

VALUES AND ATTITUDES OF NORDIC LANGUAGE TEACHERS TOWARDS SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Research question, aim, methods

Deep-rooted values are not easily changed – cultural differences.

- What differences and similarities can be found in the value systems of L2 teachers involved in language education of immigrants in three Nordic countries?
- The research **aims at** analysing and comparing *premises, perspectives and scales of values* of Danish, Norwegian and Swedish language educators, related to the requirements for immigrant citizenship.
- Case studies were chosen as the most appropriate **research method**, supplemented by the survey, using semi-structured interviews.

The research **objectives** could be defined as follows:

- to discuss the problem of language acquisition in minority groups in relation to citizenship and cultural assimilation;
- to outline the diversity of national attitudes relating to immigrants' citizenship in three Nordic countries;
- to provide illustrations based on case studies of the values and attitudes of L2 teachers in relation to language education and citizenship acquisition of immigrants in Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Diversity of national regulations and attitudes relating to immigrants' citizenship in Nordic countries

- Denmark, Norway, and Sweden have been popular destinations for many refugees.
- “The Nordic countries – despite recent cuts – continue to have comprehensive and generous social welfare systems”.
- However, in terms of migration and refugee policy, the Nordic countries do not have uniform models.

Fact sheet

- Among 27 European countries, Sweden was the most willing to allow immigrants, whose ethnicity differed from the majority, to settle in the country. Norway came in as number 6 and Denmark as 11 (Bloom 2010:153).
- The differences between countries is the test of immigrants seeking citizenship.
- Currently Sweden is the only Nordic country that does not use *language tests* in connection with the application for acquiring citizenship.

Discussion of L2 education in relation to citizenship and language policy

- Citizenship can be seen as both a goal and means to an end in democratic societies.
- The acquisition of citizenship is more decisive for immigrant participation in society than the duration of stay in the country.
- Most countries in the EU (except Ireland and Sweden) have language requirements for citizenship, and language testing is increasingly common among the countries that receive migrants.

There is a gap between the ideology in favor of all languages being equal and the regulations making them unequal

- In Sweden, the regulations construct a ***language hierarchy*** with Swedish as a national language at the top,
- the national minority languages in the middle,
- immigrant languages at the bottom.

Training programs for immigrants designed to promote integration

- The major incentives to learn the second language are: **economic advantage**, primarily in the form of source of income and social prestige.
- Without rewards, language learning is not salient.
- One must invariably look at social conditions to understand the attitudes and values that accompany language learning.

The Survey

- **Material**
- Seven 40 minute semi-structured interviews of second language teachers:
 - 2 from Norway,
 - 2 from Denmark
 - 3 from Sweden.
- The initial research question: *What do you think about immigrants becoming citizens?*
- **Analysis**
- Qualitative analysis was used to identify three analytical focuses, the construction of *premises, perspectives* and *value scales*.

Premises

- The premises identified in the material are *jus sanguinis* (heritage), *jus soli* (territory) and *jus domicile* (stay) (Fangen, Lynnebakke & Paasche 2014:4). National regulations are a mixture of the principles with an emphasis on one of them (Levanon & Lewin-Epstein 2009:421).
- These three premises can be related to three types of approaches to the regulation of citizenship, *pluralism* with an emphasis on *jus soli*, *assimilation* with both *jus domicile* and *jus sanguinis* and *exclusion* with an emphasis on *jus sanguinis*.
- There is no direct link between principles, regulations and the specific rules for citizenship but these are often used as starting points in understanding different regulations of citizenship (Levanon & Lewin-Epstein 2009:422) and theoretical points of departure for discussing issues of citizenship (see Bauder 2012).

Perspectives and Value scales

- A fourth hypothetical premise, *achievement*, is added, namely the individual's capability for achievement, e.g. language skills demonstrated in language tests. The choice of *achievement* is based on current debates.

Perspectives

- The analysis of interview responses is also based on five perspectives, the *social* (identity, integration), *political* (legitimacy), *economic* (money), *legal* (legality) and *moral* (morality and ethics) perspectives. These perspectives are influenced by Habermas' (1986) notion of different forms of rationality and validity claims.

Value scales

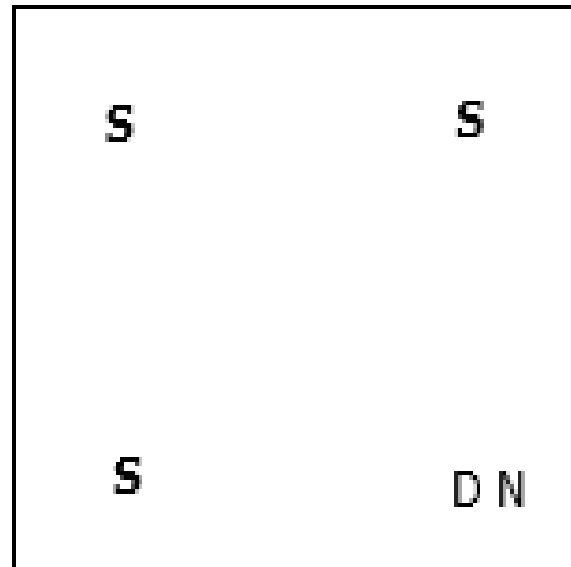
- The analysis of responses is also based on dichotomous *scales* emerging from the interview responses. These scales are reconstructed from the material and based on respondents' emphases or reiterations.

Danish respondent (D3)

- *To be a citizen of Denmark **you must be able** to speak the language/ **it is not possible** to live in a country where you don't know what is going on around you/ so yes it is the first condition/ and **you also have to be able** to be integrated/ yes **you have to** know that the most important thing is that **you can read/** and reach the level in Danish/ and **have knowledge** of the institutions/ and why you vote in elections and **what the law says.***

Heritage

Territory



Stay

Achievement

The relations between premises heritage, territory, stay/time and achievement

(D = Denmark, N = Norway, S = Sweden)

Conclusions

- Danish and Norwegian second language teachers show more similarities with each other.
- The Swedish respondents have a divergent opinion.
- Those differences between the countries should be taken into consideration when designing common efforts for the integration of immigrants in Europe.

To reflect – come back to the Fact sheet

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- The differences between countries is the test of immigrants seeking citizenship.
- Currently Sweden is the only Nordic country that does not use *language tests* in connection with the application for acquiring citizenship.

- There is a need for comparative research dealing with attitudes and national values in relation to immigration, citizenship, language learning, and integration in different countries.
- The preliminary results raise further questions about the effects caused by differences in values among language educators when comparing the countries and call for a further verification of the data in a more extended study, including Lithuania and other Baltic states.