

Richard: How can we do that?

Kgethi: In my recent writing (Setati, 2003) I have suggested that within mathematics education we should seek to highlight the re-presentation of data from multilingual mathematics classrooms by presenting the transcripts used in the languages of the actual interactions. Through this practice, I believe we can preserve the integrity of the interactants and allow our readers to judge the validity of our interpretations. In this way, we can act against what you warn about (Barwell, 2003), the privileging of a small number of languages (e.g., English) and the ways of thinking, seeing and valuing that accompany them. We can also highlight the fact that multilingual classrooms are a norm in many parts of the world and not an exception.

Richard: Perhaps I can sum up the main issues that have emerged in our discussion. It is multilingualism that is the norm in mathematics classrooms around the world, although the particular manifestation of multilingualism varies in different contexts. In particular, multilingualism is not just being able to use a set of distinct languages. In many societies, multilingualism is about living with a changing mixture of languages. In many contexts, the language of the classroom is not the same as the language of the home or of wider society. This is a situation that may mean that students do not feel the mathematics they learn belongs to them; rather, mathematics is imported along with the language. Multilingualism in mathematics classrooms also presents challenges for researchers. Different researchers will see and hear the same lesson in different ways, depending on their familiarity with the languages used. A challenge for mathematics education research, therefore, is to find ways of dealing with linguistic diversity that avoid reducing mathematics classroom interaction to a monolingual (English language) norm.

Acknowledgment

This article is based upon work supported by the National Research Foundation in South Africa under Grant number, GUN 2053954. Any ideas expressed in this article are, however, those of the authors and therefore the NRF does not accept any liability.

References

- Barton, B. and Frank, R. (2001) 'Mathematical ideas and indigeneous languages', in Atweh, B., Forgaz, H. and Nebres, B. (eds), *Sociocultural research on mathematics education: an international perspective*, London, UK, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 135-150.
- Barwell, R. (2003) 'Linguistic discrimination: issues for research in mathematics education', *For the Learning of Mathematics* 23(2), 37-43.
- D'Ambrosio, U. (1990) *Etnomatemática: arte ou técnica de explicar e conhecer*, [Ethnomathematics: art or technique of explaining or knowing], São Paulo, Brazil, Editora Atica.
- Franceschini, R. (1998) 'The notion of code in linguistics', in Auer, P. (ed.), *Code-switching in conversation; language, interaction and identity*, London, UK, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, pp. 51-75.
- Gorgorió, N. and Planas, N. (2001) 'Teaching mathematics in multilingual classrooms', *Educational Studies in Mathematics* 47(1), 7-33.
- Powell, A. (2002, second edition) 'Ethnomathematics and the challenges of racism in mathematics education', in Valero, P. and Skovsmose, O. (eds), *Proceedings of the third International Mathematics Education and Society Conference*, Roskilde/Aalborg, Denmark, Centre for Research in Learning Mathematics, pp. 17-30.
- Setati, M. (1994) 'Some students' perceptions of the value of group discussions in their learning of mathematics', in Brodie, K. (ed.) *Proceedings of the first National Congress of the Association for Mathematics Education of South Africa*, Johannesburg, South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, pp. 180-191.
- Setati, M. (1998) 'Code-switching in a senior primary class of second-language mathematics learners', *For the Learning of Mathematics* 18(1), 34-40.
- Setati, M. (2003) 'Re-presenting qualitative data from multilingual mathematics classrooms', *Zentralblatt für Didaktik der Mathematik* 35(6), 294-300.
- Whorf, B. (1956) *Language, thought and reality: selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, Carroll, J. (ed.), Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

From the editor

LAURINDA BROWN

Firstly, apologies to Bob Speiser, Chuck Walter, Tara Lewis and readers for the mistaken signs on page 44, column 1 of their article *Talking through a method* in FLM 24(3). The paragraph under Figure 9, beginning "Here, to emphasize", should have addition rather than multiplication signs throughout. The calculations can be checked by referring to Figure 2 on page 41, which also appears on the front cover of the issue. On page 32, column 2, the missing page numbers for the Speiser and Walter (2004) reference are 33-39.

Secondly, there are two authors called Tony Brown writ-

ing in this issue. In organising the contributors list, I wondered about the order in which to place them. The problem is made more interesting by the fact that they are both A. M. Brown. Given that one of them uses a.m.brown as part of their e-address and the other tony.brown I used that distinction for the alphabetical listing.

How will you know who to contact? Krista Bradford worked with the Tony Brown with a.m.brown in his e-address. This Tony Brown was working in New Zealand at the University of Waikato when the article was under consideration for the journal, but returned (January, 2005) to his post at Manchester Metropolitan University, UK. When the other Tony Brown submitted his article he worked at the University of Hull in the UK, but has now joined the staff of the University of Bristol, UK.