



The Comparative
Imperative of Multiple
Literacies for
Children of African Descent
to Survive and Thrive

30TH SESSION – UN WGEPA

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Education and the WG's Mandate

This presentation stands on the statements and findings of the WG's consideration of the status and situation of education of children of African Descent. Education is a focus area of each country visit and was one of the principal areas of focus of the Working Group's first *technical* earlier this year. The WG recognizes education as one of the instruments of structural and systemic discrimination and one that has to be examined and recalibrated if racism, prejudice and discrimination are to be dismantled. This presentation goes to the heart of education and its role of either maintaining or disrupting the status quo.



the Rights of the Child

Right to survival

Right to development

Right to protection

Right to participation

Outcome: self-actualisation

Securing Self-Actualisation

Securing life

Securing limb

Securing livelihood

Securing liberty





Learning to know



Learning to be



Learning to learn



Learning to live together



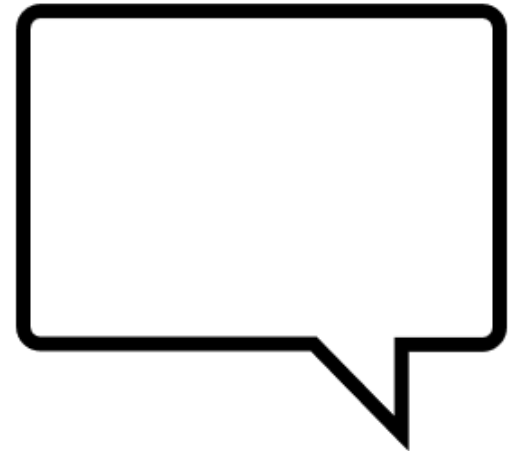
*Outcome: secure present,
foundation for future*

Manifestation of Self- Actualisation

Language

Human expression, exchange, actualization

- language acquisition
 - matures at about 4 months
- multi-modal experience
 - hearing
 - watching people's lips move
 - Interpreting the context of the linguistic input
- children remain adept at language acquisition until 17 or 18
- Trick words: ask, alumni, nuclear





Multilingualism

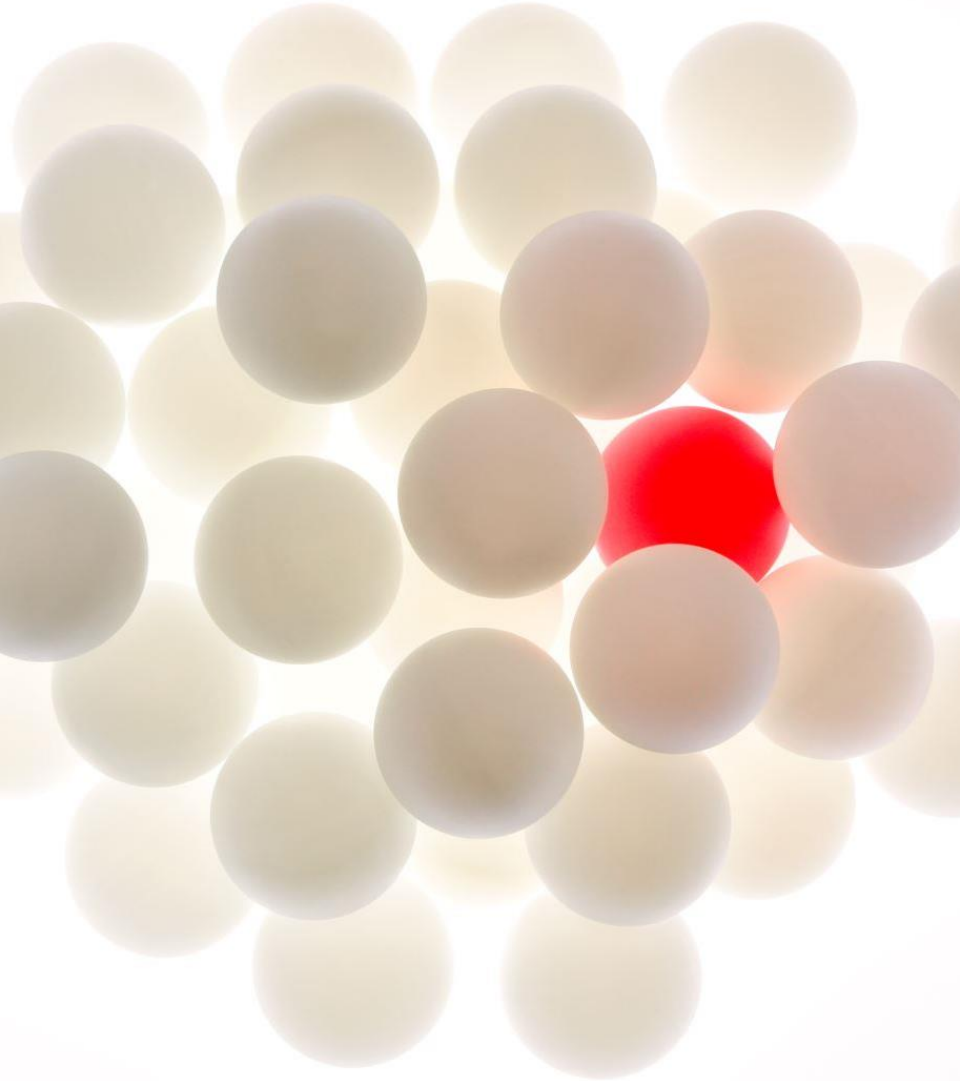
- In or more than one language
- Same message – parallel expressions
- Necessary *only* when we encounter people from other language groups
- Occasioned by human mobility, migration

Literacy

- Competency or knowledge in a specified area
- Ability to read and write – basic literacy
- Numeracy, images and symbols
- Content + cues + codes
- Contextual, purposeful, navigational tool
- Trick cues/codes: borrowed words, dress, manners

Language and Literacy

- Begin in the home
- Extend outward to geo spheres
- Extend outward to social spheres
- Interlinked at the core but take different pathways
- Essential, acquired, change (pace is different)
- Include or exclude, maintain or disrupt the status quo



Foundation of L&L Acquisition



Home



School



The 'Village'



**When these are impoverished, L&L
acquisition is compromised**

Cost of Illiteracy for Children of African Descent

Increase in dropouts – not just from school but from life

Increase in disaffection and disenchantment

Increase in morbidity and mortality

To the world – loss of

- *music, poetry, dance*
- *nurses and teachers and civil servants and soldiers and police and street cleaners and pastors and....*

Investment in L&L Acquisition

Teaching-learning
materials and
resources

Enrichment
experiences

Infrastructure

Time

Parental education

Schools, clubs,
religious organization

- make-up
- make-over

Literacies

- Health
- Financial
- Digital
- Scientific
- Cultural
- Information
- Media
- Social
- Religious
- Critical
- Legal
- Organisational

Children of African Descent

- Literacy acquisition is becoming a little more sad and sinister as other literacies become important
- Teaching *our children* new literacies
 - Dealing with police literacy
 - Dealing with shop-keepers literacy
 - Dealing with supervisors' literacy
 - Dealing with teachers literacy
 - Dealing with *Karen* literacy



Ultimately

It's their right

It's the right thing to do

It's even the nice thing to do

It's the smart thing!!

Thank you!