reflections. Students presented one nominal group in the teammates' language to the class, pasted it on a joint illustrated dictionary, and reported the team's reflections on the plural and gender usage for teammates' languages. Each student had a chance to contribute.

Reflection on sentence structures in heritage languages

In turns, team members discussed the grammatical structure of a sentence in their own languages. Then, teams received one excerpt from the text, translated into six languages (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Pashto, Spanish, Tagalog). Each student was responsible for observing the grammatical structures in two targeted languages. Each student shared the observations in a joint team

document and reported it in a collective class discussion. The teacher created a collective visual reference to indicate what was needed to identify a sentence, a question, or an order in the targeted languages.

B. Activities based on parents' story regarding a learning situation. We asked students to bring into school a text their parents had written in their native language regarding a learning situation (a description of a school day at the age of their child or any learning situation, in or out of school, or any childhood memory).

Preparation at home

Parents were invited to choose a personal memory regarding a learning situation. We proposed an open-ended question so that parents felt free to choose. Parents were invited to share this memory with their child and to write a short story (10–20 lines long) that could be used for classroom activities. Students needed to write the main ideas in French.

Cooperative sharing of parents' experience regarding learning

In small teams, students shared the story of their parents. Each student wrote a summary of her/his parent's story, transformed into the third person (from 'I' to 'she or he'), thanks to the main ideas they had prepared at home. Student typed their summary on the computer and the team corrected it using rotated spelling and grammatical responsibilities. Finally, each student created a poster with the initial parent's story in heritage language, their typed summary and illustrations. All the posters were displayed in the classroom.

C. Cooperative memory game. The programme ended with a cooperative game. We duplicated the word 'school', written by each student in one's own heritage language and in Braille for French-speaking only, so we obtained pairs for each written word. We proposed that students play a dyadic cooperative version of the memory game with this material. The dyads needed to cooperate to recognise the maximum of pairs in all languages with a minimal of trials.

Outcomes of the programme

Regular observations in the class and discussions with the teacher provided feedback. The teacher also gave more formal feedback at the end of the programme about her overall impression. In addition, each family received a research questionnaire to identify students and parents' perceptions of the programme. The questionnaires consisted of statements about the multilingual activities using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (absolutely). Any response of 1 or 2 was taken as disagreement, 3 as neutrality and 4 or 5 as agreement. We received consent for research from 17 families out of 19.

Appreciation of the activities

Thirteen parents indicated that they appreciated multilingual activities (3 do not know and 1 neutral position), eleven thought their child appreciated it (4 do not know and 1 neutral position and one negative position) and fourteen thought that these activities were relevant (2 do not know and 1 neutral position). The teacher highly appreciated the cooperative multilingual activities and thought her students felt the same. However, one student reported not appreciating the activities relating to openness to linguistic diversity, one did not appreciate the videos on the route to school, and three disliked cooperative work on the different videos.

Relations between families and the school

Ten parents reported that these activities allowed them to get more involved in homework (5 neutral positions) and eight thought that these activities could strengthen the relationship between them and the teacher. The majority of the parents (eleven) indicated that the activities promoted a discussion about languages in families. The teacher reported that these activities gave her the occasion to connect better with some parents and could sustain the relationship with the families in the future.

Perceived outcomes

In response to an open question regarding learning outcomes, the teacher noticed 'greater confidence and participation of students with difficulties'. Parents acknowledged positive outcomes for their children; twelve families reported that their children had become more comfortable with languages, fifteen reported that their children had learnt new things about languages, fourteen reported the development of positive attitudes towards linguistic diversity and fifteen towards cultural diversity.

The students were more mixed in their opinions regarding their learning. Twelve thought they had improved their learning regarding the use of polite formulations in different languages, ten regarding other words, and ten reported they had learned things about the way a school day could be organised in different locations and times. Ten students reported they wanted to know more about languages and nine indicated they wanted to learn to speak other languages.

The teacher claimed that these activities gave the opportunity to value a family's heritage language. The majority of parents thought that these activities were fundamental in primary school (16 families) and fourteen families thought that these activities could positively impact the quality of relationships in class, and allow for the affirmation of their child. Most parents (14) and children (14) agreed that students understand better the difficulty encountered by classmates who do not speak the language of instruction. This statement, along with greater tolerance, also featured in the teacher's answer to an open

question regarding classroom outcomes: 'students accept and understand that several reactions or behaviours are possible, depending on the culture'. In addition, the teacher underlined that '[these activities] increased cohesion and a feeling of class belonging'. These positive outcomes also came from students' questionnaires, with positive agreement concerning a sense of belonging to the class (6 questions with good inter-reliability index, $\alpha = .91$, $M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.68$) or the satisfaction of the relatedness to the school need (5 questions, $\alpha = .80$, $M = 4.27$, $SD = 0,69$).

Conclusion

This programme was designed to deepen knowledge regarding diversity and to sustain equality and equity in participation during class activities in a highly sociolinguistic diverse classroom. The programme prepares students and introduces some multilingual cooperative activities, relying on heritage languages and personal family stories. The programme we devised was integrated by the teacher in her regular activities and was appreciated by the teacher, students and parents.

The integrative strategies we propose may be a resource for teachers who wish to integrate cooperative learning in the regular curriculum in multilingual heterogeneous classrooms within an inclusive perspective. Cooperative activities make all students' contributions possible, necessary and valued. They provide a way to use various samples of ethnic reading in teaching the concept of genre and reading skills, as suggested by Gay (2002). By proposing to 'go and find' the languages spoken in families, i.e. the one used in their daily lives, it pursues an objective of equity that is difficult to achieve by producing pre-formatted multilingual materials that inevitably leave out one or other of the many languages represented in the school population today (Krompæk 2015). The programme's innovative character is to enable all pupils to make use of their resources in the heritage language and to value their cultural referents, giving them an equivalent place within cooperatively organised classroom activities. In line with the treatment of status issues for promoting equity in heterogeneous classes (Cohen and Lotan 1997; Cohen 1994), this programme offers teachers multiple-skill activities that attribute competence to low-status pupils, while avoiding categorising them. It may contribute to a culturally relevant pedagogy (Akkari, Loomis, and Bauer 2011) by helping teachers focus on students' academic achievement, develop students' cultural competence, and foster students' sense of socio-political consciousness. It represents one example for doing justice to diversity, learning to live together, and providing equal opportunities for learning (Batelaan 2000).

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