Communicating for equitable development: What chance for ethnolinguistic minorities in the SDG agenda?

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Three questions and **[two parenthetical remarks]**

➢ What kind of development is encapsulated in the SDGs?

  **[Relational framework]**

➢ What is at stake in language choice and use in pursuing the SDGs?

  **[Identity ...and culture]**

➢ What is the place of learning and education in SDG agenda?
What kind of development is encapsulated in the SDGs?

- Universal agenda: valid for every country, everywhere
- Education is integrated, not a separate set of goals
- Equity in development, with the expressed desire...

*to see the goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society and
to endeavor to reach the furthest behind first*
Searching for a model of development that may fit...

➢ Sen: “the kind of life we have reason to value”
➢ “Value” – differs from one group to another
➢ Reasons: respecting diverse rationales implies dialogue and negotiation
Parenthesis 1: Relational framework

- Projects, mechanisms, institutions
  - within a relational framework
- Human relations: facilitating dialogue, respecting values, building partnerships
- Relational framework: gives meaning to technical intervention
What is at stake in language choice and use in pursuing the SDGs?

➢ Not first about language, but communication
➢ Communication for participation (=at least dialogue, at best local control)
➢ No use of local language = little participation of local people, even less of minorities
➢ Language use for development purposes
➢ Attitudes toward languages
➢ Beyond the managerialist view...
Parenthesis 2: Identity ... and culture

➢ Culture: what place in the SDGs?
➢ “Crucial enabler” – spell this out for ethnolinguistic minorities
➢ Why? – age of identity politics, but *multiple* identities are expressed in *multilingual* communication and education
What is the place of learning and education in the SDG agenda?

➢ Development: a larger question than MLE
➢ BUT learning is at the centre of development/SDGs
➢ Education now integral to SDGs: two-way dialogue:
  ❖ how will MLE contribute to the whole SDG agenda?
  ❖ SDG agenda must address learning/education... and MLE
Questions for MLE in the SDG agenda

➢ Can MLE be part of the SDG strategies to explore and validate local knowledge and culture?

➢ Can MLE build the confidence of minorities and provide the tools to negotiate with outsiders on more equal terms?

➢ Can a commitment to MLE on the part of governments, international, and other agencies broaden out to multilingual development communication and relationships?
Dynamic communication-centred development process

Culture
Social structure

Language use and attitudes

Attitudes toward development

Participation
Empowerment

Development goals

Intervention strategies

Listening Feedback

Self-sustaining development capacity

Sustainable development

Dynamic interaction

Intervention parameters

Dynamic interaction

Local realities

Challenge
Priorities
Resources

Communication
Dialogue
Learning

Challenge
Priorities
Resources

Communication
Dialogue
Learning

Participation
Empowerment

Listening Feedback

Self-sustaining development capacity

Sustainable development
Thank you

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