

**PROVISION OF EDUCATION  
TO MINORITY GROUPS  
IN AUSTRIA**

by

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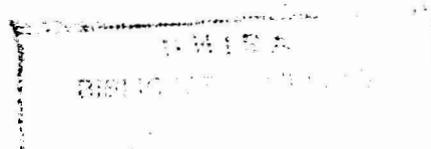
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*To whom it may concern*

This is to certify that I edited Mrs EB Atzinger's dissertation (without the title page and acknowledgements).

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20 November 2000

***“Education is the great equalizer of the conditions of  
men; the balance wheel of the social machinery.”***

**Horace Mann (in Roche 1994:2)**

## *Summary*

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Austria's aim to provide equitable education to its citizens is an ongoing process. In 1747 a decree opened schools to all children. From 1891 to 1941 schooling was compulsory for children between 6 and 14. In 1955 the Austrian Constitution guaranteed Austrian minority groups equal access to education. In 1966 and 1976 legislation further guaranteed minority groups' right to be taught in their home language subject to certain provisos. Currently minority groups are supposed to be taught in their home language for the first three years of school and school is compulsory for nine years. This study wished to establish whether minority groups are, in fact, provided with education as provided for by law, and examined the situation in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada as well. If Austria is successful, Zimbabwe or South Africa could adapt her policies in their educational situation.

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### **Title of thesis:**

**THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO MINORITY GROUPS IN AUSTRIA**

### **Key terms:**

Equitable education; Equal access to education; Bilingual; Multicultural; Minority groups; Home language; Compulsory schooling; Educational policy; Historical background; Legal reform;

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Problem formulation, aim and method**

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#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

To understand the current situation with regard to education in any country, one must study educational developments in other parts of the world that have a bearing on that particular country. Accordingly, this study examines and compares the provision of education to minority groups in Austria with that of the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada.

Like many western countries, Austria is engaged in discussions on how best to provide education to minority groups. This is an enormous task as minority groups comprise people not only of different nationalities but also of different ethnic groups and backgrounds, who speak different languages (Budzinski 1986:283-295; Eichinger, Ludwig, Jodlbauer & Ralph 1987:133; Papanek 1978:6; Pinterits, Kobilza, Mayer, Weidinger & Zeman 1992:3-47). The problem of providing education to minority groups in Austria was compounded by the influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. The disintegration of Eastern Europe meant that many citizens of those countries fled to Austria because they were no longer under Russia after the collapse of communism.

Gollnick and Chinn (1976:5) point out that in the United States of America, "minority ethnic groups became increasingly powerful both politically and socially and refused to tolerate discrimination by dominant white middle class power structures", whereas minority groups in Austria are entirely dependent on the government to look after their interests (Gruber 1982:259-270).

The Austrian education system is aimed at integration. Thus the products of this policy are ethnocentric due to the dominant German-speaking people, who stress ethnic identity and alliance. In this way minority groups became assimilated into the mainstream culture mainly because the central government has no direct control over the implementation of the education policy, which is the responsibility of the provincial governments. There is a big gap between the theory and the practice of integration and multicultural education (Fischer 1986:187-192; Rowley 1986:249).

Unlike the situation in the United States of America, where multicultural education arose from the needs of minority groups, multicultural education in Austria dates back to the 18th century when the Empress Maria Theresa imposed universal suffrage on church and manorial schools where home language instruction was to be used in the first three years of school (Ogris 1992:12-17). After the Second World War multicultural education for ethnic minority groups became compulsory in Austria.

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## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

### **1.2.1 The present situation of the education system in Austria**

Education is of fundamental importance to the preservation of any ethnic group and, as such, must be considered before other issues. Austria faces the problem of accommodating minority groups whose cultural backgrounds differ from the main culture of the society and the school. It is against this background that one should probe the education system in Austria to understand the provision of education to minority groups. The following synopsis presents the situation of the education system in Austria.

All children living in Austria undergo compulsory education, which commences at the age of 6 and has a duration of nine years (Rasch 1993:31-33; Satzke, Antoni, Seitz & Reumüller 1992:7-57).

- **Pre-school**

The pre-school years generally start at *Kindergarten* from 3 years old to 6 years old when primary school commences.

- **Primary school (*Volksschule*)**

From 6 years old to 10 years old children are in the primary school. It is important that children complete four years of school regardless of when they start school. In primary school children receive elementary education (see diagram 1).

- **Ten to fourteen year olds**

After four years of primary school education, children can choose between two types of schools. The fast learners enter grammar schools, which are academic in nature. The slow learners usually enter special classes (*Sonderschule - Oberstufe*) where they receive more individual attention at a pace that they can benefit from individually (see diagram 1).

- **Secondary school (*Hauptschule*)**

This is the secondary school which is technically oriented. Children spend four years in this school. This type of school provides children with a sound general education and prepares them for the working world by providing them with the necessary technical skills. This is the lower grade secondary school (see diagram 1).

- **Higher secondary school (*allgemeinbildende höhere Schule*)**

Children are educated here for eight years in their chosen grammar school whose main focus is either mathematics or economic science. The grammar schools comprise four

years of lower grade secondary education similar to that of the *Hauptschule* and four years of higher grade secondary education. This is an academic school and children receive a general comprehensive education, which prepares them for university entrance. Admission to this type of school depends on achievement at primary school level. All school-leavers take their higher education school-leaving examination, called the *Matura*, which is equivalent to an advanced level (see diagram 1).

▪ **Fourteen to nineteen year olds**

After four years of lower grade secondary education children may enrol for four years of higher grade secondary school education in the academic or technical field. In either case the children have to spend an additional year in their chosen field, that is academic or technical. Children have the following options:

- a) They can enter a one-year polytechnic school. The polytechnic school provides basic training for practical life and their future occupation.
- b) Those in the academic field may enrol for an extra year, after which they take the school-leaving examination (the *Matura*) and then enrol at a university of their choice.
- c) They may also enter the vocational training higher school (*berufsbildende höhere Schule*). Besides attending the four years of higher secondary school, children can enrol for an extra year in vocational training, which will enable them to practise a specific trade (see diagram 1).

Usually vocational training is given at school with occasional temporary (short-term) appointments in companies where they can practise what they have learnt. For young foreigners, vocational training is subject to quota regulations. In all these schools, the

possibility of moving from one type of school to another is left open, especially in lower grade secondary education (Feigl 1994:7-44).

Mastering the German language is a basic precondition for attending an Austrian school or finding a good job in which one is qualified. The nine provinces of Austria - Wien (Vienna), Burgenland (Panonia), Steiermark (Styria), Kärnten (Carinthia), Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Salzburg, Oberösterreich (Upper Austria) and Niederösterreich (Lower Austria) - have areas of a higher concentration of minority groups. The word "minority" is used broadly to apply to children whose parents are non-German speaking and require assistance in order to benefit from attending school. These children must learn German gradually in order to become integrated into the school system and society. Home language instruction is reserved for certain periods, if numbers justify it.

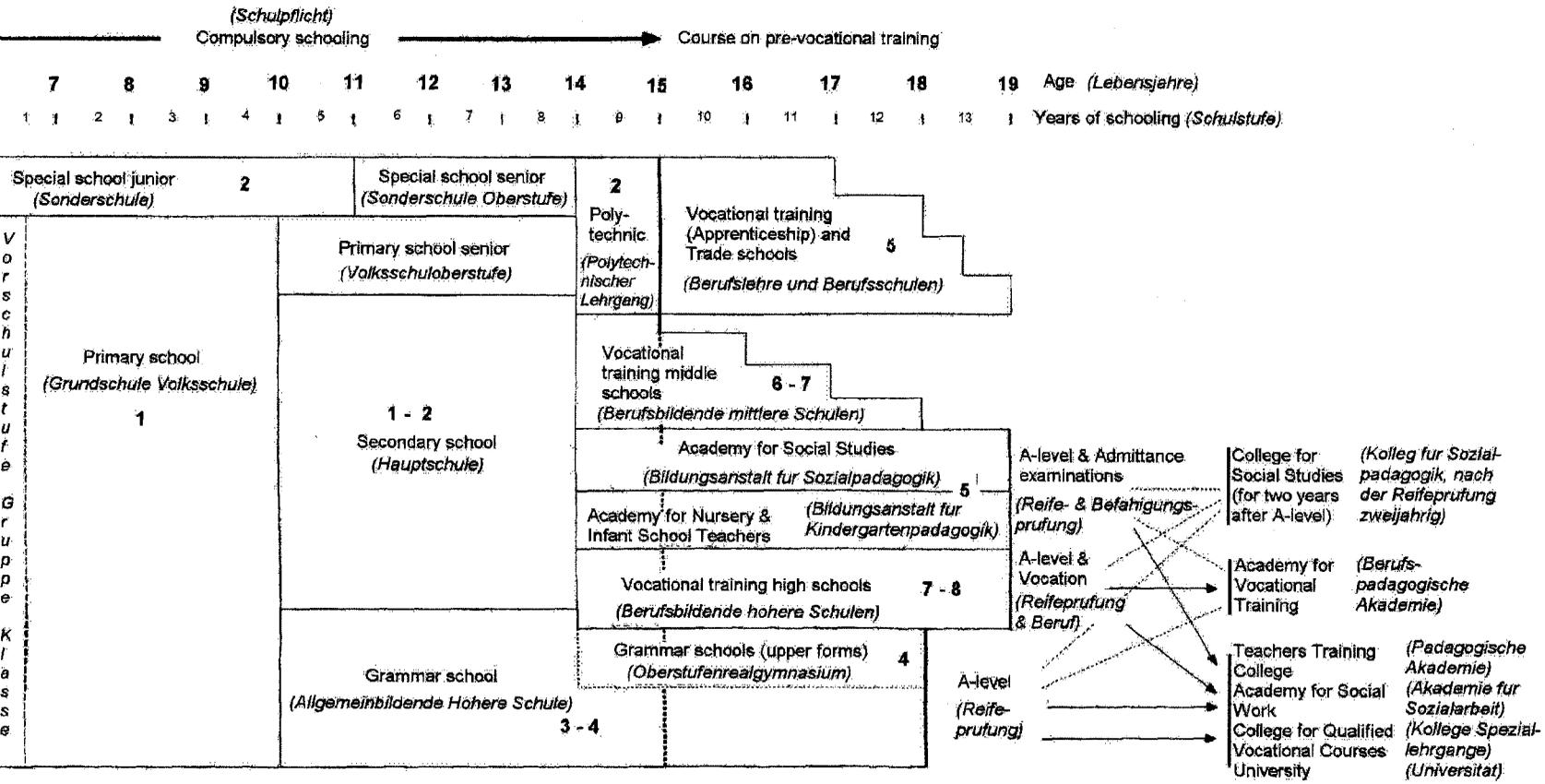
### **1.2.2 Legal background to the problem**

Regarding the curriculum, Fischer (1986:192) states that the rights of ethnic minority groups to have their children educated in their home language is tabulated in section 7 of the Austrian Constitution, which was signed in 1955 by the Austrian Government and the victorious powers of the second world war. Section 7 states that Austrian citizens of the Slovene and Croatian communities in Carinthia, Panonia and Styria enjoy the same rights as all other Austrians.

Like all schools in Austria, the bilingual school is dictated by the federal decree of 1945, which states that bilingual education must be compulsory during the first three years of compulsory education. In this respect, Slovene was retained as a compulsory subject for four teaching periods per week from the fourth year in bilingual compulsory education (Fischer 1986:190-192).

Rowley (1986:241) points out that the foundation of the Austrian Republic in 1955 resulted in section 7 of the Austrian Constitution (*Staatsvertrag*) that guaranteed the Croat minority, instruction in Croat at primary school level, a Croat school inspectorate, consideration of the Croat culture on the curriculum and adequate Croat secondary schools. By 1962 the final three forms of primary school were abolished, meaning that from the fifth year on, children began their secondary education, where German was the sole language of instruction. Thus the seven years of primary school level were now reduced to four years. Besides this, the provision of adequate Croat secondary schools was not fulfilled by 1974. At that time German became the sole language of instruction with Croat being optional. This defeated the aims of the federal decree of 1945 (Rowley 1986:242). However, the Croats retained home language instruction in religious education lessons.

RAM 1  
EDUCATION SYSTEM IN AUSTRIA



of these qualifications may also be obtained through evening classes and distance education.  
 meisten Schulabschlüsse sind auch über Schulen für Berufstätige, zweiter Bildungsweg, und über externisten Prüfungen, dritter Bildungsweg, erreichbar.)  
 Educational Channels in Austria 1993:1 (Bildungswege in Österreich 1993:1)

Problem formulation, aim and method

### 1.3 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

From her background as a Zimbabwean and as a teacher in post-independent Zimbabwe and while living in Austria, the researcher became aware of the education problems of minority groups in Austria. Austria and Zimbabwe share similar problems in providing quality education to a diverse multicultural student population. Both countries' student population is not only different in race, culture and language but ethnically as well. In Zimbabwe the problem is unique in that it is the majority not the minority of learners who would benefit from an education policy protecting the interests of disadvantaged groups. In Zimbabwe such a policy was to promote parity among previously unequal groups in the provision of education as envisaged by the 1980 Government Declaration whereby schools were opened to all Zimbabweans, regardless of race, creed or sex (*Zimbabwe Journal of Education* 1982:2-6, in Sibanda & Mabanga 1984:1-50). The aim of this study is to find out how the Austrian government treated this problem.

Since a person's education often determines his/her ability to progress socio-economically, it is important for a nation to provide equal education opportunities to all its citizens (Garbers in Hugo 1991:190). In Austria's provision of education to minority groups, their right to quality education is protected by law (Fischer 1986:19).

On this issue the Social Democratic Party, the major political party in Austria, declares that it is imperative that the rights of minority groups and the integration of disabled and disadvantaged students are guaranteed (*SPÖ Wir Sozialdemokraten* 1994:25-32). Vranitzky (1990:12) states that school is important and the Ministry of Education must take planning seriously as children will not only be the leaders of the future but will be working in a more complex environment of peoples of different cultures.

According to the Director of Education in the Province of Tyrol (Personal interview, 10 October 1994), everyone has a right to go to school in Austria and school is compulsory until

the child has completed nine years of schooling. In addition, home language teaching is compulsory by law. The School Organisational Act of 1966 and the supplementary act of 1989, based on Maria Theresa's 1747 decree, ensure that children were taught in their home language for at least the first three years of school.

In Tyrol if twelve or more learners speak a certain language, the law makes provision for them to receive home language instruction. In Vienna, five learners speaking a certain language justifies home language instruction, while in Vorarlberg ten learners speaking a certain language justifies home language instruction. The Ministry of Education and Culture (Scholten 1994:4) emphasises the integration of non-German languages as home language into the education system. Home language education is compulsory for the first nine years of school and is split into two parts, namely four years' primary school and five years' secondary school education. In terms of the amended syllabus of 1992 (Scholten 1994:4), lessons should generally be conducted in German and home language instruction should be a second alternative for those learners whose first language is not German, for example English in Vienna.

In 1999 1 500 additional teachers were involved in the programme for students whose home language is not German to receive 12-18 hours instruction per week in their own languages. In this programme the class teacher is qualified in German and the foreign home language of the learners. Learners take all subjects equally in both languages while a second teacher assists the class teacher by attending to those learners who have not applied to be in the bilingual classes.

In defining minority groups in Austria, a distinction is made between Austrian ethnic minority groups and refugees who surged into Austria after the War in Yugoslavia in 1990 and socio-economic problems, especially in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. These groups include people from Bulgaria, Poland, Turkey and some African countries (Weidinger & Gröpel 1992:5-45). The Austrian minority groups comprise the Slovenes in Carinthia, Hungarians confined to the

areas around Oberwart in the province of Styria and the Croat ethnic group of Panonia, who all became Austrian citizens in 1921 after the First World War when these areas were ceded to Austria (Rowley 1986:237).

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#### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The problem statement is:

How does the Austrian school system provide education to minority groups and how does it handle problems that arise?

It is important to research this problem to establish whether minority groups are, in fact, integrated into the Austrian education system and whether it has been a success. In researching the problem the following aspects were studied:

- Are the rights of minorities to education protected by law in Austria?
- Is the provision of education to minorities in Austria an integrative or separative process?
- Are parents consulted in the provision of education to their children and is this successful?
- How is the integration of minorities into the education system carried out?
- What is the policy of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria?

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#### **1.5 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of this investigation are to

- examine the development and nature of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria

- examine the implications of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria
  - gain insight into the problems encountered in the provision of education to minority groups in the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom in comparison to the situation in Austria
  - make recommendations on the implementation of programmes to educate minority groups
- 

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODS**

### **1.6.1 Literature study**

The research entailed an extensive study of primary sources, including monographs, research reports, dissertations and government documents. The purpose of the literature study was to acquire an understanding of the problem under investigation in order to present guidelines and make recommendations for the provision of education to minority groups in Austria.

### **1.6.2 Qualitative research**

Qualitative research methodology was used to collect data from the Directors of Education in the nine provinces of Austria and two headmasters per province at their places of work, through semistructured and unstructured interviews. Qualitative research enabled a detailed study of the information obtained from the respondents. Twenty-seven people were involved in this study. Purposeful sampling was used to interview the respondents to provide a conceptual framework to generate certain research questions (MacMillan & Schumacher 1993:378-379). The researcher also assumed the role of participant observer during the interviews.

A questionnaire was used for the Directors of Education and headmasters. In order to establish whether the provision of education to minority groups as outlined at government level was actually implemented in the schools, the researcher conducted interviews as a participant observer and analysed the data from the questionnaires.

### **1.6.3 Comparative research method**

Educational research is interrelated to disciplines such as sociology and psychology (Entwistle 1973:14). In this dissertation, the comparative method was used, involving analysis, classification and evaluation (Stone 1989:5). Similarities and differences were examined in order to establish what was common and what was different in the provision of multicultural education in the respective countries.

A literature study of mostly primary sources was undertaken. The comparative method is important as it is based on the degree to which the research design is fully explored to make it possible to extend the findings to other studies. The comparative method enables typical phenomena to be contrasted with other similar phenomena. The analysis, classification and evaluation of information was carried out in order to establish whether there are any similarities in the provision of education to minority groups in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada. This enabled the researcher to compare the situation with that in Austria and Zimbabwe.

## CHAPTER 2

### **The development and nature of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria**

---

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

A critical policy decision to be made by any state is the way it handles the question of multilingualism in its school system. It is generally agreed that home language instruction, especially at primary school level, is of paramount importance and UNESCO ruled that "it is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is the child's mother tongue" (Corson 1993:7).

It is generally accepted that the family is primarily responsible for the education of its children to adulthood and later transfers this task to the school on its behalf. As parents are integral to the schooling of their children, it is important that children are instructed in their home language as this is the mode of communication through which they can express themselves (Van Schalkwyk 1988:148, 261-262). When the implementation of education policy ignores minority languages and replaces them with the language of education, some children may suffer. For example, in Zimbabwe where the language of education is English, children in the rural areas where there are not many English pre-schools are disadvantaged. What is needed is the practical implementation of educational policies that seek to provide education to children, especially at the critical pre-primary and primary level, in their home language. This is important because at this stage the child has learned the meanings of linguistic symbols in his/her home language. Although it may be argued that it is not financially viable, in the long term the costs may be outweighed by the benefits of well educated human resources rather than the exclusion of some would-be innovators through

grounding of educational concepts in foreign languages. This means that investment in an education system that does not produce results is a waste.

Although equality of educational opportunity has been at the centre of educational policy for decades, it remains an elusive goal due to several factors, including the medium of instruction.

In this respect, Corson (1993:9) sums up Bourdieu's views:

The habitus (represents a system of durable dispositions that are the core of an individual behaviour) held in common by members of dominant groups permeates every aspect of school. This limits the education opportunities of children from non-dominant groups because the school demands competence in the dominant language, which can only be acquired through family upbringing. While the school might not openly stress this culture, it implicitly demands it through its definition of success. As a result, those groups who are capable of transmitting through the family these dispositions or habitus necessary for the reception of the school's messages come to monopolise the system of schooling.

If Austria has succeeded in implementing its policy on providing equal educational opportunities to all its minority groups successfully, countries with similar problems could learn from this experience in order to re-evaluate their own issues and eradicate similar problems.

McCormick (1984:22) points out that

"equal educational opportunity is a fundamental requirement for accountable education. This requires the accommodation of individual differences and maximising the human potential of all people."

## **2.2 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION FOR MINORITY GROUPS IN AUSTRIA**

Papanek (1978:6) points out that during the 18th century, monastery and cathedral schools were predominant in Austria. The Empress Maria Theresa's decree of 1747 imposed universal suffrage on church and manorial schools whereby poor, but gifted boys received scholarships by proving themselves in passing examinations. Rich children did not need to prove themselves in this way. Even at this time children were compelled to learn in their home language. For example, Slovene was used as the medium of instruction for the first three years of school and then German, which would eventually take over as the language of instruction, was learned. Three to four hours per week were spent on Slovene as a language (Ogris 1994:14). This was initiated in 1891 and was still in vogue in 1938 to 1941.

Papanek (1978:2) further points out that the new Austria (after the first world war) had about 6,5 million people who resided on 32 396 square miles against the Austrian empire where 51 million people had resided on 2 612 595 square miles. Austria was now German speaking with some small foreign minority groups, such as the 80 000 Czechs in Vienna, 45 000 Croats in Panonia and 60 000 Slovenes in Carinthia. The country was about 94% Catholic. Papanek (1978:3) goes on to say that the free school society led by personalities such as Gloeckel ... held a meeting in the great hall of Vienna in 1917 whereby it was decided that education should be rooted in the child's environment and should be appropriate. This means that the child must know its surroundings if he/she is to venture into the unknown successfully. The child learns well in school if he/she has a basic foundation in his/her own language. For this reason, it is therefore important that children have lessons in their own language at an early stage of their education.

According to Byram (1986:21), "our school is a German school and it intends to introduce pupils to the German cultural world, reinforce the German cultural world and the German

sense of community. Our school is a German school in the Danish State. It intends therefore to prepare pupils for life as Danish citizens."

In this school German was used as the home language. Therefore it was regarded as the main language thereby insuring that the position of the minority groups in this part of Denmark was not weakened.

Rowley (1986:242) states that the present situation in Panonia is in accordance with the 1937 decree whereby districts with more than 70% Croat population have Croat as the language of instruction at primary school level. In districts with a 30% to 70% Croat population both German and Croat are languages of instruction, while in areas with less than 30% Croat population the Croat language is an optional subject.

However, even at this time, Rowley (1986:242) points out that the reality was that the Croats had a much weaker status than might be assumed from the letter of the law. For example, at this time in Großwarersdorf and other areas, with a 90% Croat population, Croat was not compulsory. Croat merely functioned as sole language of instruction during the first half of the first year of school. Thereafter German was phased in as the language of instruction. Generally Croat was taught as a subject for three hours per week, besides being used as the language of instruction in religion. Thus, although the curriculum was laid down at governmental level for the benefit of the minority, the provincial ministry in Eisenstadt did not implement it strictly (Rowley 1986:249).

Although the 1937 decree stated that German-speaking children in multilingual communities had to attend the bilingual school, the option to attend a nearby German-only school was self-defeating. German parents opted to send their children to nearby monolingual German schools. Although the principle of educating learners to develop tolerance and mutual understanding is noble, whereby the two languages were to be seen as a vehicle of rapprochement, implementing these principles in school is virtually dependent on the

pedagogical skills of the teaching staff and basic readiness of the intramural and extramural environment. In those villages where beginners' classes are still partly taught in Croat, no consistent attempt is made to stress their ethnic status. There is also a critical shortage of teaching materials as the Croat group does not have its own school system (Rowley 1986:242-246).

Because learners in Panonia have no opportunity to learn for any other further school examination in Croat and because their numbers are not large enough to maintain their own infrastructure, they are split between an assimilatory group of urban commuter workers and a more rural group which resists assimilation.

Rowley (1986:249) concludes that it is not the Austrian federation but the Panonia communities involved who have not implemented all the rights of the minority groups guaranteed in the constitution. These circumstances might cause the minority to associate their language with negative values, such as poverty, peasant status and conservatism, while German, the language of the majority, might be regarded as a symbol of upward social mobility and therefore a key to prosperity. In that case, the school alone cannot remedy the situation. Legislation must be enforced for the rights of the minority groups as it is guaranteed in the constitution to be implemented practically.

Fischer (1986:187) recounts that it was not unusual to hear such phrases as "we must preserve our Germanness or serve western civilisation" to undermine the causes of the Slovene minority in southern Carinthia. According to Haas in Malle 1984 (Fischer 1986:188), the Slovenes' fight for survival has been going on for centuries and they have resisted being assimilated into the German culture. As the Slovenes were mostly peasants with no privileges to higher education and higher positions, it was difficult for them to find recognition in Austria. Fischer (1986:189) relates how even at the turn of the century, social advancement entailed the rejection of one's cultural identity and the acceptance of assimilation. The school remained an important social institution with language regulations and census being effective

instruments for the majority group, particularly since Slovene was used as a language of instruction in the first two years of comprehensive school and then only as an auxiliary language of instruction. While German was the dominant language of instruction, only about half the teachers were qualified to teach Slovene. In addition, Fischer (1986:189-192) points out that the transition to German as the language of instruction was completed in the third year. At this time Slovene was offered for three hours a week. Subsequent surveys indicate that people with Slovene as colloquial language decreased from 85 051 in 1880 to 16 421 in 1981 (Fischer 1986:189). Fischer (1986:189) believes that these figures are not "a valid reflection of the ethnic and linguistic proportions in Carinthia, but are rather an indication of an assimilatory pressure, an atmosphere hostile to the minority".

However, the school system as described above, was abolished in 1945 and a bilingual compulsory education system established. Fischer (1986:190) summarises this kind of school system as follows: "In the first three years of school, subjects were basically taught in the child's mother tongue, with the other official languages of Carinthia being an integral part of teaching from the beginning".

The transition to German as the language of instruction was completed at the beginning of the fourth year but Slovene was retained as a compulsory subject. Clearly, the treatment of the two languages equally was advantageous as the Croats felt that decisions on the education of their children were not imposed upon them and they were regarded as equal partners of the Germans. However, the establishment of a bilingual gymnasium (grammar school) was thwarted by German nationalist circles, who only agreed to the establishment of a lower monolingual Slovene school, with German as a compulsory subject (Fischer 1986:190).

The effectiveness of the bilingual school was put to the test as resistance to bilingual education reached a climax in 1954 when teachers demonstrated against bilingual education. This resulted in decisive changes in 1958 which introduced the possibility of German parents withdrawing their children from Slovene lessons. Only 2 500 out of 13 000 learners remained

in bilingual education after the reform (Fischer 1986:190). This means that even the Slovenes, for whom this system of education had initially been instituted, did not resist the social pressure and withdrew their children from bilingual education. This was not expected of the Slovenes because section 7 of the Austrian constitution guaranteed their right to education in their language (Fischer 1986:192; Rowley 1986:241). The removal of Slovene as an equal second language resulted in Slovene children learning German while German-speaking children did not have to learn Slovene, thus defeating the aims of the bilingual school. The German-speaking children were expected to learn Slovene so that they could understand their customs and culture and thus become tolerant. Although the general principle of educating all learners to develop tolerance and mutual understanding is noble, where the two languages (Slovene and German) were to be seen as a means of rapprochement, the implementation of these principles at school is not only dependent on the pedagogic skills and willingness of the teaching staff and whether the community is ready for this but also on enforcement by the State to enable Austria's ethnic minority groups and foreign minority groups to retain some form of cultural identity.

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## **2.3 POLICIES DETERMINING THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO MINORITY GROUPS IN AUSTRIA**

### **2.3.1 The distribution and provision of education to minority groups in Carinthia**

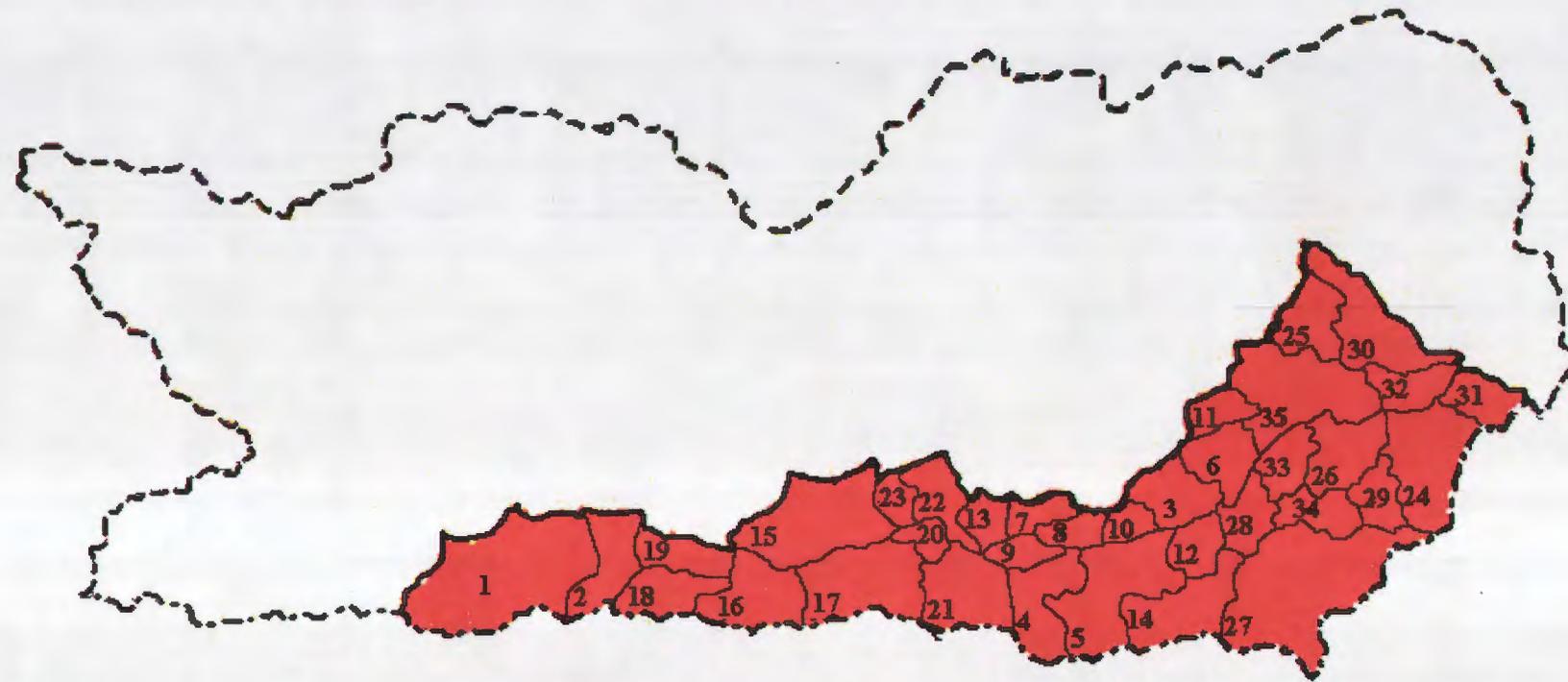
Despite the noble intentions regarding the right of minority groups to equal educational opportunities, this was not carried out in practice (see map 1a and 1b).

Horak (1985:259) states that the British occupational forces introduced bilingual education, namely Slovene primary education, in the Slovene inhabited portion of Carinthia. As stated, this was withdrawn in 1958. By 1959, instruction in Slovene was made subject to parental request only. Slovene lessons had to be taken in addition to the regular curriculum in German.

Thus, although section 7 of the Austrian Constitution of 1955 between the allied powers and Austria makes provision for the protection of the rights of the Slovene and Croat minority groups, Horak (1985:259) believes that it was not fully implemented: "The absence of precise definition of the territory to which these provisions were to apply served the Austrian government as an excuse for implementing section 7 in very few places and even there only partially."

Map 1a shows that the province of Carinthia has a high concentration of minority groups. However, the area of bilingual schools was insignificant by 1959 as indicated by map 1b. This is still the area of higher concentration of the Croat minority groups today, as these groups have not been assimilated (see chapter 4) rather like the Ndebeles in Matabeleland in Zimbabwe.

**Map 1a**      **The area planned for the bilingual school system**



**District Hermagor**

- 1 Egg
- 2 St. Stefan

**District Villach-Stadt**

- 15 Maria Gail

**District Villach-Land**

- 15 Arnoldstein
- 16 Finkenstein
- 17 Hohenthurn
- 18 Notsch
- 19 Rosegg
- 20 St. Jakob/R.
- 21 Velden
- 22 Wetnberg

**District Klagenfurt-Land**

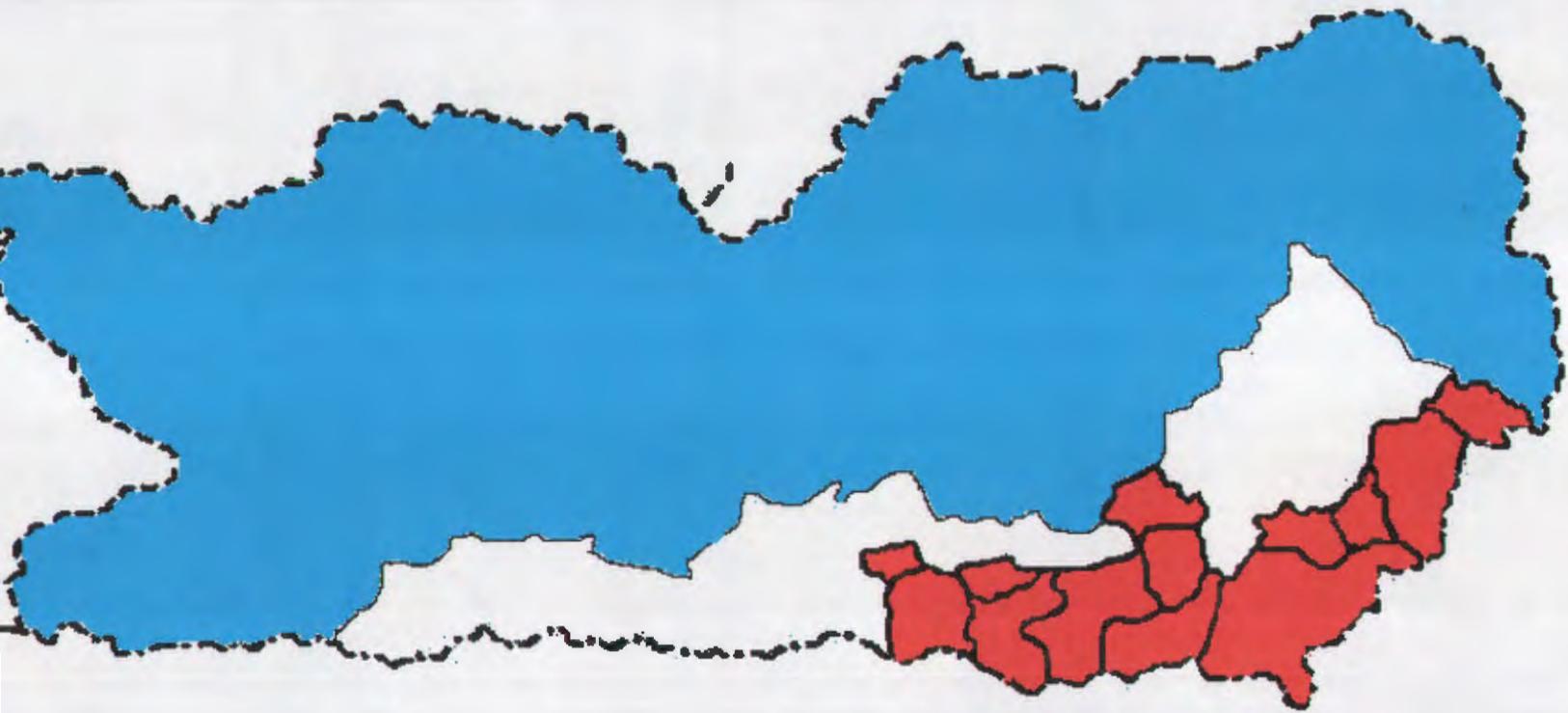
- 1 Ebental
- 2 Feistritz/R.
- 3 Ferlach
- 4 Wabersdorf
- 5 Keutschach
- 6 Kottmannsdorf
- 7 Ludmannsdorf
- 8 Maria Rain
- 9 Grafenstein
- 10 St. Margareten

**District Volkermarkt**

- 23 Bleiburg
- 24 Diex
- 25 Eberndorf
- 26 Eisenkappel
- 27 Gallizien
- 28 Globasnitz
- 29 Griffen
- 30 Neuhaus
- 31 Ruden
- 32 St. Kanzian
- 33 Sittersdorf
- 34 Volkermarkt

**Map 1b**                    **The area of actual bilingual schooling**

□ only German as official language  
■ German and Slovene as official languages (13 districts)



Source: Bilingual Education in Carinthia 1992:16

### **2.3.2 Legal reform**

Numerous disputes and controversies beyond the scope of this study marked Austrian education reform to its current format.

The era of Empress Maria Theresa marked the introduction of state control of the education system. Gruber (1982:259) points out that her belief that education is forever a "politicum" marked the fundamental re-evaluation of education in Europe during the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the state's claim to control higher education. As stated, she introduced universal suffrage in education, whose guiding principles were uniformity, universality and utility.

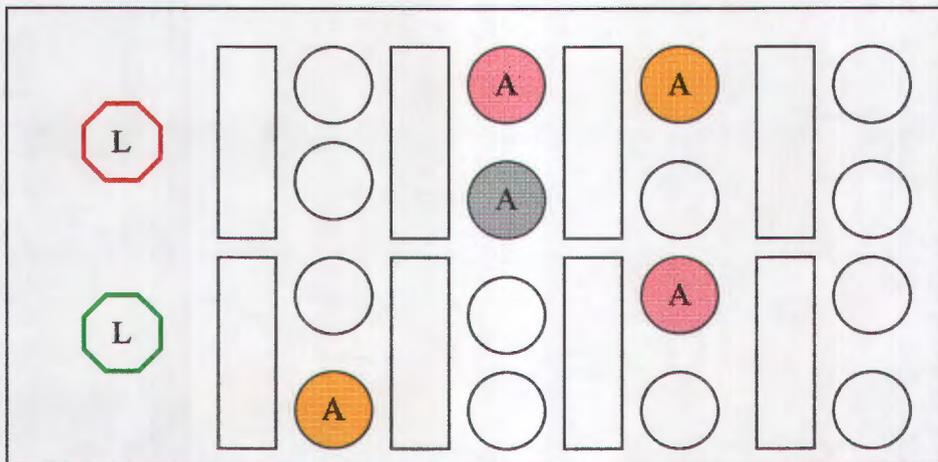
Over the years successive governments upheld these principles, more so in the 1970s when the new socialist government proclaimed "equality of educational opportunity" as one of its primary political aims (Gruber 1982:265).

However, as stated, this was not fulfilled. According to Ogris (1992:3-18), since 1988 children who have not lived in Austria for six years are designated children with a non-German home language. Such children receive a certificate of proficiency in compulsory subjects, in the integrative models indicated in diagrams 2, 3 and 4.

**Key to diagrams 2, 3 and 4**

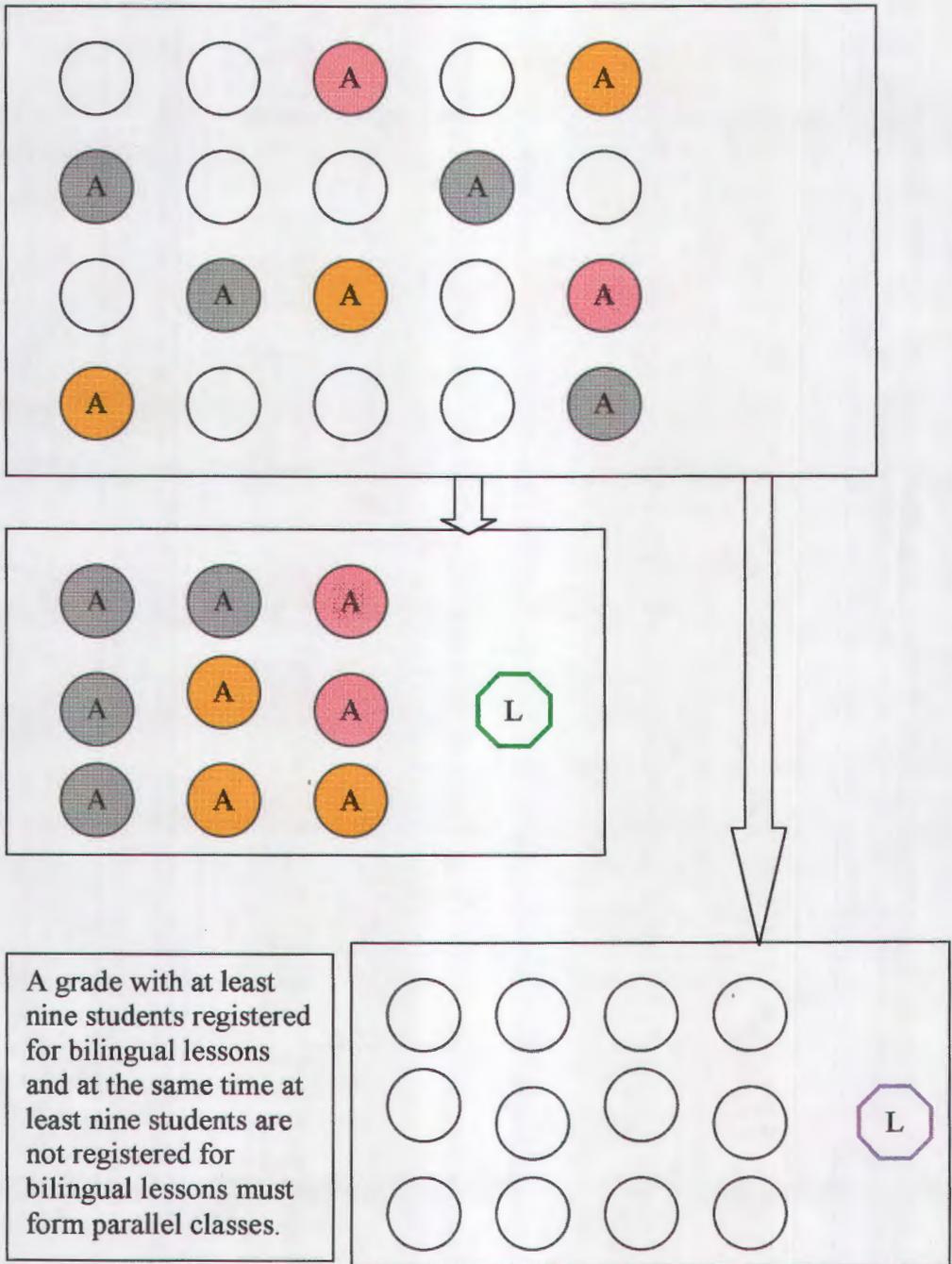
|                                      |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| S<br>T<br>U<br>D<br>E<br>N<br>T<br>S | A   | Registered for bilingual lessons   |
|                                      |    | Without knowledge of Slovene   |
|                                      |    | With little knowledge of Slovene   |
|                                      |    | With good knowledge of Slovene<br>(eg, home language)                                      |
|                                      |    | Not registered for bilingual lessons   |
| T<br>E<br>A<br>C<br>H<br>E<br>R<br>S |   | Teacher without a qualification in Slovene   |
|                                      |  | Teacher with a qualification in Slovene<br>(class teacher)                                 |
|                                      |  | Additional teacher in an integration class<br>(class with and without registered students) |

**Diagram 2 Example of integration class**



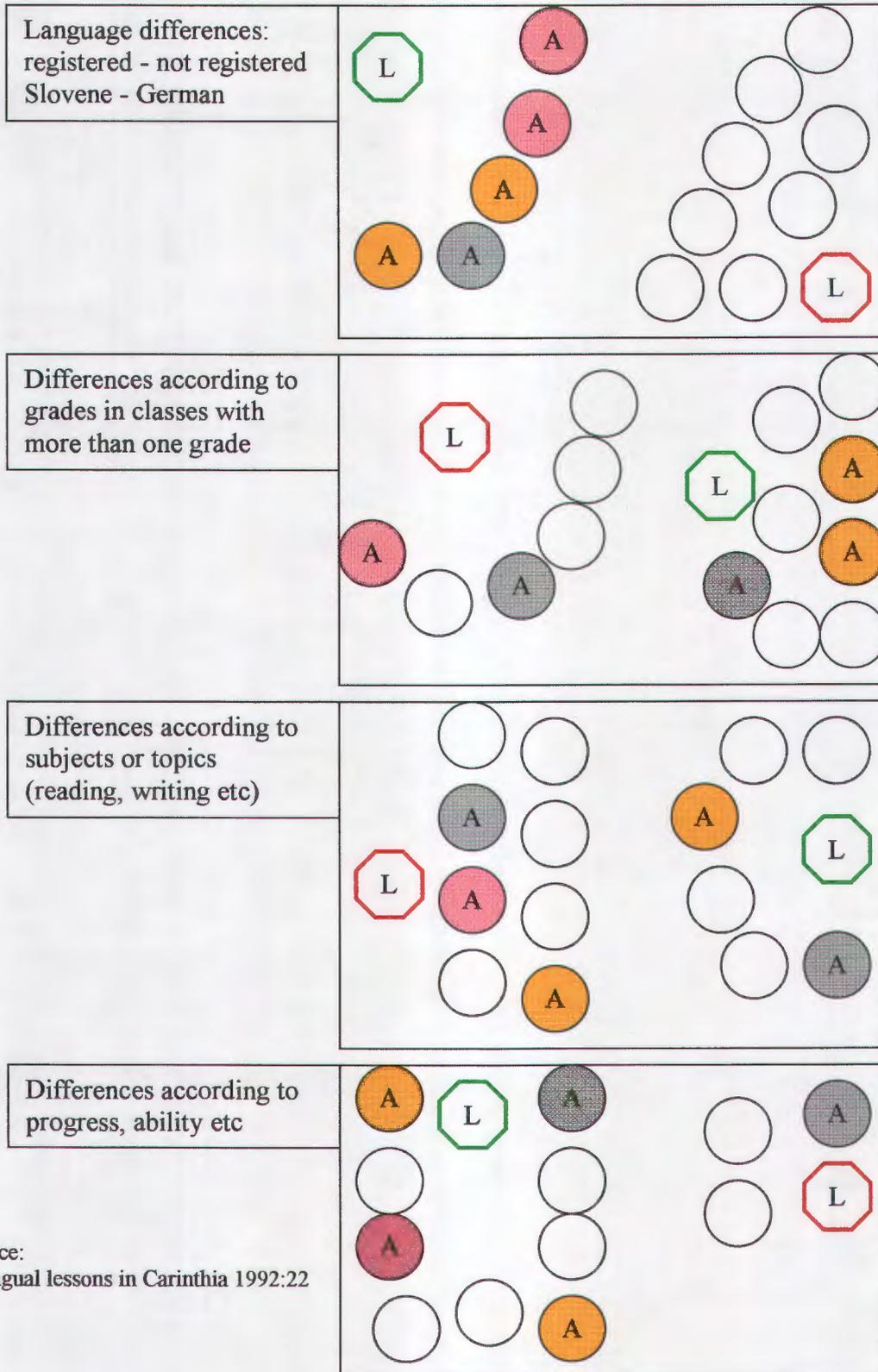
Source: Bilingual lessons in Carinthia 1992:19

Diagram 3 Example of parallel classes



Source: Bilingual lessons in Carinthia 1992:20

**Diagram 4: Possibilities of different team teaching methods**



Source:  
Bilingual lessons in Carinthia 1992:22

Ogris (1992:18) indicates that the Education Act for minority groups, as amended in 1988 (*Minderheiten-Schulgesetz-Novelle* 1988) reduced the number of students in a bilingual class to not more than 26 and not less than 7, which is a great advantage as there are two teachers in this type of class. This is a very ambitious programme. It is very difficult to make a workable programme in such a situation, for example if there are nine learners for bilingual classes and nine learners for the monolingual class that are split into two classes. This means that the teacher qualified in German and Slovene takes all the subjects equally in both languages and in the non-bilingual class the teacher is monolingual and lessons are in given German only. However, for both classes it is compulsory to have some community classes together even if the classes have been divided (see diagram 2).

In such a situation there is a class teacher qualified in both languages who is with the class all the time. The second teacher comes in to assist the class teacher by attending to students who have not applied for bilingual lessons (see diagrams 2, 3 and 4, Ogris 1992:18-22).

Although young children have no objection to other groups, older students and people find integration difficult. Ogris (1992:45-58) points out how games and the Montessori method of teaching are meant to motivate the different groups to learn together amicably, though the fear of assimilation and loss of identity and isolation seem to make it difficult to stop stereotyping. Overcoming prejudice and discrimination seems to be an impossible task, even when children are taught how to deal with conflict and how to avoid it without hatred and violence.

The difference between primary schools in Carinthia and primary schools in the rest of Austria is that the children in bilingual classes have to do the same amount of work in two languages. This is so because the German-speaking children in bilingual classes demanded the use of their own language in order to refrain the Slavic children from having an advantage over them, through having a lesson explained in Slovene and then in German. This means that in some cases German-speaking children had the same lesson twice, from a bilingual teacher

and a monolingual teacher. The High Court then ruled that where there is a need for bilingual education it is compulsory for it to be offered (Ogris 1992:17).

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## **2.4 RUDLOF AND GRÖPEL'S PILOT PROJECT**

Rudlof and Gröpel (1993/94:1-45) reported on the school trials in Vienna. These trials are based on the school organisational Act of 1966, which was part of the national legislation, as well as Vienna's Education Act of 1976, which was a provincial Act. Rudlof and Gröpel (1993/94:2) point out that the 1966 school organisational Act's eleventh amendment, which became operational on 1 September 1989, put school trials on a different base. They state that the amendment of paragraph 7 of the Act, empowers the minister of education and culture to implement or give permission to directors of education to implement school trials which relate to pedagogical or didactical matters. This is the Act on which the compulsory and the bilingual education system in Austria is based.

### **2.4.1 Compulsory schools in Vienna**

Vienna's compulsory schools are based on the 1966 school organisational Act and the Vienna Education Act of 1976, which were amended in 1989. These Acts were amended to empower the minister of education and culture to determine school trials, with the help of the Directors of education (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:2-3).

Generally, the stakeholders (the parents and the teachers) apply to the minister of education and culture through the director of education, with plans and procedures to implement school trials. This is possible whenever two thirds of parents and two thirds of teachers agree (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:31-45). These Acts determine school trials for a new policy and recently for the integration of disabled children into the regular school system (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:2). The Vienna bilingual school is based on the Education Act of 1966, as amended

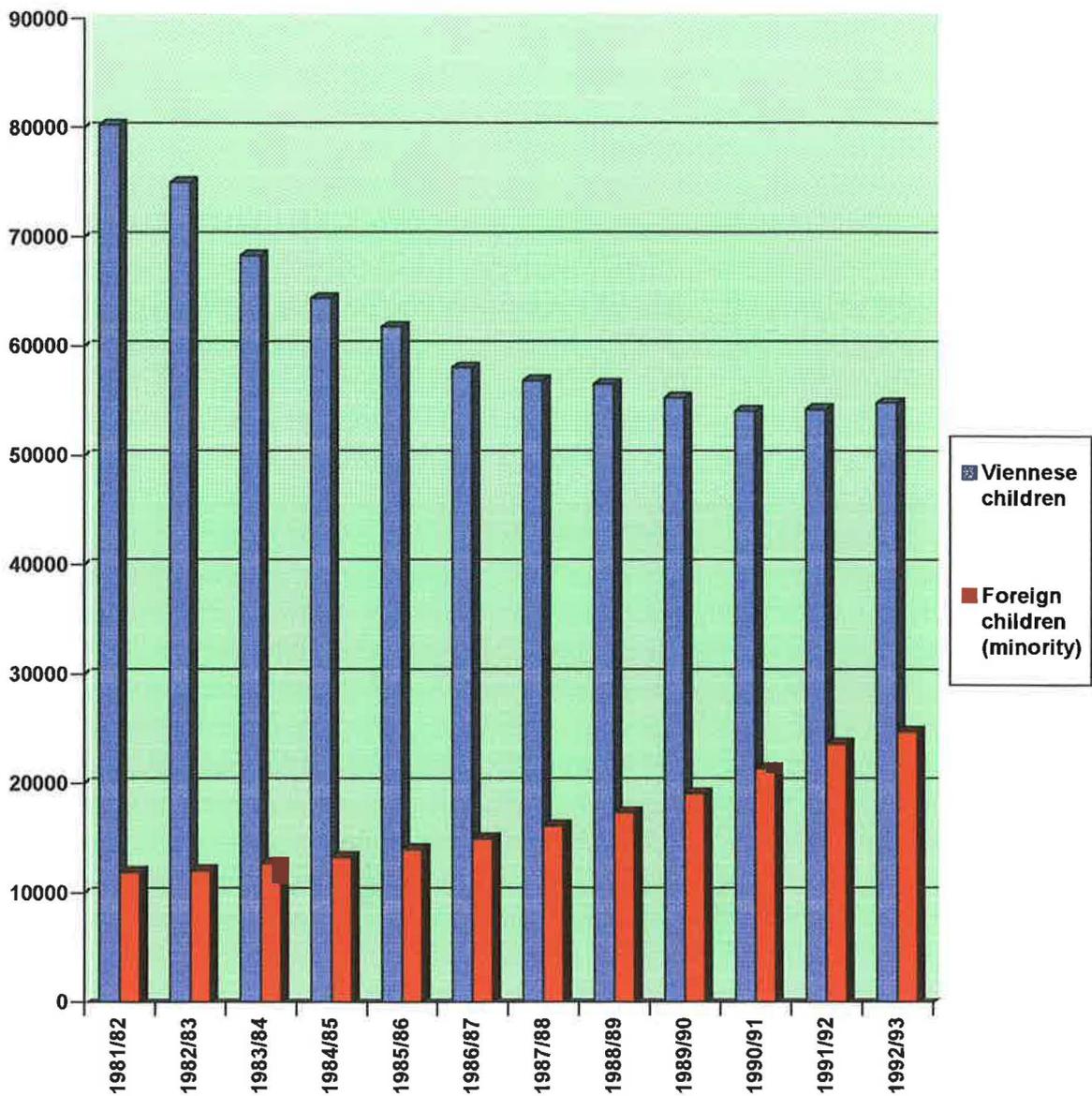
in 1989. The aim of this policy is to introduce German and English as teaching languages from Kindergarten to A-level (*Matura*) (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:31-129; Satzke, Antoni, Seitz & Reumuller 1992/93: 5-59). This means that as Vienna is a melting pot of people of different cultures, English is regarded as the language of the minority as it would be too costly to provide home language instruction for all minority groups (see Table 1 and Graph 1). Table 1 shows the distribution of minority learners of Vienna's compulsory schools from the 1981/82 school year to the 1992/93 school year (the school year in Austria begins in September and ends in August of the next year). The minority learners were 12.90% of the learner population in the 1981/82 school year whereas they were 31.11% in the 1992/93 school year. The main reason for this is the collapse of communism, which saw an influx of refugees from the countries of the former Yugoslavia which border on Austria.

**Table 1 Foreign (minority learners) children at Vienna's compulsory schools**

| School year | Viennese learners | in %  | Minority learners | in %  |
|-------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| 1981/82     | 80 271            | 87.10 | 11 889            | 12.90 |
| 1982/83     | 74 985            | 86.10 | 12 106            | 13.90 |
| 1983/84     | 68 334            | 84.30 | 12 726            | 15.70 |
| 1984/85     | 64 403            | 82.90 | 13 285            | 17.10 |
| 1985/86     | 61 772            | 81.50 | 14 022            | 18.15 |
| 1986/87     | 58 069            | 79.50 | 14 974            | 20.50 |
| 1987/88     | 56 871            | 77.89 | 16 143            | 22.11 |
| 1988/89     | 56 535            | 76.49 | 17 376            | 23.51 |
| 1989/90     | 55 307            | 74.36 | 19 070            | 25.64 |
| 1990/91     | 54 067            | 71.63 | 21 410            | 28.37 |
| 1991/92     | 54 270            | 69.65 | 23 653            | 30.35 |
| 1992/93     | 54 844            | 68.89 | 24 763            | 31.11 |

Source: The Vienna compulsory schools: place for cultural exchange 1992:5

**Graph 1 Foreign (minority learners) children at Vienna's compulsory schools**



Source: The Vienna compulsory schools: place for cultural exchange 1992:5

Table 2 shows that the distribution of minority learners in different school types is disproportional. The selective school system in Austria means that socially disadvantaged

mostly minority groups are found in school types without a good infrastructure, which may often result in poor qualifications. This can be seen in that minority learners are mostly found in special schools, because they lack competence in the German language. Rudlof and Gröpel (1993/94:31) state that the school system as it is gives the child very little time to adjust to the socialisation process when entering school. Therefore the school trial, *Neue Grundschule*, concentrates on children's individual abilities, giving children a longer time to complete their first level of primary school. This is meant to minimise the repeating of grades as this stigmatises children. Rudlof and Gröpel (1993/94:31-47), and Weidinger and Gröpel (1992/93:31-44) believe that minority learners need not be in special schools if they are assisted in acquiring basic German so that they can participate in a regular class. Minority learners or learners lacking in the language of education need assistance to acquire those language skills, before they can be expected to learn survival skills through that language, competitively.

**Table 2**      **Distribution according to school types**

|  | <b>Primary</b><br><i>(Volkschule)</i> | <b>Secondary</b><br><i>(Hauptschule)</i> | <b>Polytechnic</b><br><i>(Polytechnik)</i> | <b>SPECIAL</b><br><b>school</b><br><i>(Allgemein-<br/>bildende<br/>Sonderschule)</i> | <b>other</b><br><b>SPECIAL</b><br><b>school</b><br><i>(Sonderschule)</i> | <b>Total</b>  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|---------------|
| <b>Learners</b>                              | <b>49 726</b>                         | <b>23 861</b>                            | <b>1 709</b>                               | <b>2 616</b>   | <b>1 686</b>   | <b>79 598</b> |
| <b>Yugo</b>                                  | 6 255                                 | 4 650                                    | 317  | 802  | 147  | 12 171        |
| <b>Turk</b>                                  | 4 393                                 | 3 158                                    | 207  | 552  | 109  | 8 419         |
| <b>Pol</b>                                   | 621                                   | 288                                      | 11   | 6  | 18   | 944           |
| <b>Bul</b>                                   | 80                                    | 30                                       | 1  | 0  | 1  | 112           |
| <b>other</b>                                 | 1 956                                 | 1 007                                    | 52   | 61   | 41   | 3 117         |
| <b>Proportion<br/>of minority<br/>groups</b> | <b>13 305</b>                         | <b>9 133</b>                             | <b>588</b>                                 | <b>1 421</b>   | <b>316</b>   | <b>24 763</b> |
| <b>in %</b>                                  | 26.76                                 | 38.28                                    | 34.40                                      | 54.32  | 18.74  | 31.11         |
| <b>increase</b>                              | 0.48                                  | 0.27                                     | 2.03                                       | 6.19   | 1.74   | 0.76          |
| <b>extra-<br/>ordinary<br/>learners</b>      | <b>6 074</b>                          | <b>2 574</b>                             | <b>162</b>                                 | <b>95</b>  | <b>98</b>  | <b>9 003</b>  |
| <b>in %</b>                                  | 12.21                                 | 10.78                                    | 9.47                                       | 3.63   | 5.81   | 11.31         |
| <b>increase</b>                              | 2.19                                  | 0.23                                     | 4.56                                       | 3.55   | 4.81   | 1.73          |

Source: The Vienna compulsory schools: place for cultural exchange 1992:6

### **2.4.2 The Vienna bilingual primary school**

Rudlof and Gröpel (1993/94:47-91) summarise the aims of the compulsory Vienna bilingual primary school, which is part of the whole concept of Vienna bilingual schooling. As mentioned, German and English were introduced as teaching languages. In this respect all minority groups (foreigners) are to take English as their first language as it would be too costly to develop home language instruction for each minority group. The aim is to introduce it in Kindergarten and to proceed to A-level (*Matura*). This type of school aims at teaching learners according to the Austrian syllabus. The emphasis is on home language instruction. This is supported by the Vienna Director of Education, whose objective is to provide children with a chance for second language learning (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:47).

The parents decide in which language writing, reading and mathematics must be taught. The classes are not selected according to the age of the learners but are made up of heterogeneous groups. The Vienna bilingual school is based on this new type of primary school (*Neue Grundschule*). This means that instead of the regular classes, there are two groups of learners and a team of teachers, comprising a monolingual teacher and a bilingual teacher. Instead of failing, the child's teachers and parents discuss whether the child must do two or three years in phase one of primary school. This discussion is held in the fourth semester. Phase two of the primary school takes two years meaning that primary schooling is completed in four or five years. The new concept of primary school aims at minimising stress for the child. In the normal grading system there is a possibility of children failing in the first year of school and being sent to special schools, thus labelling them dull in their first year of school (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:31).

In each group there are 24 learners and there are parallel classes in each phase staffed by two teachers and a third minority language teacher who should assist should a problem occur in the minority language (see Table 3). Besides this the minority language teacher teaches 5 hours per week in the minority language. After phase one, which can take up to a maximum

of three years, children proceed to phase two of primary school. The new concept aims at classifying the primary school into two phases. Children can only be transferred to special schools after channels to help them to perform up to the required standard are exhausted. There is pedagogic consultation with the headmaster who co-ordinates the exercise. The lessons are organised as follows:

| <u>German-speaking group</u>       | <u>Hours</u> |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| German, Reading, Writing           | 7            |
| Mathematics                        | 4            |
| <u>English-speaking group</u>      |              |
| English, Reading, Writing          | 7            |
| Mathematics, Counting              | 4            |
| <u>Lessons as a combined group</u> |              |
| Religion                           | 2            |
| General knowledge                  | 3            |
| Music lessons                      | 1            |
| Art                                | 1            |
| Vocational training                | 1            |
| Physical education                 | 2            |
| Additional lessons                 | 1            |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>22</b>    |

Source: School trials 1993:49

The subjects German or English, Reading, Writing and Mathematics are taught in home language in two groups, with the rest of the subjects taught in German and English in the form of team teaching. The syllabus for phase one is comprehensive, comprising some parts of pre-school material and material normally found in Grades 1 to 3 (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:50; Satzke, Antoni, Seitz & Reumüller 1992:7-25). In the English-speaking group there is a

modified version of the Austrian syllabus which takes into account syllabi of English-speaking countries. The teaching methods are open learning, through acting learning, project oriented and social learning.

After four years there are four class teachers and two minority language teachers involved in the team teaching as shown in Table 3. Phase two is part of the primary school, that is Grades 3 and 4. It is composed of learners from phase one. The teachers who taught phase one in the home language continue with the group into phase two to ensure familiarity and continuity. A descriptive report is given in phase one with the consent of parents and class teachers and could be extended to the second half of the fourth year in phase two. At the end of phase two there is a written report with evaluation marks for each subject.

**Table 3 Team teaching in the bilingual school**

|        | Phase 1                     |                             | Phase 2                     |                             |
|--------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Grade  | 1                           | 2                           | 3                           | 4                           |
| Year 1 | CT(a) HLT(a)<br>24 learners |                             |                             |                             |
| 2      | CT(b) HLT(a)<br>24 learners | CT(a) HLT(a)<br>24 learners |                             |                             |
| 3      | CT(c) HLT(b)<br>24 learners | CT(b) HLT(b)<br>24 learners | CT(a) HLT(a)<br>24 learners |                             |
| 4      | CT(c) HLT(b)<br>24 learners | CT(c) HLT(b)<br>24 learners | CT(b) HLT(a)<br>24 learners | CT(a) HLT(a)<br>24 learners |

Key: CT – class teacher

HLT – home language teacher

Source: School trials 1993:50

In team teaching, work with parents is a powerful integrative force, as parents are extensively informed in the school trials to strengthen contact between foreign and local parents (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:51). The learners for this project were first enrolled in the 1992/93 school year. The students are not to exceed 24 in a group, of whom half should be Austrian German-speaking learners and the rest English-speaking learners. This means that a particular class has 48 learners, as there are parallel classes of 24 learners in a group. This exercise will continue to the year 2000 before its success or failure can be realised in order to adapt and adopt it as the way forward for the Austrian primary school system. Generally, parents/guardians decide where the emphasis should be placed in lessons. This is discussed with the class teachers, who discuss it further with the school forum to determine whether the result of these discussions can be implemented economically. This project is very important in that it seeks to integrate minority learners at no extra infrastructural development except for the additional teachers. This appears to be a viable option for countries aiming at educating their minority learners and bringing them to a level where they can take up productive places in society. In Zimbabwe the poorest O-level results are in the rural schools, followed by those from poor western suburbs (former African areas) while the best results are in private schools and schools in the eastern suburbs (formerly reserved for White people). Team teaching at primary level enables minority learners not to lag behind due language difficulties.

### **2.4.3 Secondary school with a foreign language emphasis**

The internationalisation of societies makes it important for children to learn a foreign language. The schools with the emphasis on a foreign language help children to learn through projects thereby instilling responsibility and motivating learners to learn to accept others (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:88-90). Where English is the foreign language, this is an advantage to Austrian children as it is an international language spoken in many countries of the world. The organisation in secondary schools is similar to the primary schools at first, in that there are two groups involved in integrative lessons. From the seventh year it is possible

to differ according to the job orientation of the learners. In addition, from the seventh year some subjects can be taught in the foreign language.

#### **2.4.3.1 Use of native speakers as assistant teachers in the first foreign language**

|          |       |   |
|----------|-------|---|
| 5th year | ————— | 5 hours per week                                  |
| 6th year | ————— | 4 hours per week                                  |
| 7th year | ————— | 3 hours per week plus 3 hours for another subject |
| 8th year | ————— | 3 hours for another subject                       |

Source: School trials 1993/94:90

In the secondary schools with a foreign language emphasis there is a home language assistant teacher with a teaching load distributed as indicated above (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:90-91). The learner has a choice between two living foreign languages.

Furthermore, where possible, from the seventh year onwards, learners should have a chance to be in the country of their first chosen foreign language, say Great Britain or the United States of America if English is the foreign language. If this is not possible, learners should participate in communal activities in Austria with English-speaking foreign groups of students (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:90). There are 47 secondary schools in Vienna with the emphasis on foreign language learning (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:92).

In the secondary schools with foreign language learning, the relationship between the home and the school is very important. Parents are kept well informed about visits to international institutions.

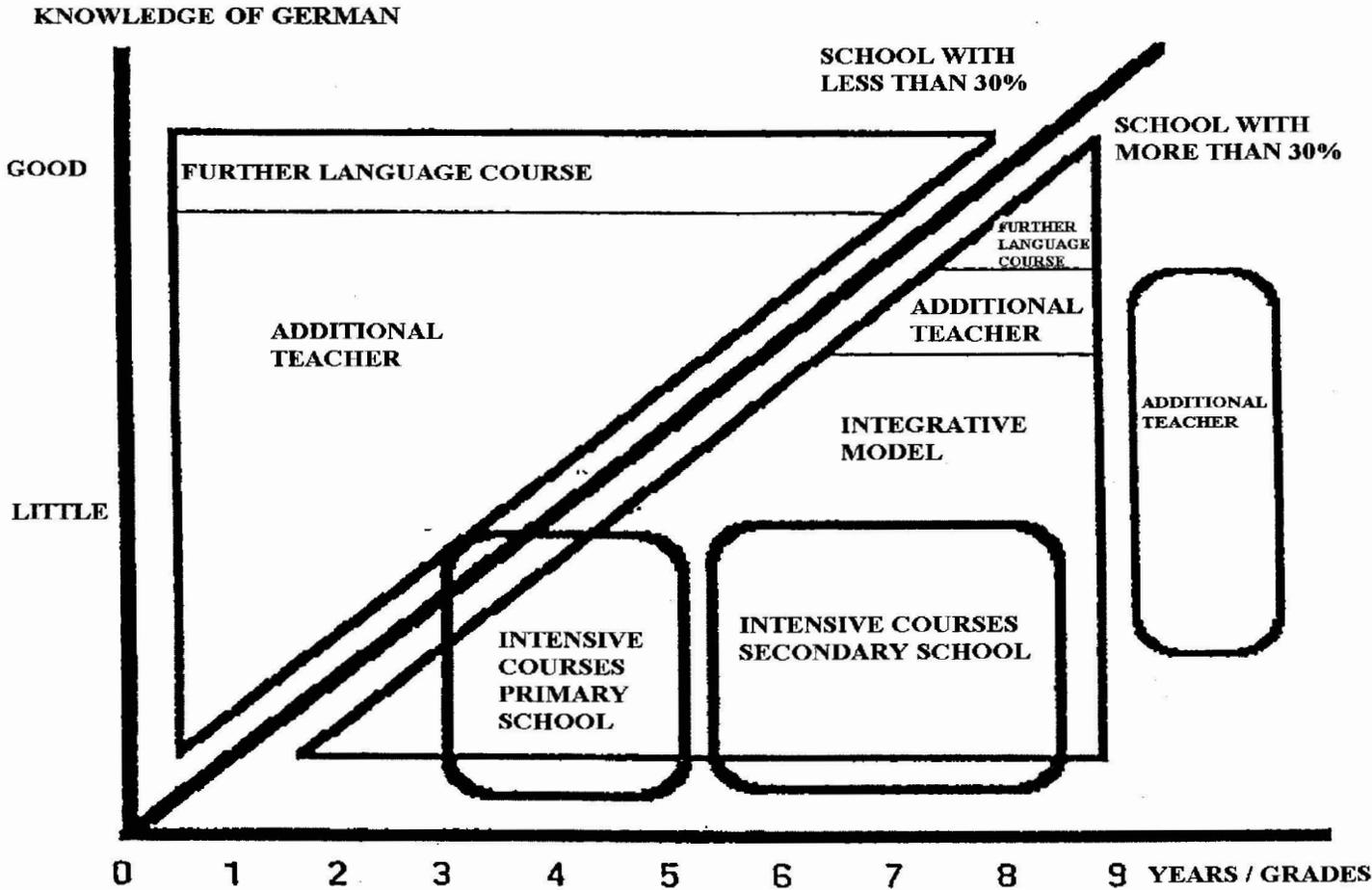
### **2.4.3.2 Minority learners at Vienna's compulsory schools**

Weidinger and Gröpel (1992/93:29-43) and Rudlof and Gröpel (1993/94:88-92) point out that minority children are assisted to be integrated into the school system by additional teachers who teach them extra German lessons. Weidinger and Gröpel (1992/93:29) state that children's individual circumstances are examined, so that children with basic German can be taught extra lessons. These support measures for children with a non-German language as a home language, but with fundamental German, have been implemented at 180 schools where they teach 500 groups for two hours per week. Children who have no knowledge of German are given an additional teacher from four to six hours per week. This has been organised at 150 schools for 1610 groups.

Weidinger and Gröpel point out that the project of the integration of foreign (minority) students care is at schools where their percentage is above the Vienna average or at any other place when teachers request such care. In principle, this model integration of minority students means additional teachers. At 72 schools, 234 classes requested to join this project.

For (*Seiteneinsteiger*) children who come to Austria and enter the Austrian school system, there are special courses for acquiring the German language fast by learning it for 18 hours per week. The aim is to enable the learner to be integrated in an ordinary class quickly. At 125 compulsory schools there are 206 *Seiteneinsteiger* classes. The lessons are in the foreign student's language and are contract teachers. Approximately 800 groups are taught in the languages of the former Yugoslavia, Turkey and Poland. The Diagram 5 clarifies the involvement of the additional teachers in the intensive German courses for learners who enter the Austrian school system from outside Austria.

**Diagram 5** Learners with non-German home language



Source: The Vienna compulsory schools: place of cultural exchange 1992:30

Satzke et al (1992/93:1-57) point out that in a bid to accommodate minority learners, there are schools where team teaching is done in a parallel manner and additive teaching whereby intercultural lessons, German and home language instruction are emphasised, in Austria. In the team teaching both teachers must discuss each child's progress, making it possible to plan the future methodically. The co-ordination of integrative measures and additional contact with

parents and consultation with outside interested bodies is very important (Satzke et al 1992/93:1-2; Feigl 1994:14-40; Weidinger & Gröpel 1992/93:39; Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:51). This means that the shortcomings of involving the whole class thereby making the minority learners miss out, as they will not be fully conversant in German, are minimised or removed. Weidinger and Gröpel (1992/93:39) state that the syllabus for improving German comes from the Pedagogic Institute of Vienna. This syllabus is made up of modules enabling learners to enter at any term during the school year. Twelve hours are entirely for longer studies for learners in their eighth or ninth year of their compulsory schooling. Six hours are reserved for job-oriented lessons and this might last one year.

According to Weidinger and Gröpel (1992/93:41), it has been found that children who have acquired one language find it easy to start on a second language. Since September 1991 there is support for teachers to teach in the language of the child. In Austria, approximately five hours per week are reserved for teaching in the language of the child this means that minority children are taught in their home language and then in German to ensure that they can finally be literate in German in high school. As mentioned in chapter 1, Austria pursues an integrative system of providing education to its minority groups. While the integrative policy would ensure that minority groups retain some aspects of their cultural identity, through providing for learning through their languages, chapter 4 examines this issue in detail to establish whether this is the case in practice.

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## **2.5 THE NEW SYLLABUS**

Satzke et al (1992/93:1-57) summarise the new intercultural syllabus whose aim is the integration of any minority student groups into the Austrian education system as follows: The additional syllabus for German lessons and home language lessons are part of an extensive package to transform the school trials which have been running since the mid-seventies concerning intercultural learning into the ordinary school system. This is generally a new

concept in the Austrian school development for school trials. School trials are held in some selected schools to find out how best to provide education to the Austrian nation, including minority groups. They determine a special model for ordinary school and show the content, didactic, educational, organisational basics and framework. This reality means completely new responsibilities and needs, which are related to the actualised discussions of autonomy, regionalisation and decentralisation of the Austrian education system.

Generally, children with non-German as a home language, regardless of citizenship, at compulsory schools in Vienna and Austria as a whole, should be helped to acquire an elementary knowledge of the German language. This enables them to communicate easily thereby making the integrative process less complex. The intercultural relationships within the school should be such that the right to cultural independence is not affected. In this case the culture of the students of a multicultural class should be an area of learning within the class, that is a subject in its own right and entering point for acceptance. Follow up should emphasise continuous language development. Students of non-German home language receive help so that finally in higher classes they can follow lessons normally like other Austrian German-speaking children. The aim of team teaching therefore is not only to concentrate on each child but to involve the whole class in learning not only subject content but a second language as well. This means that learning must go on, even before children are proficient in the German language. This is possible because there is a teacher who is proficient in the child's language, thus ensuring the protection of education as the child's basic right. Chapter 3 discusses how the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom have dealt with the question of providing education to their minority groups.

## CHAPTER 3

### **The provision of education for minority groups in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada**

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#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter examines the provision of education for minority groups in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada. The situation in these countries is compared and contrasted with the Austrian provision of education for minority groups. The aim is to study the policies dictating the provision of education for minority groups and to establish whether minority groups receive equitable education.

Generally, across nations, societies and cultures, the construction of reality through some languages can cause inequalities to be regarded as legitimate. Pluralistic societies often stigmatise some languages when languages of the dominant groups are used in preference to others. This may result in discrimination of the native speakers of non-dominant languages (Corson 1993:13). Samuda (1989:1) discusses how the schools in pluralistic societies in the Western world are often geared to upholding the standards, norms and values of an Anglo-Saxon perspective. These standards may become discriminatory when they are used to assess and place children from varied backgrounds into a school system originally designed for a homogenous group. Some structural bias, that cuts across the curriculum as regards what is deemed right, may be embedded in the societal institutions.

In this respect, Giroux (1981:23) and Smolicz (1979:9) concur that coercive political power is used to enforce the cultural hegemony of the dominant group, "propagated by the mass media and a compulsory system of education".

It is generally accepted that public school systems are not autonomous but part of a larger and interlocking system of political, economic, social and cultural structures (Mallea 1989:5). These are shaped by a complex set of power differentials, in which dominant groups exercise control over public school systems which might marginalise minority groups. Ng, Staton and Scane (1995:149) concur when they point out that critical teachers should teach minority students the code and rules, which are established by the dominant groups, so that they can compete in the education hierarchy. Berry 1979 (in Bagley and Verma 1983:X-XI) defines four contrasted conditions which may result:

- **Integration:** Integration implies that society desires to maintain positive inter-group relations. This is regarded as the full realisation of pluralism.
- **Separatism:** This is when separatism is emphasised by the majority (economically and or politically powerful), who do not want to maintain positive relationships with the minority groups.
- **Marginality:** When the majority group (the economically and or politically powerful) is hostile to the minority group.
- **Assimilation:** When the minority group has no wish to retain a separate identity, they are assimilated and take the cultural identity of the majority.

In this respect Todd (1991:54,106,107) maintains that change in schools requires the negotiation of individuals and analysis of routines so as to reduce prejudice by distinguishing between group similarities and within group differences. This would help facilitate children's acceptance of views that are different to their own. Although Moodley (1983:326) drew attention to the unequal ethnic life chances and called for multicultural education to be politicised in order to improve the chances for the school success of children from minority groups, multicultural education has been criticised for being concerned with social control rather than social change (Ng, Staton & Scane 1995:4). Olneck (1990:166) describes how multicultural education is divorced from reality in as far as it does not state its interwovenness to socio-political institutions in which it functions and in as far as it depicts

culture in a reified, fragmented homogenised manner. According to Ng, Staton and Scane (1996:61), multicultural antiracist education should be concerned with the political and moral activity before it can be regarded as technical or vocational. This means that unless the political structures responsible for policy formulation realise their obligation in the equitable provision of education to minority groups, they cannot be integrative education leading to realisation of everyone's potential.

Verma and Bagley (1979) and Young and Bagley (1981) in (Bagley & Verma 1983:X) argue that:

multicultural education assumes that educational processes should respond to, and respect and foster the cultural identity of various minority groups in society, as well as making members of the majority group culture aware of the needs and aspirations of the minority groups. The ultimate aim of multicultural education is to produce students who have a cognitively complex view of a world within which they are in harmony, having a magnanimously proud sense of their personal and cultural identity, a pride tempered by concern for others, empathy, altruism and the possibilities of self-actualisation in adult life.

The provision of education to minority groups should be such that they feel that their interests are also being looked after.

However, Giroux (1992:10) maintains that "multiculturalism should mean analysing not just stereotypes but also how institutions produce racism and other forms of discrimination, to minority groups."

According to Baker (1994:11),

Multicultural education is a process through which individuals are exposed to the diversity that exist in the United States and the World, whereby children should have

the opportunity to learn regardless of their gender, social class, ethnic, racial or cultural traits.

This would mean that there would be no cultural or any group that feels superior to other groups. For example, in the United Kingdom there is lobbying to ban supremacist groups and to replace the 1976 Race Relations Act to improve race relations (Reuters 1999:5).

The word "minority" acquires different meanings according to the context in which it is used. Churchill (1986:6) defines the word "minority" to denote:

- Indigenous peoples: such as Indians in the United States of America and Canada.
- Established minority groups, such as the Hispanics in the United States of America and the Canadian Francophones.
- New minorities, such as immigrants into the United Kingdom from the commonwealth countries and many other immigrants who immigrated due to some other social upheavals in their own countries (eg, east Europeans who went to western Europe when communism disintegrated).

However, Ng, Staton and Scane (1995:130) define "minority" as "people who are relatively powerless in the hierarchy of power and authority". This means that people who are numerically the majority may be the minority in terms of economic power; for example, women in a group and most black people in Zimbabwe, who constitute disadvantaged groups.

Although these categories are hardly precise, these minority groups must be provided with relevant education that prepares them to take their place in the society in which they live, function and work. This can happen when governments define their citizens' rights without disadvantaging anyone.

As the nature of the education problem faced by linguistic and cultural minority groups in the three countries is different, the historical background is first discussed briefly, before the contemporary situation is discussed.

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### **3.2 THE EARLY HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION FOR MINORITY GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND CANADA**

#### **3.2.1 The United States of America**

The United States of America is an ethnic and culturally diverse society whose native inhabitants spoke more than 200 languages (Banks & Lynch 1986:30). Bailey (1961:67) describes how the English and then other Europeans were settled in America by 1790, with the Black population forming the largest non-European group.

The primary goal of the education system was to Americanise (Anglicise) the minority groups so that they could be assimilated into the Anglo-Saxon culture. In this respect Ng, Staton and Scane (1995:23) cite Cubberley (1909:15-16) as saying:

Everywhere these people (immigrants) tended to settle in groups or settlements and to set up their manners, customs and observances. Our task is to break up these groups or..., to assimilate and amalgamate, as far as can be done, the Anglo-Saxon conception of righteousness, law and order and popular government and to awaken in them a reverence for our democratic institutions and for those things in our national life which we as a people hold to be of abiding worth.

Through the pursuit of the assimilationist policies, Banks and Lynch (1986:32) and Weinberg (1983:113) concur that the education of non-white ethnic groups was planned to be inferior through discriminatory funding, less trained teachers and poor teaching materials which

culminated into a narrow and impoverished curriculum. As a result of this, many black people were not found in positions requiring advanced education.

Drake (1966:4-5) explains why this system of education perpetuated the failure of minority groups, especially the Black population:

Negroes in America have been subject to victimisation in the sense that a system of social relations operates in such a way as to deprive them of a chance to share in the more desirable material and non-material products of the society which is dependent, in part, upon their labour and loyalty. They are victimised also because they do not have the same degree of access which others have to the attributes needed for rising in the general class system- money, education, "contacts"...The victims, their autonomy curtailed, and their self-esteem weakened by the operation of the caste-class system, are confronted with "identity problems". Their social condition is essentially one of "powerlessness".

Banks (1986:32-33) thus concludes that, despite being taught the American ideals instituted in the bill of rights, minority groups were excluded from enjoying such rights.

These contradictory policies on the egalitarian ideals and racist ideology eventually sparked the civil war, which led minority groups to challenge the education system (Banks 1986:32,33,35; Weinberg 1983:14-19). Mexican-American parents scored a landmark victory for minority groups (Weinberg 1983:19) when Judge McCormick decided in their favour against separate-but-equal institutions, declaring that: "A paramount requisite in the American system of public education is social equality. It must be open to all children by unified school association regardless of lineage".

This was a complete reversal of the concept of separate-but-equal institutions, which had been upheld by the Supreme Court since 1896 (Banks & Lynch 1986:35). As a result, other minority groups lobbied for their rights and the 1950s and 1960s saw the establishment of the

National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP). This civil rights organisation succeeded in getting segregated schools declared unconstitutional (Banks 1986:37, Weinberg 1983:19).

The minority groups were convinced that the effectiveness of schooling is closely bound with the equality and equity of education. Because of multi-ethnic demands, legislation was enacted (Banks & Lynch 1986:40; Imhoff 1990:19-20, 231; Weinberg 1983:24, 211) as follows:

- The Title (I) amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ASEA) of 1965 was designed to provide assistance to educational agencies for the education of children from low income families,
- The Title (VII) to the ASEA (Bilingual Education Act of 1968) provided special funds to help students who came to school speaking a language other than English,
- The Title (IX) amendment to the ASEA (Ethnic Heritage Studies Act 1972) which provided funds for the study of the history and culture of ethnic groups and to train teachers to incorporate ethnic content into the curriculum.

These amendments are the basis on which multicultural education was founded in America. The Board of Directors for Teacher Education adopted a policy statement, "No one model American in 1973", which reads (Banks & Lynch 1986:42-43):

Multicultural education rejects the view that schools should seek to melt away cultural differences or view that schools should merely tolerate cultural pluralism. Instead, multicultural education should be oriented towards the cultural enrichment of all children and youth through progress rooted to the preservation and the extension of cultural alternatives.

Thus, pressure from multi-ethnic groups resulted in the merging of multicultural education. School districts were required by law to offer equitable education to all Americans, regardless of race, colour, creed or any lineage.

### **3.2.2 The United Kingdom**

Like the United States of America, the United Kingdom emphasised assimilation, in order to minimise cultural differences and to preserve the homogeneity of the country. By the 13th century the United Kingdom was occupied by the Romans, then the Viking raiders and immigrants from other European countries, notably Jews, Flemish, Scottish, Welsh and some Black people (Banks & Lynch 1986:76; Todd 1991:1-20; Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:1-3). Walvin (1984:33) reports the presence of a black population in London by the mid 18th century and that it had increased to 20 000 by 1764.

To ensure speedy assimilation, the second report of the Commonwealth Advisory Council (1964:paragraph 10) believed that: "...a national system of education must aim at producing citizens who can take up their place in a society properly equipped to exercise rights and perform duties which are the same as other citizens...it can not be expected to perpetuate the different values of immigrant groups".

Supporting the policy of dispersal, whereby immigrant children were spread in different schools, to avoid undue concentration, Peterson (Male 1989:41) states that:

...schools want to give their immigrant pupils as good an introduction to life in Britain as possible. The evidence we have received strongly suggests that if a school has more than a certain percentage of immigrant children among its pupils, the whole character and ethos of the school is altered. Immigrant pupils in such a school will not get as good an introduction to British life as they would get in a normal school, and we think their education must suffer as a result.

As the assimilationist policies disregarded the cultural differences of the immigrants, most of them found themselves in schools for the mentally retarded, just like in the United States of America (Banks & Lynch 1986: 80; Samuda 1989:17-18, 95; Weinberg 1983:32-41; Watson 1988:542). This is because intelligent tests are culture bound and therefore minority groups were not only disadvantaged because they did not understand the culture but also because they could not communicate in the foreign language.

In 1968 the Home Secretary marked the change in British policy. Assimilation would be accompanied by equal opportunity and the accommodation of cultural diversity through mutual tolerance (Watson 1988:541-542). Because of these developments, the House of Commons Select Committee on Race Relations (Watson 1984:386-387) urged government to train teachers as follows:

We would like to see every college of education in the country teaching its students something about race relations and the problems of immigrants... Teachers should be equipped to prepare all their children for a multicultural society.

The Department of Education and Science (DES) Report on the Education of Immigrants (1971:120) urged the education system to promote the acceptance of immigrants, as diversity would eventually enrich the mainstream culture and social tradition. Despite these pronouncements, many British scholars are critical of the government's failure to have a firm policy on the provision of education to minority groups. Watson (1988:534) argues this matter as follows:

Because education is essentially a local matter in the British context Government thought to pass the onus of responsibility for educational policy and provision to local authorities. At no time have Government accepted that they have some responsibility for formulating national educational policies... One critic has observed "it is as well to remind ourselves that laissez-faire is not the absence of policy so much as a policy not to have a policy".

Consequently, the European Economic Community's directive on home language teaching could not be effectively enforced by the government, on the grounds that this was local authority's responsibility (Watson 1988:532).

In 1978 the DES invited seven Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to establish special access courses, to prepare minority group students for higher education as teachers. In 1979 and 1980 there were eleven such courses with 169 students, who increased to 291 by 1981 (Tomlinson 1983:86).

The school curriculum was equally explicit (DES 1981:paragraph 21):

What is taught in schools and the way it is taught must appropriately reflect fundamental values in our society... the work of our schools has to reflect many issues with which pupils have to come to terms as they mature and schools and teachers are familiar with them... Society has become multicultural and there is now among pupils and parents a greater diversity of personal values...

Because of these declarations, developments in multicultural education reflecting the ethnic diversity were grounded in the United Kingdom.

### **3.2.3 Canada**

Before the arrival of European colonialists, Canada was made up of about 50 distinct Indian tribes who spoke over twelve different languages. However, between the 16th and 18th centuries there was an influx of French colonialists until 1763 when Canada was ceded to the British, and by the 19th century the British outnumbered the French (Banks & Lynch 1986: 51).

The French minority group resisted assimilation, so that in 1864 an act of parliament declared that both French and English would be used in the assembly and legislature of Canada,

respectively (Mallea 1989:8). Furthermore, the British American Act of 1867 recognised diversity, accommodated minority concerns besides pushing for territorial integration (Mallea 1989:58). Mallory (1972:2) indicates that education was removed out of the national and political system into the provinces, thereby establishing a Federal system of education.

When Canada 's economy was booming (Banks & Lynch 1986:51; Mallea 1989:59; Samuda 1989:9), the need to settle the prairies resulted in the arrival of other European immigrants and Asians who came as contract labourers.

Despite valuing the cultural mosaic, early Canadian educators interpreted the failure of minority groups as culturally rooted. According to Banks and Lynch (1986:59),

Canadian education is replete with instances of the forcible removal of Indian children from their homes and families in order to exorcise them of their malignant cultures... Characteristic of a victim blame approach, such a perspective overlooked the complex inter-relationship between the economic, social and political factors involved, which transcends the cultural basis.

With the relaxation of the immigration policy in the early 1960s, multiculturalism was recognised as a philosophy and government policy (Samuda 1989:9). At this time the French Canadians felt that they were being discriminated against and treated as inferior by the majority English Canadians. The separatist movement in Quebec coincided with the civil rights movement of Black Americans in the United States of America (see 3.3.1) and "with Prime Minister Diefenbaker's call for a Canadian Bill of Rights"(Samuda 1989:9).

Clement (Mallea 1989:20) distinguishes "between inequality of opportunity, which is the differential access to elite positions and inequality of condition resulting from the hierarchically organised nature of Canadian society. Inequality of condition, he argued, leads to inequality of opportunity because the elite successfully transmit their privileges, inherited

wealth, social contacts, ...The school...serves the ideology and interests of the dominant classes rather than those of the subordinate groups".

Because of the constant lobbying by the French Canadians (Mallea 1989:64-70), the government established the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which led to French being declared one of the official languages of Canada. This issue of language resulted in other powerful ethnic minority groups demanding recognition of their languages. So, the government changed its policy to bilingualism within a multicultural context and in 1971 the Prime Minister announced that "although there are two official languages, there is no official culture; nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians" (Trudeau 1971:1; Ng, Staton & Scane 1995:4).

This meant that any minority group in an area where the majority speaks French would use it as their first language with English as their second language. However, this later shifted to mean that minority groups relied on their languages with French or English as the second language. Thus, Canada tried as far as possible to provide a fair and equitable education based on a federal system, to enable these immigrants to meet the demands of a complex industrialised, urbanised society (Banks & Lynch 1986:52-53; see 3.3.3).

### **3.3 CONTEMPORARY POLICIES DETERMINING THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION FOR MINORITY GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND CANADA**

#### **3.3.1 The United States of America**

The background to American race relations and therefore multiculturalism is the bill of rights, which enabled minority groups to challenge slavery. As a result of the bill of rights, minority groups lobbied for equal rights, and segregated schools were declared unconstitutional (Banks & Lynch 1986:37; Weinberg 1983:19).

However, even after such declarations, Borona and Garcia (1990:27-30) point out that less than 2% of the schools made use of language proficiency called for in the proposed regulations of 1977. It was feared that minority children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds might be misclassified, due to standardised intelligence tests that do not distinguish among several causes of low score. According to Bain and Herman (1990:41-42), findings indicate that "science could not begin to differentiate hereditary variations in intelligence from environmental ones until social conditions had been equal for several generations".

Thus, according to Weidinger and Gröpel (1992/93:4), the difference in academic performance could best be explained by the variables of language, values, customs, attitudes and norms which are characteristically associated with culture and socio-economic groups. This means therefore that only by changing the educational experiences, that is introducing culture-related education, can we expect minority children to pass in great numbers. Intelligence is a culture-bound concept, which cannot be distanced from the environment, and the people for whom it is set (Bain & Herman 1990:3; Chalmers 1996:40). This means "a school could become the means of a self-fulfilling prophecy, where the intellectual inferiority of minorities is scientifically demonstrated" (Samuda 1989:3). Multicultural education is

commonly criticised for being concerned more with social control than social change (Ng, Staton & Scane 1995:4). In this case it is important for those teaching a multicultural curriculum to have an understanding of cultural and racial differences and develop appropriate techniques and materials that will help to achieve the teaching objectives. Moreover, Stuhr, Petrovich-Mwaniki and Watson (1992:20), Baker (1994:5,7,68-73), Chalmers (1996: 8,45) and Asante (1992:28-31) conclude that such a curriculum would relate to the cultural experiences of the students, like basing art lessons on the history of the local area, and looking at the experiences of African-American people in the teaching of American history. Baker (1994:85-86), Imhoff (1990:4), Chalmers (1996:2,8-10) and Ng, Staton and Scane (1995:33) describe the fundamental mismatch between the school curriculum and life experiences and the cultural backgrounds of the American minority youth, due to different education opportunities and life chances for minority and majority youth. Ng, Staton and Scane (1995:33) believe that schools privilege middle class values while minority group values are often ignored.

Chalmers (1996:2,5-10), Grant (1992:12) and others believe that the curriculum should reflect the dreams, hopes and reflectives of minority groups, as they believe that by the year 2000, minority groups will not only constitute the majority of the world population but of many American states as well. Accordingly, America's fifty states have formal multicultural programmes, with departments for vetting teachers' understanding of cultural issues and inspecting the curriculum for sexist and racist content (Mitchell & Salisbury 1996:339-340).

The implementation of legislation on bilingual education meant that between 1970 and 1973 the number of New York students enrolled in bilingual classes rose from 6 000 to 13 815 and 73 000 in 1973 (Weinberg 1983:240). The 1990s evaluated these programmes. In many American schools there is no longer a majority group. So, for example, the San Francisco Unified District created an international staff development programme to enable teachers to discuss race, and class issues on previously held views about different cultures so as to confront their own prejudices (Shulman & Mesa-Bains 1993:1-3).

Currently there are many affirmative programmes going on in America. There are two main models of bilingual education in America (Cavaliere 1998:1-2; Imhoff 1990:24-28), in which English-speaking children are in non-English-speaking classes and maintenance programmes that preserve minority children's native languages while increasing their English proficiency. There are about 150 000 students in the largest school district, the New York City Board of Education (Cavaliere 1998:3) and those in maintenance programmes outperformed their schoolmates in Maths and English by Grade 3. Bilingual education is favourable to minority children as it reduces their numbers who were formerly over-represented in classes for the mentally retarded (Weinberg 1983:28, 32-40; Samuda 1989:17; Shulman & Mesa-Bains 1993:65) because people apparently did not realise minority groups' failure to pass intelligence tests could be due to their lack of mastering the foreign language. Bilingual students spend 10% of their time in English instruction, while 20% is spent "mixing in art, music and structured physical education classes" (Hardy 1997:3). This is to enable children to learn English in low anxiety settings.

Studies of non-native English speakers in bilingual programmes and native speakers in immersion programmes show that students need to understand 50% of the English language to promote high levels of language proficiency among language majority students and academic achievement among minority students. This means that 10% of English instruction is necessary in the initial stages of promoting English use to non-native speakers and then 50% in later elementary years (Borona & Garcia 1990:102-103; Moran & Hakuta 1995:446). Furthermore, Mitchell and Salisbury (1996:34-142) point out that integration through bussing or grade level redistribution is important. This means that where one school is a kindergarten, children of the same age level are bussed to that kindergarten, resulting in children of different racial backgrounds being integrated due to the age factor. There are also special emphasis schools, such as Maths, so that students with an aptitude for Maths can go to that particular school. Bennett (1995:673) points out how other forms of affirmative action programmes, such as the quota system, whose objectives are to eliminate the injustices of the after effects of the slavery period are resisted as reverse discrimination by the dominant

groups. On the other hand, minority groups are disenchanted with this system as the beneficiaries are viewed as less qualified.

The need to develop minority role models resulted in the New York State planning the increase of minority students at elementary, middle and secondary levels (Baker 1994:14-16; Grant 1992:32,193; Richer & Weir 1995:255-261). In adopting teaching strategies, Shulman and Mesa-Bains (1993:19) believe that the text, "Pygmalion" helps teachers to realise that acceptance by dominant cultures means recognising their prejudices and learning to play along according to the dominant culture's norms. Reisman (1994:7-83) uses storyboarding to help English second language speakers to become creative.

Giroux (1992:33) points out that:

Students must be encouraged to cross ideological and political borders as a way of furthering the limits of their own understanding in a setting that is pedagogically safe and socially nurturing rather than authoritarian and infused with the suffocating smugness of certain political correctness.

The provision of education to minority groups in America is an on-going process. Policy makers embrace anti-racist education, whereby observable socio-economic power is believed to be historical due to institutional and social power relations that produce inequality (Richer & Weir 1995:255-256,268; Coalition to defend affirmative action... 1996:1-4; Defend affirmative action 1996:1-4).

### **3.3.2 The United Kingdom**

As demographic changes occur schools are called upon to make schooling equal and equitable for all races and cultures (Grant 1992:1).

In the 1960s attempts were made to meet the needs of minority children, due to educational inequality related to socio-economic factors (Male 1989: 56). Even then calls were made for the re-examination of school books (The *Plowden Report* 1967:71) as some of them "displayed an out of date attitude towards foreigners and coloured people...".

Despite these calls (Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:7) the European Parliament reports that a racist attack is made every 26 minutes and the minority's plight has not greatly improved in the United Kingdom. Multicultural education is criticised in this regard and minority groups in the United States of America and elsewhere are calling for anti-racist education that accepts pluralism and is geared to bring about egalitarianism besides giving relevancy to issues of class and gender (NG, Staton & Scane 1995:87). The transformation of individuals' attitudes and social change are called for. Giroux (1990:10) maintains that: "Multiculturalism should mean not just stereotypes but also how institutions produce racism and other forms of discrimination".

In the 1980s, John Rex (Commission for Racial Equality: *Five Views of Multiracial Britain* 1978:20) expressed this matter as follows:

Most people who think about multi-cultural education at all think of teaching immigrants British ways, on the one hand, and taking a patronising interest in immigrant customs on the other. What I am suggesting is that we learn about the history, the culture and the social organisation of, say, the Sikhs, and the part they have played in the empire, and come to see them as different from ourselves in the way the French are, but not as inferior.

Richer and Weir (1995:107) stress that:

As there is an aggressive policy of multiculturalism, there is no need for children from a Sikh or West Indian background to be required to learn British or European history anymore than any other world histories... Since we can't teach them all it is better to teach social studies and current events which validate all children by letting

them voice their own opinions instead of intimidating them with the unfamiliar which might make them feel inferior.

Richer and Weir question what constitutes world history or well-known global occurrences. The point being raised is that it is wrong to imply that minority learners are ignorant because they do not know events that are considered important in the Western world. In other words, if the minority learner is very good in the three Rs, what is considered as historically significant in his culture should be ranked important. For instance, the researcher had to learn about the First and Second World wars in History lessons and the American great lakes in Geography instead of topics relating to Zimbabwe, as the syllabuses were only rewritten after 1980. This is what makes people inferior as it implies that people have no history or that their history is not important enough to warrant its study. Thus while it is important for minority learners to have a global perspective of the world, what constitutes global requires proper definition, to encompass what minority groups are familiar with.

In addition, concerns have been raised about the absence of a clear national policy for multicultural and explicit curricular guidance (Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:17-18; Figueroa 1995:795). In spite of this, school districts such as Hampshire (Fyfe 1993:281-284) adopted an intercultural antiracial education policy whereby schools are provided with guidelines on multicultural education and how to combat racial harassment. This is significant as it enhances awareness of the complexity of minority groups.

While multicultural education that promotes justice and equality for all in Britain is called for, Banks (1992:113) and Tod (1991:106-107) appeal for an education that promotes activities that explore the link between children's experiences and the wider economic and political contexts. The result of the Rampton (1981) and Swan (1985) reports caused Bradford and other school districts to run racism awareness campaigns (Figueroa 1995:795; Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:22,40-41). Moreover, the history syllabus now includes material from different periods and cultures so that issues can be approached from the point of view of

minority groups. This means that the syllabus is being changed to be relevant to minority groups. As the United Kingdom is a signatory to the International Human Rights Bill, Figueroa (1995:131) believes that multicultural education will continue to change and be of relevance to minority groups.

Verma, Zec and Skinner (1994:41) discuss how the Inner London Education Authority is reformulating a policy of equal opportunities in education from the curriculum support group and point out that a number of ethnic minority teachers are in senior posts. They state that recently trained teachers have received some preparation for teaching in multi-ethnic schools where topics such as racism and the contribution of minority groups in discoveries and innovation are emphasised.

Besides this there are general home language instruction and translation services after school (Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:83-84). Thus it is clear that the LEAs are committed to changing teaching and curricula to reflect the pluralistic nature of society. This is as a result of the fact that even second generation minority groups have resisted assimilation (Churchill 1986:45).

It would appear that minority learners' performance is frequently explained according to these categories:

- Home - that is the socio-economic status of a disadvantaged background, such as being viewed negatively by the majority or the economically powerful
- School - teacher expectations and the curriculum developed for Anglo-Saxon populations
- Learner characteristics - such as language problems and the self-concept of minority learners

The United Kingdom is working to fulfil the provision of equitable education to its minority groups.

### **3.3.3 Canada**

Although like the United Kingdom and the United States of America, Canada has always valued the cultural mosaic, it has pursued an assimilationistic policy in its provision of education to minority groups. According to Banks and Lynch (1986:59) and Samuda (1989:9), the wish to have one's culture dominant over other cultures has been a source of recurring conflict since the arrival of the Europeans in the 17th century.

When the multicultural education ideology developed, it focused on visible ethnic and cultural tolerance and understanding, rather than on how these were produced historically and ideologically and their social and economical consequences (Ng, Staton & Scane 1995:XIII, 4). It would seem that multicultural education was concerned with social control rather than social change (Ng, Staton & Scane (1995:4).

The Royal Commission on Education in 1961 and the Royal Commission on Bilingualism in 1963 documented inequalities between Francophones and Anglophones in many societal activities, including the educational areas even in Quebec where the French are the majority (Mallea 1989:66,68,73; Banks & Lynch 1986:54). Consequently the Canadian Government has virtually accepted that the bad performance of minority groups is due to an unsuitable curriculum. In policy number 119 the Ministry of Education (1993:45) declared that

there is a growing Recognition that the education, policies and programs have been European in perspective and have failed to take into account the view points, and experiences of Aboriginal people and many other racial and ethnocultural Minorities. As a result systematic inequalities limit the opportunities for Aboriginal and other students... Educators therefore need to identify and change institutional policies that are racist in their impact, if not in content...

Thus, the emphasis is on making an appropriate curriculum for the peoples of Canada.

Accordingly, the Toronto Board of Education set up an official policy on race relations, whereby currently there are forty Boards of Education in Ontario with race relation policies (Ng, Staton & Scane 1995:7,8-10). These race relation policies promote anti-racist education that seeks to eradicate racism in schools and society at large. Consequently Canada's educational policies are determined by the minister of education in each province and the provincial department of education is responsible for teacher certification and selection of textbooks (Mitchell & Salisbury 1996:61).

Solomon and Brown (1994:1-22) believe that Black students have not performed to expected levels as they feel alienated from the curriculum. In Solomon and Brown (1994:10) one student summed up his feelings as follows:

If you are hearing something from the teacher, a negative comment, some lessons that abuses your race, always speaking positively about other students you know, White, Chinese and never Blacks you get angry and you either don't want to hear or you might want to say something bad to the teacher...

It is very difficult for minority group children to be enthusiastic in school systems where teachers devalue what they embrace as part of their cultural identity. As a result of this (Ng, Staton & Scane 1995:14-18) retreat camps of 10 students and a teacher, comprising about five schools discuss anti-racist education to see how the curriculum can be improved from marginalising minority groups. Moreover the introduction of Bill 101, the Charter of the French language, enabled Indian tribes to administer their education by means of a contract with the federal government (Mallea 1989:69-82; Ng, Staton & Scane 1995:80). In this case the federal government manages these Indian schools through budgetary initiatives resulting in higher participation levels in class by Indian students as the curriculum is infused with cultural content. In 1998 the Nisga's First Nation concluded a deal with the federal government and the provincial government of British Columbia, one of whose offers was legal control over education (Crawley 1998:4).

Thus in Canada's federal education system, the minority groups' educational needs are catered for by means of the creation of intercultural awareness, after-school language programmes and integrated language programmes.

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### **3.4 A COMPARISON OF THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION FOR MINORITIES IN THE THREE COUNTRIES**

#### **3.4.1. Introduction**

The use of minority languages is aimed at enabling children to find geographic as well as social fixation. Minority language use is encouraged as the treatment of educational issues is often impossible without reference to the environment outside the school, specifically the degree of integration of the minority within the larger community. This section aims at examining the differences in the way the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada handle the question of providing education to minority groups, as research shows that low academic achievement amongst minority groups is mainly due to language problems and an inappropriate curriculum.

#### **3.4.2 Educational policies**

It is generally believed that gains in educational achievement for minority groups have been so marginal that these countries are still striving for equitable solutions. Although the three countries' background to race relations is different, their educational policies have gone through a long evolutionary process. Currently pluralistic antiracist education that is infused with the cultural content of the minority groups is advocated (see 3.3.3).

Although the education system in England is based on the delivery of services through local authorities, using the central inspectorate (Churchill 1986:17), interethnic relations in the school result in the reduction of hostilities in society (Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:1-117). This is so as local education authorities have adopted a consultative approach on school policies on equal opportunities and multicultural anti-racist education (Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:40,117; Figueroa 1995:796).

On the other hand, Canada operates a federal system of education whereby each province has total control over its education system (see 3.3.3). The formulation of a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework allows the Canadian population to be bilingual, that is to speak at least French and English (Mallea 1989:73; Mitchell & Salisbury 1996:61; Moodley 1995:815-817). The Canadian government wishes to allow its peoples to control their education and to fulfil this, it negotiated a treaty with the Nisga's First Nation to give them self-rule (Crawley 1998:4).

In the United States of America, the states provide education to minority groups within the dictates of the federal mandates (Gollnick 1995:44-60) which are reviewed every six years. As discussed, the 1990s have seen agitation for equal education opportunity resulting compensatory education.

### **3.4.3 Provision for the participation of minority groups**

The impetus for minority rights in the United Kingdom was spurred by the Council of Europe's Directive of 25 July 1977, whereby member states were to provide immigrant children with equal opportunities through teaching them in their home language. The commitment to egalitarian ideals paved the way for minority groups to lobby government for equal treatment in the provision of education in the United States of America. In Canada, the formulation of a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework means that ethnic

minority groups are involved in the development of the curriculum of their children (Samuda 1989:9-10; Mallea 1989:72-73; Banks & Lynch 1986:54; Mitchell & Salisbury 1996:61).

In the United States of America, the provision of education to minority groups is through compensatory models comprising bilingual classes, affirmative action and instructional intervention to close the learning gap between minority and majority learners (Borona & Garcia 1987:29-30,34; Samuda 1989:17; Weinberg 1983:28,32-41; Bain & Herman 1990:7-10; Calvaliere 1998:1-3; Ehrlich 1998:1-2; ERA 1997:1-2; Gollnick 1995:47-48; Morani & Hakuta 1995:446). This is done to facilitate the mainstreaming of minority groups into regular classes so that they can succeed in higher education and thus be employed in elevated professions.

In the United States of America, affirmative action programmes are in place for Black disadvantaged minority groups (Roche 1994:4). In the case of the Minneapolis Community College affirmative action is directed toward the Black minority group who are given preferential treatment in preparing them for higher education through remedial classes (Roche 1994:8-11). Roche contends this is done to bring about social justice embodied in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Economic Opportunity Act of 1965 and the Higher Education and Voting Rights Act of 1965. It is generally agreed that minority groups merit the protective measures of affirmative action to correct the injustice suffered through historical unequal treatment whereby the “education of minority...receives less of everything that we believe makes a difference in terms of quality education” (Roche 1994:10-11; Bain & Herman 1990:53; Where is the action in affirmative action 1997:1-4). Bain and Herman (1990:44-45) point out that the achievement level in predominantly Black elementary schools in the Pittsburgh public schools improved when the Black community with the help of White liberals took control of the school board and set out objectives emphasising higher achievement.

Thus, although Roche (1994:2) cites Horace Mann as saying: "Education is the great equaliser of the condition of man, the balance wheels of the social machinery...", this is not always easy to fulfil. The bilingual schooling in California is under criticism for wasting resources, as children are said to spend time socialising instead of learning English (Hardy 1997:1-6). The Unz Proposition 227 Initiative hopes to have minority groups educated through sheltered English immersion programmes (Crawford & Lyons 1998:1-6). The Californians (Maruziva 1998:8) voted bilingual education out of the state schools as they believed it was wasteful and led to the segregation of mostly Spanish children by language. This means that children will spend one year in the immersion programmes before proceeding into the regular, instead of the six years bilingual programme. This will possibly have a reverberating effect on the provision of education to minority groups in the United States of America.

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### 3.5 CONCLUSION

The provision of education to minority groups is not an easy task as several factors affect it. The three countries are still trying to find the best way to provide for the education of their minority groups in an accountable and equitable manner. In all the three countries governments try to cut costs. Thus, in the 1990s multicultural education took on a new meaning as it is regarded as a means of empowerment and emancipation of minority groups (Kennedy 1992:50). This happened as a result of the focus on anti-racist education, which aims to reveal the real institutional and social power relationships that underlie and produce "race relations and racism", which could create disadvantaged minority groups (Richer & Weir 1995:255-256; Nieto 1992:208; Figueroa 1995:792).

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **The empirical research**

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#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 1 gave an introduction to the present situation of the education system in Austria and the legal background to the research problem. Chapter 2 and 3 dealt with the provision of education to minority groups in Austria and in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada. This chapter looks at the qualitative research carried out in this study.

A literature study of relevant published and unpublished sources, mostly from Austria and the United States of America, was carried out in order to understand how educational provision for minority groups is practiced in those countries. This is appropriate in qualitative research. This helped to identify the sub-problems, thereby raising additional pertinent questions about the topic (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:372-377). Interviews, questionnaires and observation of some classes in the two schools visited were used. Triangular techniques enabled the researcher to explore the topic from different perspectives. Thus, no attempts were made to predict behaviour or establish relationships under experimental conditions. Nor was there any attempt to reject or confirm specific hypotheses as in a typical quantitative research project (Lemmer 1989 in Duff 1991:17; Grant 1992:189).

This chapter clarifies the meaning of the word "minority" as it relates to Austrian minority groups, namely the Slovenes, Hungarians and Croats (chapters 1 and 2), and foreigners, namely refugees, asylum seekers who are receiving education in Austria. The objectives of this chapter were to examine, describe and analyse the collected data in order to understand whether the educational provision for minority groups in Austria has been successful (Dillion,

Madden & Firtle 1990:152; McMillan & Schumacher 1993:371). Qualitative methods were used to collect the relevant information from the participants such as directors of education and headmasters. Purposeful sampling was used to select respondents for the study. The aim of this research was to gain insight into the problem, make recommendations on and stimulate further research into the education of minority groups.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 formed a base from which an interview schedule for directors of education and questionnaires for directors of education and principals were constructed. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 also encompass the research design, the historical background to the development and the nature of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria and a comparison of the education systems of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Interviews were conducted to ascertain who is responsible for formulating policy for the education of minority groups and how this is implemented at provincial level by the directors of education (Van der Westhuizen, Basson, Barnard, Bondosio, De Welt, Niemann, Prinsloo & Van Rooyen 1991:135-235; Robins 1980:131). Questionnaires were used for the directors for education and principals to ascertain whether educational provision to minority groups is practised as suggested at government level and whether it is conducted in a satisfactory way.

The provision of education to minority groups in Austria was compared and contrasted with the provision of education to minority groups in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada.

## **4.2 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

During the 1989/90 school year a survey was conducted by the Austrian statistical office, to determine the number of foreign minority learners in Austrian schools (see Table 4, Heiler 1991:424). The surveys of foreign minority learners presented by the Austrian statistical office in the 1996/97 school year and the 1997/98 school year were then compared (see Tables 4, 5, 6 and 4.4).

### **4.2.1 The distribution of non-citizen minority group learners in the different Austrian education systems in the provinces**

Table 4 highlights the number of learners according to nationality (Austrians, Non-Austrians), types of schools and provinces as well as a proportion of non-Austrian learners in percentage. Therefore for the reporting period 1989/90 out of a total 1 135 371 schoolchildren involved in the survey, 47 662 or 4,2% are of foreign nationality. This was done to clarify the numbers of Austrians and foreign minority groups and to establish whether there are differences in the way they are provided with education.

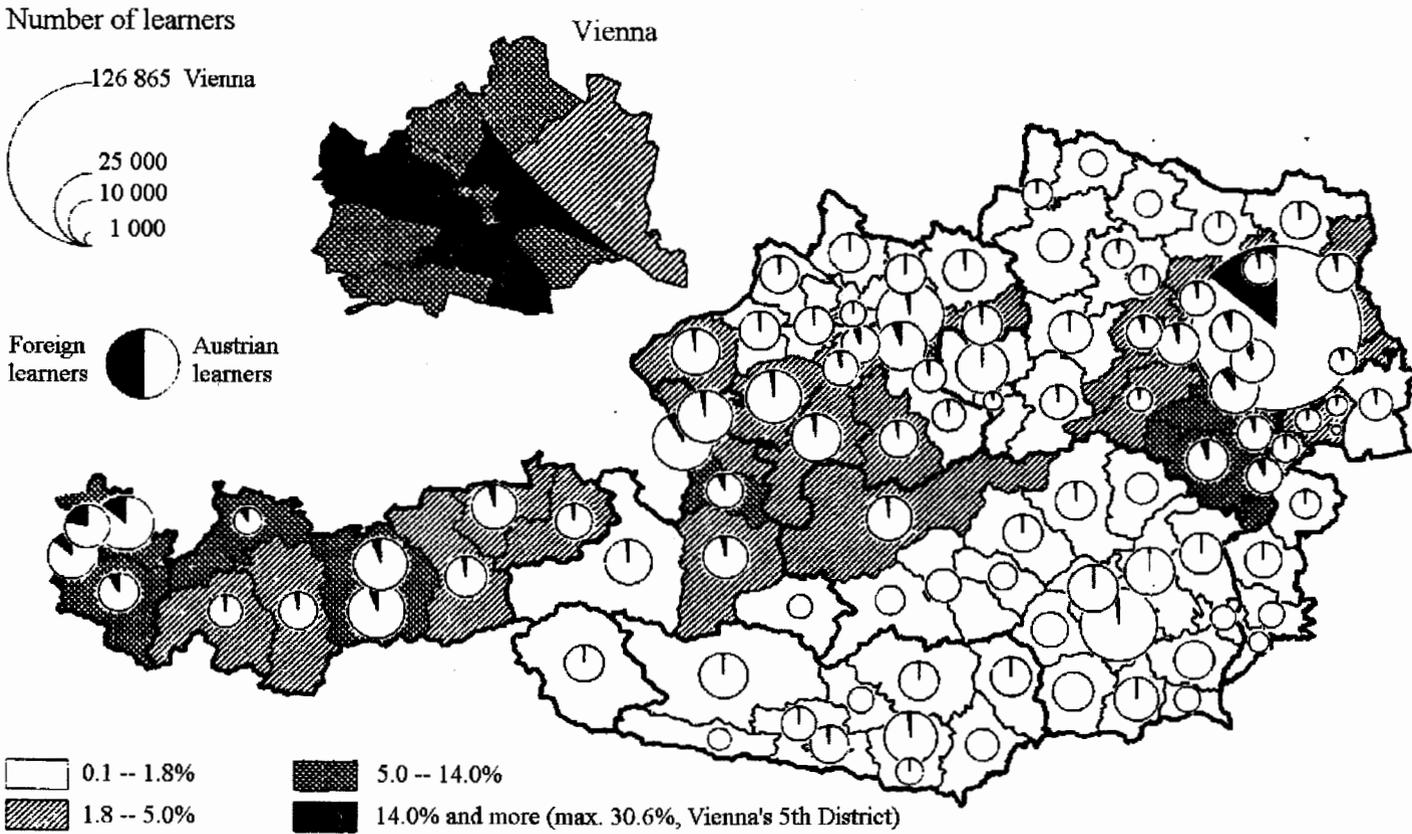
**Table 4 Learners in the 1989/90 school year according to type of school, citizenship in the provinces of Austria**

| Type of School   | Subject                 | Learners in      |               |               |                |                |               |                |                |               |                |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
|  |                         | Austria          | Panonia       | Carinthia     | Lower Austria  | Upper Austria  | Salzburg      | Styria         | Tirol          | Vorarlberg    | Vienna         |
| Primary Schools  | Learners total          | 368 204          | 12 723        | 29 007        | 67 771         | 70 673         | 24 833        | 58 279         | 32 812         | 18 739        | 53 367         |
|  | Austrians               | 349 825          | 12 566        | 28 754        | 65 371         | 68 755         | 23 627        | 57 789         | 31 430         | 15 893        | 45 640         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 18 379           | 157           | 253           | 2 400          | 1 918          | 1 206         | 490            | 1 382          | 2 846         | 7 727          |
|  | %                       | 5                | 1.2           | 0.9           | 3.5            | 2.7            | 4.9           | 0.8            | 4.2            | 15.2          | 14.5           |
| Secondary Schools                                      | Learners total          | 239111           | 9 445         | 18 659        | 44 891         | 46 874         | 16 947        | 41 512         | 23 819         | 13 313        | 23 651         |
|  | Austrians               | 225 601          | 9 325         | 18 493        | 43 264         | 45 563         | 16 132        | 41 261         | 22 781         | 11 120        | 17 662         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 13 510           | 120           | 166           | 1 627          | 1 311          | 815           | 251            | 1 038          | 2 193         | 5 989          |
|  | %                       | 5.7              | 1.3           | 0.9           | 3.6            | 2.8            | 4.8           | 0.6            | 4.4            | 16.5          | 25.3           |
| Special Schools  | Learners total          | 18 535           | 425           | 1 227         | 3 512          | 2 960          | 1 090         | 2 328          | 1 494          | 964           | 4 535          |
|  | Austrians               | 15 734           | 408           | 1 194         | 3 023          | 2 782          | 984           | 3 312          | 1 283          | 606           | 3 142          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 2 801            | 17            | 33            | 489            | 178            | 106           | 16             | 211            | 358           | 1 393          |
|  | %                       | 15.1             | 4             | 2.7           | 13.9           | 6              | 9.3           | 0.7            | 14.1           | 37.1          | 30.7           |
| Polytechnic  | Learners total          | 21 11            | 780           | 1 260         | 4 095          | 4 574          | 1 629         | 3 572          | 2 147          | 1 059         | 1995           |
|  | Austrians               | 19 993           | 772           | 1 251         | 3 955          | 4 457          | 1 537         | 3 557          | 2 006          | 877           | 1 581          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 1 118            | 8             | 9             | 140            | 117            | 92            | 15             | 141            | 182           | 414            |
|  | %                       | 5.3              | 1             | 0.7           | 3.4            | 2.6            | 5.6           | 0.4            | 6.6            | 17.2          | 5.4            |
| Grammar Schools  | Learners total          | 158 940          | 4 891         | 11991         | 24 981         | 22 365         | 10 225        | 23 773         | 11 422         | 5 975         | 43 317         |
|  | Austrians               | 154 816          | 4 862         | 11 861        | 24 598         | 22 112         | 9 979         | 23 586         | 11 160         | 5 694         | 40 964         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 4 124            | 29            | 130           | 383            | 253            | 246           | 187            | 262            | 281           | 2 353          |
|  | %                       | 2.6              | 0.6           | 1.1           | 1.5            | 1.1            | 2.4           | 0.8            | 2.3            | 4.7           | 5.4            |
| Vocational Training (Apprenticeship) and Trade Schools | Learners total          | 152 824          | 3 567         | 11 438        | 23 617         | 27 311         | 10 996        | 28 003         | 14 696         | 7 966         | 25 240         |
|  | Austrians               | 148 209          | 3 549         | 11379         | 23 182         | 27 029         | 10 737        | 27 938         | 14 285         | 7 107         | 23 003         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 4 615            | 18            | 59            | 435            | 282            | 259           | 65             | 411            | 849           | 2 237          |
|  | %                       | 3                | 0.5           | 0.5           | 1.2            | 1.1            | 2.4           | 0.2            | 2.8            | 10.7          | 8.9            |
| Vocational Training Schools (Intermediate Level)       | Learners total          | 68 483           | 2 466         | 4 601         | 12 514         | 11 593         | 5 197         | 9 969          | 6 955          | 3 149         | 12 039         |
|  | Austrians               | 66 739           | 2 452         | 4 525         | 12 355         | 11 475         | 5 036         | 9 926          | 6 814          | 2 953         | 11 203         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 1 744            | 14            | 76            | 159            | 118            | 161           | 43             | 141            | 196           | 836            |
|  | %                       | 2.5              | 0.6           | 1.7           | 1.3            | 1              | 3.1           | 0.4            | 2              | 6.2           | 6.9            |
| Vocational Training Schools (Advanced Level)           | Learners total          | 99 626           | 4 130         | 8 893         | 18 974         | 17 643         | 6 490         | 13 553         | 7 343          | 3 773         | 18 827         |
|  | Austrians               | 98 281           | 4 116         | 8 838         | 18 807         | 17 529         | 6 387         | 13 504         | 7 249          | 3 640         | 18 211         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 1 345            | 14            | 55            | 167            | 114            | 103           | 49             | 94             | 133           | 616            |
|  | %                       | 1.3              | 0.3           | 0.6           | 0.9            | 0.6            | 1.6           | 0.4            | 1.3            | 3.5           | 3.3            |
| Academy for Vocational Training                        | Learners total          | 2 628            |               | 68            | 399            | 259            | 222           | 338            | 269            | 63            | 1.01           |
|  | Austrians               | 2 619            |               | 68            | 399            | 259            | 219           | 338            | 267            | 62            | 1.007          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 9                |               |               |                |                | 3             |                | 2              | 1             | 3              |
|  | %                       | 0.3              |               |               |                |                | 1.4           |                | 0.7            | 1.6           | 0.3            |
| Teachers Training Colleges                             | Learners total          | 5 909            | 245           | 283           | 981            | 1 137          | 364           | 852            | 460            | 236           | 1 351          |
|  | Austrians               | 5 892            | 245           | 280           | 978            | 1 132          | 363           | 850            | 458            | 236           | 1 150          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 17               |               | 3             | 3              | 5              | 1             | 2              | 2              |               | 1              |
|  | %                       | 0.3              |               | 1.1           | 0.3            | 0.4            | 0.3           | 0.2            | 0.4            |               | 0.1            |
| <b>Totals in these Schools</b>                         | <b>Learners total</b>   | <b>1 135 371</b> | <b>37 672</b> | <b>87 427</b> | <b>201 735</b> | <b>205 389</b> | <b>77 993</b> | <b>182 179</b> | <b>101 417</b> | <b>55 227</b> | <b>185 332</b> |
|  | <b>Austrians</b>        | <b>1 087 709</b> | <b>38 295</b> | <b>86 643</b> | <b>195 932</b> | <b>201 093</b> | <b>75 001</b> | <b>181 061</b> | <b>97 733</b>  | <b>48 188</b> | <b>163 763</b> |
|  | <b>Foreigners total</b> | <b>47 662</b>    | <b>377</b>    | <b>784</b>    | <b>5 803</b>   | <b>4 296</b>   | <b>2 992</b>  | <b>1 118</b>   | <b>3 684</b>   | <b>7 039</b>  | <b>21 569</b>  |
|  | <b>%</b>                | <b>4.2</b>       | <b>1</b>      | <b>0.9</b>    | <b>2.9</b>     | <b>2.1</b>     | <b>3.8</b>    | <b>0.6</b>     | <b>3.6</b>     | <b>12.7</b>   | <b>11.6</b>    |

From Table 4 it is evident that those provinces with the highest proportion of foreign minority learners were Vorarlberg (12,7%) and Vienna (11,6%). In absolute figures Vienna, the capital of Austria had approximately 21 569 learners, followed by Vorarlberg with a total of 7 039. It was not surprising therefore that out of a total of 47 662 foreign children in Austrian schools, 45,3% are situated in Vienna and 14,8% fall under Vorarlberg. This implies that three-fifths of the non-Austrian minority learners were concentrated in those provinces. In the other seven provinces the proportion of foreign learners (Salzburg 3,8%, Tyrol 3,6%, Lower Austria 2,9%, Upper Austria 2,1%, Panonia 1,0%, Carinthia 0,9% and Styria 0,6%) was below the national average percentage of non-Austrian learners. It is clear that while the minority learners of Austrian citizenship are concentrated in Carinthia and Panonia, the minority learners of non-citizenship are mainly concentrated in Vienna and Vorarlberg, possibly due to Vienna's metropolitan status.

As in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada, divided into school levels and types, minority children of non-Austrian citizenship have 15,1% in schools with retarded children, thereby forming the highest number of learners in such schools (Weinberg 1983:28, 32-34; Samuda 1989:17; Shulman & Mesa Bains 1993:65; Solomon & Brown 1994:1-22; Olneck 1990:147-174; Heiler 1991:429). The minority quota in schools for retarded children in Vorarlberg (37,1%) and Vienna (30,7%) were the maximum regarding the combination of school types per province. Generally, the secondary schools with (5,7%), polytechnic colleges with (5,3%) and primary schools with (5%) proportion of foreign minority learners were above the overall average of foreign students (4,2%) in slow learning classes (special classes), due to language problems. Chapter 5 deals with the current situation in order to establish whether the situation has changed or improved or whether the status quo was retained.

**Map 2 Distribution of minority learners of non-citizenship during the school compulsory years**



Source: Statistical news 1991:425

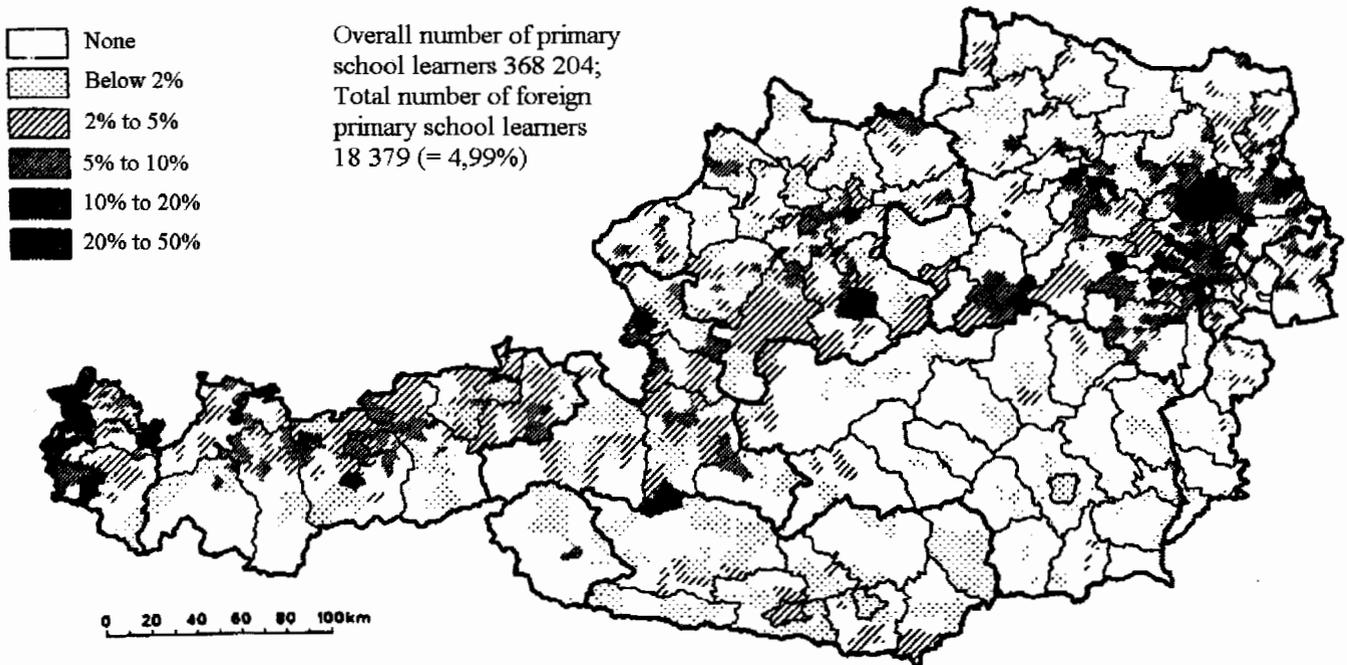
#### **4.2.2 A discussion of the regional breakdown of minority learners of non-Austrian citizenship**

Table 1 and Map 2 are a visual representation of the numbers and proportions of foreign children in the schools of general education (State schools) according to districts in which the schools were located during the 1998/90 school year. The total foreign proportion of learners in Austrian state schools then was 4,9% and this percentage was exceeded in 18 out of 99 political districts. The provinces of Vienna and Vorarlberg have the highest numbers of foreign minority students.

Maps 3 and 4 show the attendance of non-Austrian children at the municipality level at primary and secondary schools during the period 1989/90. The information confirms the regional breakdown of minority learners of non-Austrian citizenship in state schools, in that the highest numbers of minority learners in the primary schools were found in the areas of higher concentration of foreigners, in the provinces of Vienna and Vorarlberg. Some districts have more than 50% non-Austrian minority learners. This historical background has been provided in order to understand the differences in the minority group learners. This refers to the ethnic (the Austrian minority groups of non-German speaking origin as tabulated in article 7 of the Austrian constitution after the First World War see chapter 1) in Carinthia, Styria and Panonia as opposed to the foreign minority learners (those who settled in Austria for various reasons, eg, refugees, or whose parents are migrant workers) who were provided with equal educational opportunities on the guidelines on which any minority groups are to be provided with education in Austria.

**Map 3 Primary schools**

Foreign learner percentage  
in the primary schools of  
Austria



Boundaries: Political Constituency

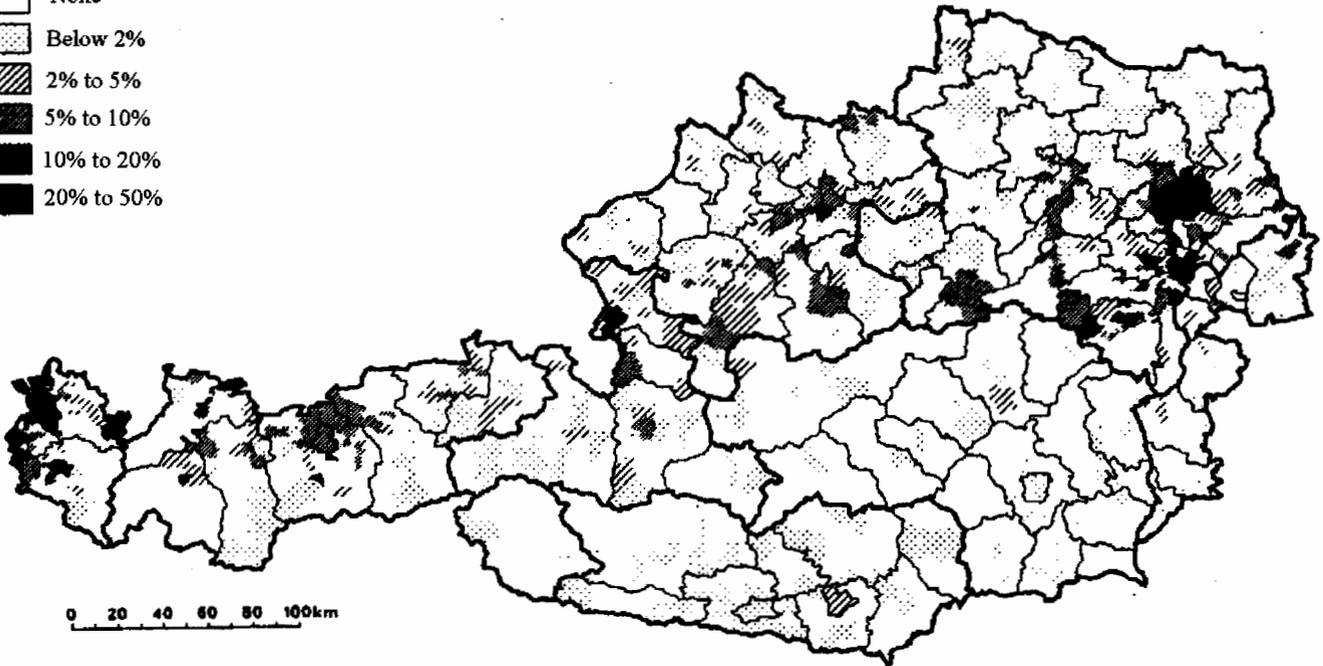
Source: Statistical news 1991:428

**Map 4 Grammar schools**

Foreign learner percentage  
in the grammar schools of  
Austria

Overall number of grammar  
school learners 239 111;  
Total number of foreign  
grammar school learners  
13 510 (= 5,65%)

-  None
-  Below 2%
-  2% to 5%
-  5% to 10%
-  10% to 20%
-  20% to 50%



Boundaries: Political Constituency

Source: Statistical news 1991:428

### **4.2.3 The distribution of non-citizens minority students in the primary and high school system in Austria in the 1989/90 school year**

Generally only those learners who have passed the examination proceed to the next grade level. In terms of the Austrian school system, this means that in 1989/90 the language disadvantaged school children, such as those not fluent in German because their first language is not German, achieved low qualifications. This study was undertaken against this historical background to probe whether the situation has changed and how fair and equitable education for minority groups (regardless of citizenship) is.

Maps 2 and 3 show the attendance of non-Austrian learners at municipality level at primary and secondary schools during the period 1989/90. In principle, the distribution of non-citizen learners reconfirms the regional patterns already covered, namely that foreign learners are concentrated in Vienna and Vorarlberg. The special situation here relates to the then high concentration of non-Austrian learners in the community of Mittelburg in Vorarlberg, while the district figures for primary schools in some areas of Vienna reach 30%. In some primary and secondary schools in these two districts, the attendance by non-Austrian learners can be above 50%. As Heiler (1991:424-429) points out a high percentage of learners of non-Austrian citizenship are found in the industrial centers whilst Panonia, Carinthia and Styria have the highest number of Austrian minority groups. This is probably because these are the areas with possibilities of employment. In the compulsory vocational training colleges, non-Austrians made up about 3%, although, comparatively speaking, all provinces have enrolment figures below the national quota of non-Austrian students in higher institutions of learning and vocational technical institutions. This is probably because non-Austrian learners find it difficult to qualify as they are disadvantaged by the lack of German language skills to tackle work at a higher institution of learning. The overall registered foreign students in the institutions of higher education (grammar school, vocational training intermediate level, vocational training advanced level, vocational training [apprenticeship and trade school] and academy of social studies see chapter 1) represented 15% of all non-Austrian school children,

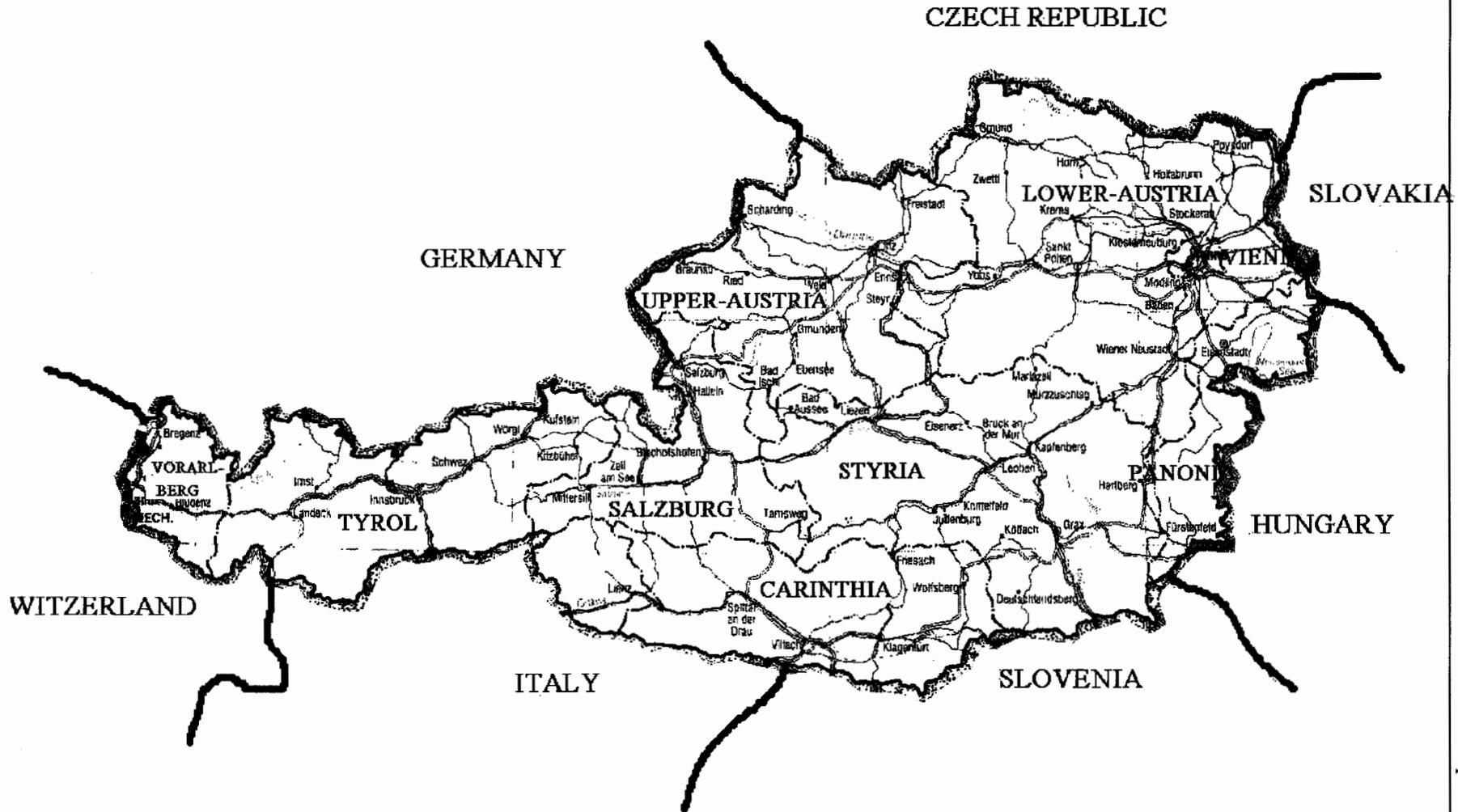
while the 4 615 apprentices represented 9,7%. However, the *Das Schulwesen in Österreich Schuljahr 1996/97:110*, Table 15 showed that nearly every eleventh student was a non-Austrian minority student. Generally, there was no significant change in the number of non-Austrian minority students from previous years, when there is an overall decrease of -0,3%. Regionally, it was said in Vienna every fifth student was a foreigner, whereas in Styria, Panonia, Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol, the number of minority students of non-citizenship has not changed significantly (Heiler 1998:96-110).

Map 5 Location of the study (showing provinces in which the study is conducted)



Source: Holzel 1996:12

Map 5 Location of the study (showing provinces in which the study is conducted)



Source: Holzel 1996:12

#### **4.2.4 The Provinces (in which the research was carried out, see Map 5)**

Vorarlberg

Tyrol

Salzburg

Carinthia (Kärnten)

Styria (Steiermark)

Upper Austria (Oberösterreich)

Lower Austria (Niederösterreich)

Vienna (Wien)

Pannonia (Burgenland)

Study Map 5 shows the provinces in which the research on the distribution of Austrian minority and non-Austrian minority groups, in the provincial state schools was carried out. These provinces are indicated on the map. In the next section, the qualitative research methodology used in this study is discussed.

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### **4.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

#### **4.3.1 The differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodology**

In this study a qualitative approach was followed throughout. However, it is necessary to understand the differences between the two traditions and why the qualitative approach was followed.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:14-15) and Dillion et al (1990:152-162) make the following distinction between qualitative and quantitative research methodology:

- While quantitative research is based on the belief that social facts are based on a single objective reality excluding beliefs of individuals, qualitative research assumes that multiple realities are socially constructed through definitions of the situation.
- Quantitative research seeks to establish relationships and explain changes in measured social facts, whereas qualitative research seeks to understand the social phenomenon from the participants' point of view. As this was the aim of the research, of this study, the qualitative tradition was used.

The researcher used an emergent research design using data collection strategies as the study progressed. This is in line with qualitative research methodology.

As the researcher was personally immersed in the study, subjectivity was taken into consideration in data analysis and interpretation as is usual in qualitative research. The researcher chose the qualitative method, which employs the experimental design as a means of reducing errors.

The researcher chose qualitative research instead of quantitative research methodology for this research project as the focus is on the life-world of minority groups and how education is provided to them. The scale of the research was limited as the aim was not to generalise the results but to stimulate further research on a much broader scale. The research was exploratory and idiographic and the purpose was not to generalise, but to understand the provision of education to minority groups of Austrian-citizenship and non-Austrian citizenship, as a unique situation.

The aim was to obtain the personal views of those entrusted with the interpretation and implementation of the policy of providing education for all groups of minority groups in Austria then, so that these could be interpreted and used to reconstruct the reality of the research participants as they explained and directed meaning to their experience of education.

### **4.3.2 Qualitative data selection strategies**

The researcher incorporated the ethnographic unstructured interview and participant observation as methodological strategies in order to gather the relevant data from the research participants (Grant 1992:76; McMillan & Schumacher 1993:43, 385, 391). These strategies enabled the researcher to interview, record, transcribe and analyse the data.

Suitable times for interviews with the directors of education were negotiated with each province and conducted in private to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The equivalent of one term was spent on the field research in which the researcher observed and conducted formal and informal interviews with the research participants, in order to gather as much information as possible as opportunities arose. The questionnaire was mailed to the relevant officials at the end of 1998 and answers were returned. This provided a broader background to the research findings. The results from the surveys and interviews, observations and informal and formal discussions enabled the researcher to obtain information relating to the provision of education to the Austrian and non-Austrian minority groups as dictated by policy and how it was implemented then.

### **4.3.3 The pilot study (1994)**

An initial field research pilot study was carried out in 1994. Access to schools involved extensive negotiations with the provincial directors of education who helped in identifying schools with the highest number of minority groups. Minority groups fall into two categories, namely the Austrian minority groups of the Slovenes and Croats in Panonia and Carinthia, the Hungarians in Styria and mostly the foreign minority learners concentrated in the industrial centers, especially of Vienna and Vorarlberg (see chapter 2). The minority learners of non-Austrian citizenship have the same right to education as Austrian minority groups and receive education based on the principles of the Vienna compulsory Bilingual School (see chapter 2). However, in some provinces, such as Panonia, Carinthia, Vorarlberg and Vienna, the second

language of the learners might not necessarily be English. Minority groups often comprise groups from Eastern Europe and do not reflect the international character of Vienna. The use of many languages in one particular school would be too costly and therefore mostly dominant minority languages are used in any one particular school, such as English at the Vienna Bilingual School and the languages of Austrian minority groups that are used in the provinces such as Panonia and Carinthia. After the 1994 field research was completed, the researcher sent the same questionnaires to the same schools and to the directors of education in January 1999 and received the response at the beginning of April 1999. This procedure was followed in order to establish whether the situation had changed.

During 1994 the researcher basically visited four schools in the provinces of Vienna, Vorarlberg, Panonia and Carinthia (see location on Map 5), while the rest of the headmasters were sent questionnaires to answer for the study. Two headmasters per province were involved in the study (see addendum A), meaning that eighteen headmasters were involved in the study, since there are nine provinces in Austria. Permission to carry out the study was sought from the relevant Ministry, who directed the researcher to the provincial directors of education as they are well poised to direct the researcher to those schools with the highest concentration of any minority groups in their provinces (Verma, Zec & Skinner 1994:24-25). The questionnaires and interview schedule in 1994 and 1999 then concentrated on the same issues in order to enable the answers to the research problem to unfold as the study progressed.

#### **4.3.4 Ethnography**

Ethnography in qualitative research is defined as the systematic recording of human cultures or a way of studying human life as it relates to education (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:406). The research in this study was ethnographic in that it sought to understand the provision of education to minority groups from the point of views of those who work in schools and therefore experience inter-ethnic relations (Verma et al 1994:21-115).

This study was also of an exploratory nature. It was carried out in order to learn how minority groups are provided with education in Austria. According to Stuhr, Petrovich, Mwaniki and Watson (1992:20-24) and Baker (1994:5-12) socially critical research is when a researcher analyses various aspects of the education system (Austrian in this case) such as the historical, political and social process to find out how these affect the provision of education to minority groups in the country studied. Thus the events and classification of groups were received by the researcher from what the research participants said.

#### **4.3.5 Purposeful sampling, the construction of interview schedules and questionnaires**

According to Schumacher and McMillan (1993:378), purposeful sampling is the selection of rich key informants. In this study the information rich informants were the directors of education and headmasters who were in the areas where the higher concentration of minority groups existed. These key informants were regarded as knowledgeable on this topic.

By means of purposeful sampling, the researcher selected the research participants from the areas of higher concentration of minority groups and which were easily accessible. From these research participants, the researcher was able to identify other areas of higher concentration of minority groups, where the research could be carried out. This was the snowballing sampling selection strategy (McMillan and Schumacher 1993:381). The study was conducted this way and not by random sample because there was no guarantee that areas with a higher concentration of minority groups would have the same chance of being chosen (Verma et al 1994:25; McMillan & Schumacher 1993:160-161). Thus the researcher used purposeful snowball sampling whereby knowledgeable research participants were sought and in turn indicated areas of higher concentration of minority groups (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:381-383, 412).

In 1994, during the initial phase of the pilot study, the researcher used unstructured interviews to collect data from the research participants. The views of the research participants (the directors of education and headmasters) who are entrusted with interpreting and implementing policy on the provision of education to minority groups were used. The goal was to obtain answers from the nine directors of education regarding the interview schedule and questionnaires. The research participants are regarded as information rich and knowledgeable regarding the research topic and it was felt that they would yield insights into the problem. This is typical of the research process in ethnographic research (Schumacher & McMillan 1993:406). This procedure was followed throughout as the researcher felt the perceptions and experiences of the research participants would be central to understanding the provision of education to minority groups in Austria. The directors of education were asked to comment on the quality of education provided to minority groups and to give their views about the impact of the policy and practice regarding minority learners and whether this resulted in positive intercultural relationships within the wider community. The schedule was designed while the researcher was in Tyrol. The researcher allowed the research participants to divert to some other relevant topics whose significance and relevancy might not have been realised in the initial stages of the research.

#### **4.3.6 Interviews with the directors of education**

After consultation with the appropriate government officials in 1994, the researcher was referred to the respective provincial directors of education. Thereafter the researcher mapped the field so as to acquire data about the social, spatial and temporal aspects of the area to be studied, so that it could be understood in total context for in-depth interviews and the distribution of questionnaires to the headmasters of the selected schools (see addenda A, B, C and D). The researcher wrote an introductory letter to the directors of education asking for permission to undertake the research and also requested assistance in identifying schools with a high concentration of minority groups.

#### **4.3.7 Confidentiality and anonymity of the research participants**

Confidentiality and anonymity mean that the privacy and identity of the research participants is protected. This is important as it enables research participants to provide information without fear of any repercussions in the victimisation by those affected by the information they disclose.

The directors of education were all assured that the research would not only be confidential but anonymous as well. The directors of education were coded in the letter "D" of the alphabet for directors of education plus a number, that is D1, D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9 for Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Salzburg, Carinthia, Styria, Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Vienna and Panonia, in that order. The nine directors of education in Austria were consulted in order to attain an in-depth understanding of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria. At the offices of the provincial directors of education, additional information was gathered by means of formal and informal interviews.

The headmasters were coded from H1 to H18 (that is, two per province), in the order stated above from Vorarlberg to Panonia, for example, H1 and H2 would be for Vorarlberg while H3 and H4 would be for Tyrol, in that order.

In addition to this, the researcher made inferences from the attitudes of the provincial directors of education and headmasters who were visited during 1994. Where possible, the researcher held discussions with the Parents Teachers' Associations in order to get an overall view on the provision of education to minority groups in Austria.

In order to realise these objectives it was necessary to:

- construct open-ended interviews for the directors of education in the nine provinces of Austria in order to understand how the policy which was formed

at central level (government level) was interpreted and implemented at regional level.

- construct an interview schedule, based on the tasks of management in the provision of education to minority groups, in Austria.
- construct a questionnaire for the directors of education and headmasters to ascertain whether they were satisfied with the way education was provided to minority groups in Austria.

The questions to the directors of education also related to the identification of school with a higher concentration of minority groups in the provinces and whether they were Austrian or non-Austrian and the type (guest workers or refugees). The questions to the headmasters were complementary to the ones for the directors of education. The goal was to ascertain whether the provision of education to minority groups is successful or not and which areas they hoped could be improved upon.

#### **4.3.8 Selection of the four schools**

With the help of the office of the provincial Directors of Education, the researcher was able to identify schools to visit with the highest concentration of non-Austrian minority groups in the Provinces of Vienna and Vorarlberg, while Panonia, Carinthia, and Styria have the highest concentration of Austrian minority groups (see chapter 2 and Map 5).

Questionnaires were also sent to eighteen headmasters (two per province). The researcher included self-addressed return envelopes. The headmasters were informed about the purpose of the research and that permission to carry out the research had been granted by the relevant directors of education.

### 4.3.9 Visits to the schools and the gathering of data

For the provinces with the highest number of foreign minority groups, the researcher concentrated on the capital city, Vienna and Dornbirn, the capital city of the province of Vorarlberg. For the Austrian ethnic minority groups a school in Eisenstadt in Panonia and a school in Klagenfurt in Carinthia were visited (see Map 5). For those four schools questionnaires were personally delivered and collected in 1994.

### 4.3.10 Follow-up research (1999)

After the 1994 field research pilot study was completed, the researcher then sent the same questionnaires that were used in 1994 to the same schools and provincial offices of the directors of education in January 1999 in order to establish whether the situation had changed. The responses were received in April 1999. After telephonic discussions with the relevant officials from the ministry of education, the researcher was referred to visit the Internet at (<http://www.schulen.wien.at/ice/schulent/ssrhtml/sv98/index.html>) to ascertain what developments had occurred in the provision of education to minority groups in Austria. In addition, the researcher was fortunate that one of the officials responsible for running the programme of the provision of education to minority groups (Austrian and non-Austrian) at the head office in Vienna visited Zimbabwe for two months (June and July 1999). This was fortunate in that besides being a co-author of one of the texts used in the study, the researcher had had an in-depth discussion with this participant on this topic during the pilot study in 1994. Extensive interviews were undertaken with this research participant in 1999, where several pressing issues of this topic were clarified. From the documentary evidence from the ministry of education officials in Vienna (received during July 1999), the researcher tabulated some of the relevant data to show whether the number of non-Austrian learners in State school has changed from what it was in the 1989/90 school year (see table 6). These were then analysed and the significance pointed out under 4.4.

**Table 5 Distribution of foreign minority learners in comparison to Austrian learners in the 1996/97 school year**

| Province                            | Learners total   | Austrians                | Foreigners            |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Panonia (Burgenland)                | 38 727           | 36 403 (94,0%)           | 2 324 (6,0%)          |
| Carinthia (Kärnten)                 | 89 165           | 84 425 (94,7%)           | 4 740 (5,3%)          |
| Lower Austria<br>(Niederösterreich) | 218 511          | 202 946 (92,9%)          | 15 565 (7,1%)         |
| Upper Austria<br>(Oberösterreich)   | 219 968          | 204 271 (92,9%)          | 15 679 (7,1%)         |
| Salzburg                            | 83 383           | 75 553 (90,6%)           | 7 830 (9,4%)          |
| Styria (Steiermark)                 | 177 336          | 170 592 (96,2%)          | 6 744 (3,8%)          |
| Tyrol (Tirol)                       | 106 764          | 98 587 (92,3%)           | 8 177 (7,7%)          |
| Vorarlberg                          | 56 580           | 48 630 (85,9%)           | 7 950 (14,1%)         |
| Vienna (Wien)                       | 203 001          | 165 515 (81,5%)          | 37 486 (18,5%)        |
| <b>Austria (Österreich)</b>         | <b>1 193 453</b> | <b>1 086 922 (91,1%)</b> | <b>106 513 (8,9%)</b> |

Source: The schooling in Austria 1998:110

According to Table 5 foreign minority learners were concentrated in Vienna and Vorarlberg with 18,5% and 14,1%, of their totals, respectively. In absolute figures, however, Vienna, Upper Austria and Lower Austria have the highest figures, Vienna due to its international character while the other provinces have high numbers because of a deliberate effort to spread minority groups throughout the country as the other provinces have higher numbers of Austrian minority groups. The significance of this data is discussed fully in section 4.4.

**Table 6 Total number of foreign minority learners in Austrian schools in the 1997/98 school year**

| Province                         | Number of learners |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Panonia (Burgenland)             | 2 614              |
| Carinthia (Kärnten)              | 4 509              |
| Lower Austria (Niederösterreich) | 13 876             |
| Upper Austria (Oberösterreich)   | 14 856             |
| Salzburg                         | 7 615              |
| Styria (Steiermark)              | 6 372              |
| Tyrol (Tirol)                    | 7 353              |
| Vorarlberg                       | 6 325              |
| Vienna (Wien)                    | 48 312             |
| <b>Austria (Österreich)</b>      | <b>111 832</b>     |

Source: Adapted from the Austrian school statistics 1998:288

Although the number of foreign learners has increased, it is realised that there was a general decrease in the number of minority learners in most of the provinces, except Vienna, which had 10 826 additional learners. This might be due to refugees moving back to their homes or to a high dropout rate (refer to 4.4). However, the increase in Vienna may be due to its metropolitan status.

**Table 7 Learners in the 1997/98 school year according to type of school, Austrian citizens and foreign minority group learners in the provinces of Austria**

| Type of School   | Subject                 | Learners in             |               |               |                |                |               |                |                |               |                |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
|  |                         | Austria                 | Panonia       | Carinthia     | Lower Austria  | Upper Austria  | Salzburg      | Styria         | Tirol          | Vorarlberg    | Vienna         |
| Primary Schools  | Learners total          | 396 367                 | 12 267        | 30 702        | 76 639         | 74 085         | 26 522        | 56 625         | 34 983         | 19 954        | 64 554         |
|  | Austrians               | 349 405                 | 11 385        | 28 786        | 70 590         | 67 059         | 23 391        | 53 796         | 31 970         | 17 099        | 45 239         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 46 962                  | 882           | 1 916         | 6 049          | 7 026          | 3 131         | 2 829          | 3 013          | 2 855         | 19 261         |
|  | %                       | 11,8                    | 7,2           | 6,2           | 7,9            | 9,5            | 11,8          | 5,0            | 8,6            | 14,3          | 29,8           |
| Secondary Schools  | Learners total          | 261 587                 | 9 187         | 19 702        | 51 077         | 53 663         | 19 180        | 39 301         | 26 417         | 14 231        | 28 829         |
|  | Austrians               | 233 753                 | 8 535         | 18 500        | 47 781         | 49 496         | 17 047        | 37 576         | 24 139         | 12 342        | 18 337         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 27 834                  | 652           | 1 202         | 3 296          | 4 167          | 2 133         | 1 725          | 2 278          | 1 889         | 10 492         |
|  | %                       | 10,6                    | 7,1           | 6,1           | 6,5            | 7,8            | 11,1          | 4,4            | 8,6            | 13,3          | 36,4           |
| Special Schools  | Learners total          | 16 693                  | 258           | 1 019         | 3 451          | 2 712          | 1 124         | 1 240          | 1 444          | 936           | 4 509          |
|  | Austrians               | 13 214                  | 229           | 905           | 2 920          | 2 323          | 876           | 1 161          | 1 273          | 658           | 2 869          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 3 479                   | 29            | 114           | 531            | 389            | 248           | 79             | 171            | 278           | 1 640          |
|  | %                       | 20,8                    | 11,2          | 11,2          | 15,4           | 14,3           | 22,1          | 6,4            | 11,8           | 29,7          | 36,4           |
| Polytechnic  | Learners total          | 19 523                  | 606           | 1 061         | 3 888          | 4 226          | 1 449         | 2 824          | 2 172          | 1 196         | 2 101          |
|  | Austrians               | 17 439                  | 571           | 994           | 3 638          | 3 949          | 1 236         | 2 714          | 2 001          | 1 027         | 1 309          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 2 084                   | 35            | 67            | 250            | 277            | 213           | 110            | 171            | 169           | 792            |
|  | %                       | 10,7                    | 5,8           | 6,3           | 6,4            | 6,6            | 14,7          | 3,9            | 7,9            | 14,1          | 37,7           |
| Grammar Schools  | Learners total          | 184 007                 | 5 640         | 13 320        | 28 584         | 27 001         | 11 945        | 27 377         | 13 109         | 7 317         | 49 714         |
|  | Austrians               | 172 519                 | 5 279         | 12 988        | 27 578         | 26 314         | 11 587        | 26 768         | 12 499         | 7 041         | 42 465         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 11 488                  | 361           | 332           | 1 006          | 687            | 358           | 609            | 610            | 276           | 7 249          |
|  | %                       | 6,2                     | 6,4           | 2,5           | 3,5            | 2,5            | 3,0           | 2,2            | 4,7            | 3,8           | 14,6           |
| Vocational Training<br>(Apprenticeship) and<br>Trade Schools | Learners total          | 125 039                 | 2 910         | 8 945         | 21 065         | 24 320         | 9 826         | 21 119         | 12 115         | 6 287         | 18 452         |
|  | Austrians               | 114 931                 | 2 734         | 8 510         | 19 687         | 22 950         | 8 782         | 20 547         | 11 462         | 5 903         | 14 356         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 10 108                  | 176           | 435           | 1 378          | 1 370          | 1 044         | 572            | 653            | 384           | 4 096          |
|  | %                       | 8,1                     | 6,0           | 4,9           | 6,5            | 5,6            | 10,6          | 2,7            | 5,4            | 6,1           | 22,2           |
| Vocational Training<br>Schools<br>(Intermediate Level)       | Learners total          | 52 850                  | 2 194         | 3 977         | 10 279         | 9 299          | 4 416         | 7 235          | 5 890          | 2 466         | 7 094          |
|  | Austrians               | 48 802                  | 2 074         | 3 841         | 9 718          | 8 842          | 4 148         | 7 048          | 5 641          | 2 226         | 5 264          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 4 048                   | 120           | 136           | 561            | 457            | 268           | 187            | 249            | 240           | 1 830          |
|  | %                       | 7,6                     | 5,5           | 3,4           | 5,5            | 4,9            | 6,1           | 2,6            | 4,2            | 9,7           | 25,8           |
| Vocational Training<br>Schools<br>(Advanced Level)           | Learners total          | 113 417                 | 5 147         | 10 027        | 21 701         | 20 614         | 8 110         | 14 957         | 8 396          | 4 291         | 20 174         |
|  | Austrians               | 107 655                 | 4 798         | 9 721         | 20 910         | 20 132         | 7 890         | 14 700         | 8 193          | 4 057         | 17 254         |
|  | Foreigners total        | 5 762                   | 349           | 306           | 791            | 482            | 220           | 257            | 203            | 234           | 2 920          |
|  | %                       | 5,1                     | 6,8           | 3,1           | 3,6            | 2,3            | 2,7           | 1,7            | 2,4            | 5,5           | 14,5           |
| Academy for<br>Vocational<br>Training                        | Learners total          | NO STATISTICS AVAILABLE |               |               |                |                |               |                |                |               |                |
| Teachers Training<br>Colleges                                | Learners total          | 9 267                   | 356           | 439           | 1 640          | 1 622          | 456           | 1 628          | 644            | 360           | 2 122          |
|  | Austrians               | 9 200                   | 346           | 438           | 1 626          | 1 621          | 456           | 1 624          | 639            | 360           | 2 090          |
|  | Foreigners total        | 67                      | 10            | 1             | 14             | 1              | ---           | 4              | 5              | ---           | 32             |
|  | %                       | 0,7                     | 2,8           | 0,2           | 0,8            | 0,1            | 0,0           | 0,2            | 0,8            | 0,0           | 1,5            |
| <b>Totals in these<br/>Schools</b>                           | <b>Learners total</b>   | <b>1 178 750</b>        | <b>38 565</b> | <b>89 192</b> | <b>218 324</b> | <b>217 542</b> | <b>83 028</b> | <b>172 306</b> | <b>105 170</b> | <b>54 818</b> | <b>197 549</b> |
|  | <b>Austrians</b>        | <b>1 066 918</b>        | <b>35 951</b> | <b>84 683</b> | <b>204 448</b> | <b>202 686</b> | <b>75 413</b> | <b>165 934</b> | <b>97 817</b>  | <b>48 493</b> | <b>149 237</b> |
|  | <b>Foreigners total</b> | <b>111 832</b>          | <b>2 614</b>  | <b>4 509</b>  | <b>13 876</b>  | <b>14 856</b>  | <b>7 615</b>  | <b>6 372</b>   | <b>7 353</b>   | <b>6 325</b>  | <b>48 312</b>  |
|  | <b>%</b>                | <b>9,5</b>              | <b>6,8</b>    | <b>5,1</b>    | <b>6,4</b>     | <b>6,8</b>     | <b>9,2</b>    | <b>3,7</b>     | <b>7,0</b>     | <b>11,5</b>   | <b>24,5</b>    |

Source: Compiled by researcher from Austrian school statistics 1998:216-235, 288-295

#### **4.4 AN ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN MINORITY LEARNERS IN AUSTRIAN SCHOOLS FROM THE 1989/90 SCHOOL YEAR (Table 4) TO THE CURRENT SITUATION (Tables 5, 6 and 7)**

Looking at the 1989/90 school year figures in Table 4, in comparison to the 1996/97 Table 5 school year figures, it is evident that the numerical number of foreign minority has risen sharply over the years in all the provinces of Austria while there is no great increase percentage wise. As discussed, an official from the statistical office pointed out that this is due to the break up of the communist ideology coupled with the wars in the former Yugoslavia, which saw many of these people seeking refuge in Austria. However, when one compares Tables 5, 6 and 7, it is clear that although there was an overall increase in the number of minority learners in Austrian schools in the 1997/98 school year, this increase was mostly in Vienna possibly due to its metropolitan status. In absolute figures, Vienna currently holds 48 312 foreign minority learners hence the greater number of programmes currently running to cater for the educational needs of minority groups (Dallinger 1998, School trials at Vienna's compulsory schools). This is followed by Upper Austria and Lower Austria in 1997/98, with 14 856 and 13 876 whilst during the 1996/97 school year Lower Austria had more foreign learners than Upper Austria. However, considering the 1996/97 statistics, foreign learners are still concentrated in the provinces of Vienna and Vorarlberg when one looks at the proportion in contrast to the Austrian learners. Generally, the headmasters pointed out that it is very difficult to plan for the material requirements of the non-Austrian minority groups. This is due to the fact that one could not be sure of the nationality of one's foreign students in the long run in the present circumstances. It needs to be reiterated that Austria runs several programmes in its bid to provide equitable education to its minority groups, which are constantly adapted to suit the changing circumstances. The headmasters believe that this is very taxing, as the schools must be run within the normal budget. This means that they have to improvise material to improve the teaching of minority groups within their school districts. According to the information in the Austrian school statistics (Plank 1998:288-295), minority group learners are mostly concentrated in the primary schools with their numbers decreasing

as they go to higher institutions of learning where qualifications are required, perhaps due to language problems and poverty. Most of these learners, (in absolute figures) are concentrated in Vienna, Upper Austria and Lower Austria perhaps due to these provinces' capacity. The infrastructure is of such a nature such that they can accommodate additional learners. In terms of percentage, minority groups are concentrated in Vienna, Vorarlberg and Salzburg (Table 7). In addition, one realises that the numbers of foreign minority learners in higher institutions of education has not increased over the years. This would imply that Austria is still trying to find the best way to provide education to its minority groups.

#### **4.4.1 Possible shortcomings in the research**

With reference to the pilot study, some problems were to be foreseen in the research, such as the fact that the research was originally conducted in German and then had to be translated into English. This meant that the researcher had to rely on what the research participants were prepared to convey regarding matters of cultural interpretation. Due to financial constraints, only four out of the eighteen schools (two per province) were visited.

As the research is very topical, the research participants were sometimes not forthcoming with the required information. This was, in fact, experienced during the follow-up research in 1999. The researcher met with a certain amount of hostility from the research participants. Besides this, the researcher realised that some of the research participants were evasive and spoke positively about the provision of education to all minority groups regardless of citizenship. This is probably due to the fact that the research somehow touches on the complex nature of racism. The researcher observed that some of the officials at the ministry of education often pretended that racism did not exist in Austria.

A further possible shortcoming that needs to be understood is the fact that the research was undertaken on a limited scale and therefore not all issues in the provision of education to minority groups could be probed.

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it is evident that the provision of education to minority groups in Austria continuously changes as different needs arise. It would appear that despite the new intercultural curricula, the provision of education to minority groups in Austria has yet to reach acceptable satisfactory levels, if the comments by the directors of education are anything to go by. There is consensus that teachers and learners need to be counseled in order to be sensitive to the cultural differences and educational needs of minority children.

The teachers' attitudes and society at large should become sensitive to the needs of learners from minority groups. As schools are not isolated from the cultural milieu in which they are situated, when the interaction between all types of minority groups and the majority group children in schools is positive as regards the integration of minority group children, this is bound to spill over to society at large with advantages to society.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Results, conclusions and recommendations**

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#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This dissertation was aimed at researching the provision of education to minority groups in Austria. The following paragraph is a brief summary of the provision of education to these minority groups. To understand whether Austria has succeeded in its endeavour to educate minority groups, a study of three countries with similar problems, namely the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada, was carried out. This procedure was described in chapter 3. The research problem is: How does the Austrian school system practise the provision of education to minority groups and how does it handle problems that arise? The background to the Austrian school system was discussed in chapter 1. Chapter 2 examined the historical background to the development and the nature of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria. An in-depth study of the various ways of teaching minority groups as suggested by government policy, such as bilingual lessons, team teaching and the use of native speakers as assistant teachers, was discussed in chapter 2. Chapter 4 focused on the actual empirical research procedures.

In this chapter the results of the empirical research are discussed in order to establish whether the provision of education to minority groups in Austria is practically implemented, and whether it has been successful. A brief comparison is made and contrasted to what the situation was like during the field research in 1994 and the current situation. The provision of education to minority groups in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America is referred to briefly. Recommendations are made on how the provision of education could be improved on in practice.

The research process was essentially ethnographic, whereby the perceptions, opinions and conceptual categories of those who work in schools with a high concentration of minority groups was recorded by means of description of the participants' experiences. The administration of the questionnaires (chapter 4) is valuable as it enables one to understand the ethnographic, qualitative data. This is important as it shows how the changes in the provision of education were viewed and whether the educational policy was being implemented. In chapter 3, the provision of education to minority groups in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada was studied to understand the development of the provision of education to minority groups through the years up to the current situation, and to determine whether this is as dictated by policy.

During the 1960s minority education in the three countries (the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America) was mainly assimilistic, whereas in the 1980s minority education was pluralistic. The 1990s sought education, which reveals the institutional and power relationships that underlie race relations, which could create disadvantaged minority groups (Richer & Weir 1995:255-256; Nieto 1995:208; Figuero 1995:792). The 1990s also reflected a situation in these countries that points to the fact that there is an apparent mismatch between the school curriculum and the cultural backgrounds of the minority youths, due to the different educational opportunities and advancement chances for students from the minority groups. Clearly the provision of equitable education to minority groups is an ongoing process in these three countries (see chapter 3).

In chapter 4 the Austrian minority groups were discussed in detail. This chapter clarified the different minority groups, that is the Austrian minority and the foreign minority groups, with specific examples of where they are found, thereby also defining the area where the research was carried out.

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## 5.2 AN EVALUATION OF THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO MINORITY GROUPS IN AUSTRIA

### 5.2.1 The period from 1989 to 1999

Table 4 (chapter 4) highlights the number of learners according to nationality (Austrians, foreign minorities) and provinces as well as a proportion of foreigners in percentage. Thus, in the period 1989/90, out of a total of 1 135 371 schoolchildren involved in the survey, 47 662 or 4,2% were of foreign nationality, while in the 1996/97 school year, out of 1 193 435 schoolchildren involved in the survey, 106 513 or 8,9% were. This means that the number of foreign students had more than doubled. According to *Das Schulwesen in Österreich* (1998:96-97), nearly every eleventh student in Austria was a foreigner, whereas in Vienna nearly every fifth student was a foreigner. Generally, there has been an increase in the number of foreign minority learners entering Austrian schools possibly due to the break up of Eastern Europe, especially Yugoslavia, which has seen an influx of refugees as this country borders Austria. When one looks at the 106 513 students of foreign citizenship, one realises that more than 50% come from the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia). A quarter of these foreign students come from Turkey whilst more than 10% come from the previous Eastern Europe that is Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Czech Republic and Slovakia. The rest of the foreign students are from Western Europe and other parts of the world. This discussion is included to highlight the nationality of the foreign minority so as to understand why they are taught in the dialects of Austrian minority groups.

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### **5.3 DATA PRESENTATION, EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY**

In Austria, the 11th amendment of the school organisational Act of 1976, paragraph 7 declares the minister of education and culture responsible for educational policy (Rudlof & Gröpel 1993/94:1-31). It is with his agreement that the director of education in any province can implement didactical matters, such as the developments of new syllabuses.

The responses from the questionnaires to the directors of education in 1999 did not differ significantly from the responses of the pilot study in 1994. Although all the directors of education responded, the director of education of Salzburg was reluctant to participate. The pilot study in 1994 indicated that in Salzburg minority learners received education separately from majority learners. The minority groups comprised guest workers, asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants. This indicates that although the Austrian policy provides for the equitable provision of education to minority groups, the implementation of that might not be fully realised as provinces dictate the pace and decide on integrative or separate education, for the minority groups.

#### **5.3.1 Results of interviews and questionnaires of the Directors of Education**

The following discussion contains the results of the interviews and questionnaires, which was sent to the directors of education.

- *Policy*

According to the results from the study, the provision of education to minority groups leaves a lot to be desired due to the lack of uniformity in the timing of the implementation, as it is left to the provincial governments to decide when to implement equitable education to minority groups. The decentralisation of the education system means that all the provinces are at different stages of providing equitable education to minority groups. Based on the

information from the research and the Austrian Statistical Office in 1999, it would appear that the provision of education to minority groups in Austria is very complex due to the many different minority groups which stem from their different cultural and language backgrounds. It is not easy to provide home language education to minority groups as initially envisaged by the Austrian constitution (Tschentscher 1994-30 March 1999:2). It is also emphasised that all these activities must take place within the normal school budget.

The research participant from Vienna, who was in Zimbabwe in July in 1999, pointed out that minority groups from the former Yugoslavia were taught in either Croatian or Slovenian as their languages were dialects of these languages, which, again, are dialects of the Austrian minority groups. This is significant in that although there are guidelines on how minority groups are to be provided with education, these minority groups benefit, as they are mostly from areas whose languages are languages of minority Austrians.

On the whole, the provision of home language education during the first years of schooling of minority groups has not yet been fully realised. Thus, although the education policy dictates that all children have a right to education beginning with home language instruction, it is impossible to implement this successfully due to the many factors discussed in the literature study. It has been emphasised that it is only when minority groups reach a certain number that they can be provided with education suitable for them through home language instruction, team teaching, and project learning (see chapter 1 and chapter 2). Thus, although the Austrian policy dictates that everyone has a right to be taught, in their native languages, at least for the first three years of school, it has been difficult to fulfil this. This means that where numbers are lower, there is no home language instruction for minority groups. Although it is clearly stated that all learners in Austria have a right to home language instruction up to a certain age, in reality it is difficult to implement as such schools are not well funded.

The Austrian policy provides a framework by which the directors of education can pursue an integrative or a segregative perspective on education. Salzburg chose the segregative path, while the other provinces are in various forms of integrative classes. All in all, only the areas where the highest percentage of minority groups is concentrated have possibilities for home language instruction. This is because of policy declarations that are not matched by the infrastructure development and resources. Generally areas of higher concentration of minority groups provide minority groups with education through their native languages for at least the first three years of school. This means that those minority group learners who are living outside this radius of the higher concentrations have to make do with what is locally available to them.

In addition to this, there is a need for teachers to be counselled to improve their attitude towards minority groups. There is a need to find a balance between all the factors associated with this programme if it is to work (see chapter 4). Thus, although the right to quality education to minority groups is protected by law (Fischer 1986:19; Tschentscher 1994-30 March 1999:2), the implementation of this law is complex. Although children from minority groups are clearly disadvantaged due to a lack of understanding of the dominant languages (see chapters 1, 2 and 4), it is not financially viable to provide home language instruction to minority groups. This is the case even at the primary school level as minority groups are formed by many groups, whose numbers are continuously changing and, in addition, they speak many different languages.

The provision of education to minority groups is still in the initial stages, when varied experiments are being undertaken, as for example the Vienna Bilingual School and the various formats of integrative learning systems (see chapter 2 and chapter 4). The headmaster of school A in Vienna emphasised that the programmes running at his school started in the school year 1992/93 and are still currently running (1999/2000) when the decision to adapt them into the school system will be taken in the year 2003. He explained that his school is an example of the third step of the Vienna bilingual schooling concept, which starts at

kindergarten and goes up to A-levels. Accordingly, the Vienna bilingual middle school is the start of the secondary school level and is very distinct from other models of schooling currently running in Vienna and in Austria as a whole. The aim of this programme is to have an equal number of German-speaking Austrian learners and English-speaking learners (either as native speakers or through family intermarriages where English is the common language) to learn together. This is happening on three levels:

- the intensive teaching of English and German to the learners, whereby the language being taught is not the first language,
- co-operative teaching in the form of team teaching between an Austrian and an English teacher
- in arts and sports, where lessons can be carried out in one or both languages (see Table 8 in this chapter and chapter 2).

**Table 8** Timetable for the fifth year of school

|   | Hours per Subject        |                           | Teacher             |                     |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|   | German speaking learners | English speaking learners | Austrian teacher    | Native speaker      |
| Religious Education                       | 2                        |                           | 2                   |                     |
| <b>Language Faculty</b>                   |                          |                           |                     |                     |
| German                                    | 5 + 1*                   |                           | 5 + 1*              |                     |
| English as a 2nd language                 | 5 + 1*                   |                           | 5 + 1*              |                     |
| English                                   |                          | 5 + 1*                    |                     | 5 + 1*              |
| German as a 2nd language                  |                          | 5 + 1*                    | 5 + 1*              |                     |
| <b>Social Faculty</b>                     |                          |                           |                     |                     |
| Geography                                 | 2                        |                           | 2                   | 1                   |
| <b>Maths &amp; Science Faculty</b>        |                          |                           |                     |                     |
| Mathematics                               | 4                        |                           | 4                   | 4                   |
| Biology                                   | 2                        |                           | 2                   | 2                   |
| <b>Arts Faculty</b>                       |                          |                           |                     |                     |
| Painting                                  | 2                        |                           | (2) or (2)          |                     |
| Fashion and Fabrics & Technical Education | 2                        |                           | 2                   | 2                   |
| Music                                     | 2                        |                           | (2) or (2)          |                     |
| <b>Sports Faculty</b>                     |                          |                           |                     |                     |
| Physical Education                        | 4                        |                           | 4                   | 4                   |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>30 + 2</b>            |                           | <b>31 to 35 + 3</b> | <b>18 to 22 + 1</b> |

\* = Non-obligatory exercise to promote interested and talented learners, Conversation Club (English and German as a language), Reading and Writing in the home language.

Source: School trials at Vienna's schools 1998:2

As in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada, the provision of education to minority groups aims at providing relevant education. In the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada, governments are being called upon to correct observable socio-economic problems which is caused by institutional social relations that result in inequality (Richer & Weir 1995:255-256, 268; Grant 1992:1; Giroux 1990:10). Thus, educators in these countries are tasked with identifying and changing institutional policies that might be regarded as being racist in their impact and which could thereby lead to disadvantaging minority groups. From these studies (in the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada), it is clear that minority groups find it difficult to be enthusiastic in school systems that devalue what they embrace as their cultural identity. Therefore these countries have set up departments of education that are responsible for teacher certification and the selection of textbooks that are free of racial bias (see chapter 3). Emphasis is also placed on the discussion of anti-racist education; in order to improve it, so that those minority groups will not be marginalised. It is also realised that by infusing the curriculum with the cultural aspects of the minority groups the results will be an improvement of participation by these minority groups as they then feel to be part of the system.

▪ *Integration*

The Austrian policy on the provision of education to minority groups provides a framework for the provincial directors of education to decide to pursue an integrative or segregative perspective on education. Only Salzburg teaches its minority groups separately from the majority learners.

In other provinces (Tyrol, Panonia, Styria, Carinthia, Vorarlberg, Vienna, Upper Austria and Lower Austria) minority groups were and are taught in various forms of integrative classes. In Panonia, minority learners are taught the usual lessons. In addition to additional German lessons, they receive get-together classes and cultural activities that help parents of these learners to meet parents of majority learners. In Tyrol, on the other hand, lessons are only

provided in German for children who are from non-German home language backgrounds. Panonia, Vienna and Vorarlberg offer cultural feasts in addition to their mixed classes, with additional language teachers to teach the language courses. In Styria there is additional lessons offered in German and there is home language instruction, especially for Austrian minority groups. In Upper and Lower Austria, extra-curricular lessons are provided to enable those minority learners to learn German.

In 1994, five out of nine directors of education believed that the integration of minority learners causes friction, although overall the headmasters believed the integration is positive as regards the tolerance of the cultural groups. However, the number of directors of education who believed integration caused friction dropped to four in 1999. In this respect it was pointed out that it was difficult for learners to socialise with children whose parents were sometimes domestic workers for their parents.

▪ *Language*

Another issue observed is that the two hours per week which should enable learners to learn German quickly was and is believed not to be sufficient. Except for minority groups whose language is that of the Austrian minority groups, there are hardly any possibilities for home language instruction. This factor was clarified when the research participant from Vienna, who visited Zimbabwe in 1999, explained that Austria is fortunate in that most of Austria's foreign minority learners' languages fall within those spoken by its minority groups and therefore have a chance to receive home language instruction. However, in 1994 and 1999, the directors of education placed the failure to provide home language instruction on the policy declarations, which are not matched by the infrastructure development and resources.

▪ *Cultural and religious differences*

The other causes of friction are currently still cultural and religious differences, which resulted in poor communication and contact in learner-teacher, parent-teacher relationships. In addition, part of the Austrian public is still against school integration due to mutual

distrust, bureaucratic obstacles and unwillingness by minority groups to be integrated. This makes integration a difficult task for the teacher.

▪ *Socialisation of learners and parents*

Friction is handled in different ways in the nine provinces of Austria. In Panonia, there are service officers, where volunteers try to integrate minority families into the mainstream society, by placing minority group adults into certain jobs. In Tyrol there are workshops, community activities and intercultural feasts to create contact so that there is some understanding achieved between the different peoples. The director of education in Vienna on the other hand believed that although xenophobia is mostly carried into the school from outside, the solution lies in the curriculum for intercultural learning. Intercultural learning was developed in Vienna more than nineteen years ago and was implemented in the 1993/94 school year. In Vorarlberg a bilingual teacher has been employed at the regional education offices where there are constant efforts to integrate minority parents into the parent teachers' association. On the other hand in Styria the aim is to concentrate minority learners at certain schools so as to effectively offer German language courses by employing post-graduate language teachers who are qualified to teach the relevant foreign language. In Lower Austria, volunteers provide additional information to minority parents to help their integration.

Although the majority of the directors of education were satisfied with the policy of the provision of education to minority groups, those three directors of education who were not satisfied put the following points across: namely that the integration of minority groups into society can not be solved through the institution of the school alone. The curriculum for intercultural learning gives room for integrative or segregative learning for foreign minority groups and only Salzburg took the segregative measure. There is still a need for personal assistance, additional German lessons, learning materials and additional bilingual lessons. Although the Austrian policy promotes the provision of equitable education to minority groups this is not the reality at the schools as the directors of education believed integration minority groups calls for a societal effort.

▪ *Disciplinary problems*

Both types of schools, with either a higher number of majority or minority learners, were experiencing incidences of disciplinary problems such as challenging teachers or bunking lessons. In addition, minority groups were found nearer to the industrial areas where the socio-economic structure of the people is low, where they live communally in sub-standard buildings, in the poorer surroundings of town. The belief is that minority groups are fairly accepted. However the political propaganda make the majority scared of minority groups, especially foreigners. Integration is a long time process whereby children are easily integrated, regardless of their ethnicity or nationalities, whilst in the communities, it is difficult as there is a lot of suspicion by the majority groups. The recent influx of refugees due to the war in the Kosovo (1999, no statistics available) is making the Austrian public more resistant to welcoming minority groups. The existing policy includes sections dealing with home language instruction and there are curricular guides for teaching minority groups.

The directors of education were of the belief that learners performed better where there were specific curricula guides. The ministry of education sets up the principle regulations and within that framework, the directors of education are implementing the policy with the assistance of headmasters and teachers, according to regional differences. There is provision for parents to take part in the formulation of this policy through the Parents Teacher Associations, as some of them are unable to speak German.

As discussed (see chapter 4), five out of the nine provinces of Austria have higher concentrations of minority groups. Of these Styria, Carinthia and Panonia have higher concentrations of Austrian minority groups and Vienna and Vorarlberg have higher concentrations of foreign minority groups.

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### 5.3.2 Results of the interviews with Headmasters and questionnaires from the Headmasters

#### ▪ *Policy*

The principals, Parents Teachers Associations and senior teachers were and are still accountable for interpreting and implementing the educational policy, for the provision of education to minority groups. Once the school has set up plans for the provision of education to minority groups, the Parents Teachers Associations and the school forum present their views so that alterations can be made where necessary.

All eighteen headmasters included minority groups, which may be placed in the following categories: all eighteen headmasters had guest workers, sixteen headmasters had refugee learners and eight headmasters had asylum seekers in the schools. These categories of learners are in the areas of the study (that is two schools per province, were besides the Austrian minority groups, in Panonia, Styria and Carinthia).

#### ▪ *Language*

The five headmasters who were dissatisfied with the Austrian Education policy, presented these points:

- there is not much input from teachers
- children should be exposed to intensive German language courses before entering school
- there is more bilingual teachers needed if the program is to be a success
- there are too many languages to be taught.

The principals informed the researcher that the German language lessons are syllabus oriented so that the learners can understand school topics and hence eradicate school problems due to the lack of language proficiency. The teaching of the native language is done up to three hours per week and contract teachers teach in the languages of the former

Yugoslavia, Turkey and Poland and other East European languages falling into the languages of Austrian minority groups. Where classes were too big, team teaching was and is conducted (see chapters 1 and 2) with teachers consulting each other on the progress of the learners, so that they could plan the work for project learning. Special courses were planned for one year for the children who have just entered Austria to learn German and who would proceed to integrative classes.

Sometimes where there is a concentration of minority groups in one region it becomes difficult to get an optimum number of students to be taught. This is so because when the minority learners are few they are often ignored and when there are too many minority learners, the majority learners do not feel challenged, since teachers spend some time explaining issues and some lessons to the minority learners who experience problems because of the language issue. The negative attitudes of teachers regarding the minority learners need to be changed. Additional problems pointed out were that classes were too large and that the time allocated to them to teach foreign minority students, the German language, was inadequate. This resulted in these learners being placed in the schools for the mentally retarded.

▪ *Integration*

The integrative classes for foreign minority students (Vienna and Vorarlberg) are organised allowing for the children's individual circumstances to be looked into. Additional teachers to teach those children without any knowledge of the German language are given for at least 6 hours a week. These schools are part of Project integration of foreigners and the school principal and his teachers applied for it, with the approval of 2/3 of the teachers and parents who agree to have it implemented. In the case of a school in the province of Vienna, there are still special language courses (*Seiteneinsteigerkurse*) of up to 18 hours per week to ensure the fast integration of the minority learners into the regular classes.

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In the case of schools with higher percentages of Austrian minority groups, (Panonia and Carinthia) the present situation in these provinces is a result of article 7 of the Austrian constitution. It stated that ethnic Austrian minority groups had the same right to education, as their German speaking counterpart (see chapter 1). The schools make up their own operational plans so that at the end of primary school the learners can be able to pursue their secondary schooling in German. This is especially important in Panonia where the Croatian community does not control their schools, but children receive education in bilingual classes. The principal at a school in Panonia, stated that this is so as the Croats speak various dialectical varieties of Croat and do not form an enclave, but pockets are found scattered, all over the province. Their second language, the "*Umgangssprache*", is closer to Viennese German. In the Grosswarasdorf, children were taught in Croat for the first year of schooling. Thereafter the German language is phased in, in such a way that by the 4th year German was the sole language of instruction.

This contrasted with Carinthia where children were taught in Slovene for the first two years and thereafter chose to receive lessons in Slovene and learn German in parallel classes. From the third year German is phased in so that the children can be ready for sole German instruction by the 4th year. These children have a chance to choose high schools offering bilingual education or to pursue their secondary education in regular German schools. In the provinces with higher concentration of Austrian minority, children receive education in their own languages during the first year of school, thereby fulfilling the requirements of the provision of education to minority groups in Austria, and thus to overcome language problems in school.

▪ *Disciplinary problems*

Eleven out of the eighteen headmasters involved in the study believed that the integration of minority learners with the majority learners causes friction. They expressed the belief that schools must understand the culture of the minority groups for integration to succeed. Headmasters felt that problems of integration had to be explained to parents, and teachers

must be counselled to teach minority groups. Ultimately the ideal should probably be a uniform distribution of minority groups, which could be achieved by means of bussing them. More time is needed to improve the German language proficiency of minority groups, besides planning extra curricular activities that can bring about the tolerance of minority groups by the majority.

Of the eighteen headmasters, eleven experienced no disciplinary problems in their schools. Nine headmasters believed that both groups, that is the majority and the minority groups give disciplinary problems. Eight headmasters knew the background of the learners who give them disciplinary problems. Ten headmasters allow the class-teacher and headmaster to solve the problem together and eight allow the class-teacher, headmaster and parents to solve the problems. Eleven headmasters pointed out that minority learners completed four years of secondary school while seven headmasters indicated that they dropped out of school. In 1999, ten headmasters experienced no disciplinary problems, ten headmasters knew the background of their learners and the rest were unchanged. Generally, there is no great difference between the pilot study in 1994 and the current study of 1999, as regards disciplinary issues.

▪ *Socio-economic factors*

The reasons presented for not completing school were as follows:

- The minority children find the German language difficult.
- They prefer to go into apprenticeships to alleviate their own poverty rather than go to school.

It is difficult to accommodate minority group children from three or more different countries as it would mean teaching in three different languages, and therefore it is better to teach them German before they come to school. Headmasters expressed the feeling that there is no help from parents who sometimes find the system threatening and too difficult for their children. Like the directors of education, the headmasters pointed out that minority groups are comprised of big families from the working class areas, who mostly rely on social-welfare.

These parents do not speak the German language fluently and they live as ethnic groups. Five headmasters believe minority groups come from both areas, that is, from poor and affluent areas, especially the Austrian minority groups. Only two headmasters cater for minority groups in their schools who are from affluent areas. Minority groups are therefore found in the poorer areas of town.

▪ *Religion and cultural differences*

Most headmasters believed integration results in the cultural integration of minority groups and that minority groups generally do not form a class of their own. Those three headmasters who believed students do form a group, believed the student cliques are due to cultural differences as people have a tendency to seek out those who speak a language similar to theirs. This results in clusters being formed during break periods. Minority learners probably feel unwelcome in the classes where they are expected to learn in German quickly. The headmasters commented that even Austrian minority learners sometimes keep to themselves during break time as they are defined by language.

It is generally believed by the headmasters that both groups of children (ie, minority and majority) are equally absent from school. The minority children are absent due to language problems, which make them feel not part of the system, while the German-speaking children feel that they are not challenged adequately. The German-speaking children are often absent as they feel they know the lessons others are trying to catch up with. Sometimes minority groups do not feel catered for, besides being absent for religious reasons, such as the Ramadan season when the children who are Moslems spend time praying and fasting. The majority of the headmasters believed that the minority groups constitute the group needing the most counselling, while seven felt that both groups needed counselling. Thus, in this respect, both groups need assistance. Fifteen out of eighteen headmasters involved in this study have possibilities of extra lessons in their schools and thirteen headmasters have both groups of learners taking these lessons. In this case, it seems that headmasters strive to fulfil the minority's needs as regards quality education, though it is difficult satisfy both groups.

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### **5.3.3 A comparison of the numbers of minority group learners between 1989-1998 in Austria**

Although the number of foreign minority learners has increased, it is clear that there was a general decrease in the number of minority learners in most of the provinces, except Vienna, which had almost thousand additional learners. This might be due to refugees moving back to their homes, or to a high dropout rate. When one looks at the 1989/90 school year figures in chapter 4, in comparison to the 1996/97 school year figures, it is clear that the number of foreign minority groups has risen sharply over the years in all the provinces of Austria. As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, an official from the statistical office pointed out that this is due to the break up of the communist ideology coupled with the wars in the former Yugoslavia which has seen a lot of these people seeking refuge in Austria.

However, when one compares Table 5, 6 and 7 in chapter 4, it is clear that although there was an overall increase in the number of minority learners in Austrian schools in the 1997/98 school year, the greatest increase was in Vienna possibly due to its metropolitan status. In absolute figures Vienna currently holds 48 312 foreign minority learners and hence the increased number of programmes currently running to cater for the educational needs of minority groups (Dallinger 1998:www.schulen.wien.at/.../sv98). This is followed by Upper and Lower Austria in the 1997/98, with 14 856 and 13 876 whilst during the 1996/97 school year Lower Austria had more foreign learners than Upper Austria. However, if one considers the 1996/97 statistics, the foreign learners are still concentrated in the provinces of Vienna and Vorarlberg when one looks at the proportion to the Austrian learners.

Generally, the headmasters pointed out that it is very difficult to plan for the material requirements, where one could not be sure of the nationality of one's foreign students in the long run, in the present uncertain circumstances. Thus (chapter 4), Austria runs several programmes in its bid to provide equitable education to its minority groups which are constantly adapted to suit the changing circumstances, which the headmasters believe are

very taxing as they must be run within the normal budget. This means that they have to improvise material to improve the teaching of minority groups within their school districts.

According to the information in the Austrian School Statistics (Plank 1998:288-295), minority group learners are mostly concentrated in the primary schools with their numbers decreasing as one goes to higher institutions of learning where qualifications are required. This is perhaps due to language problems and poverty (see chapter 4). Most of these learners, in absolute figures are concentrated in Vienna, Upper Austria and Lower Austria perhaps due to these provinces' capacity to accommodate many learners. It is pointed out that in terms of percentage it is in Vienna, Vorarlberg and Salzburg where minority groups are concentrated (see compiled Table 7 in chapter 4).

In addition to this, when one looks at the proportions, it is clear that the number of foreign minority learners in higher institutions of education has not increased over the years. This is in line with the findings of this study whereby it was indicated that foreign minority learners drop out of school due to language problems. Thus, although the Austrian constitution states that every child in Austria has a right to education, this has yet to be fulfilled, as has been discussed in this dissertation. This is because of factors, such as the costly nature of the exercise, and the fact that regional Governments control the implementation of the education policy and, as such, can choose what to implement and what to leave out.

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#### **5.4 A COMPARISON OF THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO MINORITY GROUPS IN AUSTRIA WITH THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION TO MINORITY GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND CANADA**

The provision of education to minority groups is a complex issue, which constantly changes. Despite the fact that the three countries, the United Kingdom, the United States of America

and Canada instituted affirmative action programmes, which was aimed to bring about equality of education to minority groups decades ago, this issue is still hotly debated. As the American education system is being called upon to correct institutional policies that might disadvantage minority groups, the affirmative action programmes that are a cornerstone to the provision of equitable education to these groups are in danger of being dismantled. According to "ERA"1999:2, proposition 209 (California Civil Rights Initiative) has eroded the gains made by minority groups in California, since it was voted in, in May 1995 (see chapter 3). Generally calls are being made for outreach programmes that would make c-level students eligible for college by tutoring them in their weakest subjects (*Where is the "Action" in Affirmative Action?* 1997:2-3) <http://members.tripod.com/-genewang/affaction.html>.

On the other hand, Canada seems to be gearing itself to be improving upon achievements of the past by formulating and adopting an educational policy that will protect the language rights of minority groups which is guaranteed by the constitution and the official languages act (Office of the Commissioner of the Official Languages 1999:1-40). The Commissioner will ensure the compliance of the Official Languages act, that is French and English and help official language minority communities to develop their languages. Thus, Canada seems to be celebrating its diversity by ensuring that its peoples become literate in one of the official languages (either English or French) in addition to their home language (see chapter 3).

The provision of education to minority groups in Austria is complicated by the fact that the bulk of these minority learners are foreigners, which creates problems in infrastructural planning and development, as it is difficult to make long term plans with learners who might return to their countries. Despite these problems, Austria provides for the education of not only its minority groups but foreign minority groups as well (see chapter 4). Austria runs several programs in regions of higher concentration of minority groups. Thus in spite of the costs involved, Austria is running several programmes in all its provinces aimed at delivering quality education to minority groups. Personnel such as directors of education and

headmasters are trying to implement the provision of education to minority groups with the available resources.

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## **5.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This research is deemed important in that the researcher wanted to establish whether Austria had succeeded in providing education to its minority groups as it would help those with similar problems to learn from them. This could also guide the researcher to realise whether the provision of education to the minority groups helped in bringing about integration and harmonious living in the Austrian society.

Although the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada have led the way in formulating policies and strategies in the provision of education to minority groups, there are still complaints that this education does not fulfil the needs of these people. Those headmasters, who complained, pointed out that it is very difficult to plan for learners speaking different languages and actually made suggestions that they would prefer that foreign students were taught German before coming to their schools. Generally in all the countries studied one realises that a cultural understanding of the minority groups improves levels of mutual tolerance.

It was surprising to discover that most headmasters of the eighteen schools studied in Austria did not know the demographic profiles of their minority learner intake. The policy on the provision of education to minority groups was criticised for being too open to such an extent that even in one district schools were at various stages of implementation and that it is overstated and could possibly be alienating to minority groups. As a result of this, provinces differ in the extent to which they interpret and implement of the policy of the provision of education to minority groups. The four schools, which the researcher visited, differed in their approach in that the provision of education to minority groups was viewed as a "wholesome

**5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The research was carried out to establish how the Austrian school system provides education to minority groups and how it handles problems that arise. It is realised that although section 7 of the Austrian Constitution provides for the provision of education to minority groups (see chapters 1, 2 and 4) especially, foreign minority groups do not benefit fully from the education system because of language problems. The researcher recommends the following to alleviate the problems in practice:

- (1) Playgroup centres should be established where minority group children and majority group children (from two years of age) can play together under the guidance of trained adult teachers and thus be exposed to the German Language at a tender age. These children would then learn the majority language under less stressful conditions such as is generally experienced in school.
- (2) In these centres educational films should be shown in both the language of the minority and majority languages which could enable the minority learners to enrol for pre-school when they speak or understand the majority language.
- (3) The Austrian education system should invest in the provision of education to minority groups through the training of minority group teachers as they are the ones best qualified to deal with problems that might be found in their communities.
- (4) Schools offering education to minority groups often lack teaching materials and therefore companies and organisations should be offered incentives to invest in the development of such playgroup centres and improvement in schools.
- (5) The provision of accessible educative programs for the learning of the majority language, (such as videos) should be encouraged.
- (6) There should be Public Television Centres where children who have no videos at home, can watch educational videos.

- (7) The ministry of education should give preference to areas of the higher proportions of minority groups when looking at the development of a new infrastructure or improvement of the current structure.
- (8) Pre-schools should be funded by government and should be established near these play centres, so that the children who are already fluent in their own languages can benefit.
- (9) Thereafter, in primary schools educational programmes can be developed in the form of tapes so that the children can have radio lessons whereby the teacher can carry out demonstrations for the benefit of the whole group.
- (10) During such lessons the teacher will not only demonstrate but also translate the lesson to the language best understood by the minority group children.
- (11) Encourage the development of languages through essay competitions, as the minority group learners will realise the importance of both languages.
- (12) Schools should introduce days when learners are speaking in the majority language to encourage learners to learn it, as they will virtually live and work in the Austrian society.
- (13) More textbooks should be written in minority languages so that the minority groups will not be disadvantaged because of the lack of understanding of the language.
- (14) Public libraries should be equipped with materials and books which are of relevance to minority groups.
- (15) A fair distribution of the media should be encouraged. This implies that there should be access to newspapers, radio programmes and television in their languages, so that the minority learners realise that their language is not stigmatised. This means that by the time students are expected to learn in German only they will be fluent and also they will have also mastered their languages.
- (16) More research on this topic on a quantitative and qualitative basis is imperative.

## **5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY**

This research was complex due to the fact that most of the material had to be translated from German to English. In addition, financial problems meant interviews were limited to the Provincial Directors of Education and the headmasters of the four selected schools. Besides this the researcher realised that most of the people were evasive and probably spoke very positively about the provision of education to minority groups, while the actual situation is quite different.

It was difficult to carry out the research as there are not many written documents or sources available on this topic. Difficulties were also experienced because whatever was available is written in German and the researcher had to rely on translating the sources. Moreover, it was also difficult to find appropriate charts and diagrams to assist in explaining the provision of education to minority groups in Austria.

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## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, from the discussions, the comparison and analysis of the results of the study, which was conducted in 1994, and the current situation (1999), it is evident that the provision of education to minority groups in Austria continuously changes as different needs arise. It would appear that despite the new intercultural curricula, the provision of education to minority groups still has to reach acceptable satisfactory levels. Teachers and learners need to be counselled in order to become more sensitive to the needs of minority children.

Teachers' attitudes and society at large should probably require a paradigm shift to create a conducive environment where the educational needs of the minority learners can be satisfied. These schools are not isolated from the cultural milieu but rather mirror images of the

cultural milieu such that if what is happening in the schools is positive as regards the integration of minority groups this is bound to spill over to society at large and benefit all.

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*Addenda*

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**ADDENDUM A**

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**Questionnaire for the headmasters of two schools per province with a concentration of minority groups**

Title: Educational Provision for Minorities in Austria

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently involved in research into **EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR MINORITIES IN AUSTRIA** for my masters degree at the University of South Africa, as indicated by the enclosed letter from the Head of Department, Professor O J Van Schalkwyk. The subject is both topical and relevant to schools in newly independent countries like Zimbabwe and South Africa. I would appreciate your completing the questionnaire.

The approval of your Director of Education in the Province has been obtained to conduct this research.

The information in the questionnaire will be treated confidentially.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

(Mrs) E.B. Atzinger

## ADDENDUM B

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### Instructions for the completion of the questionnaire

Please give the answers to the questions as follows:

- Make a cross in the box next to the appropriate answer.
  - Write your comments in the space provided, when explanations are required.
1. What kinds of minority groups are present in your area of responsibility (eg, guest workers, refugees, asylum seekers)?

.....

2. Are you satisfied with the Austrian educational policy on the provision of education to minority groups?

Yes  No

3. If not, which areas could be improved?

Explain briefly:

.....

.....

.....

4. Does the integration of minority groups into the education system cause friction?

Yes  No

5. How could friction be minimised?

Explain briefly:

.....

.....

.....

6. Do you have disciplinary problems in your school?

Yes  No

7. In your opinion, who causes these problems?

a) Minority groups

b) The majority group

c) Both groups

8. Do you know the family background of the children who give you disciplinary problems?

Yes  No

14. Do minority groups make a group of their own in your school?

Yes  No

15. What do you think causes these student cliques?

a) cultural differences

b) other

Explain briefly:

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16. Which students are mostly absent?

a) minority group children

b) majority group children

c) both

17. In your opinion, what causes students to be absent?

Explain briefly:

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18. Regarding the number of students needing counseling in your school;
- a) minority students are the majority
  - b) majority students are the majority
  - c) both groups
19. As regards levels of learning ability:
- a) minority student constitute the group needing the most help
  - b) majority students constitute the group needing the most help
  - c) both groups
20. What do you think blocks the students' ability to learn?
- a) Culture
  - b) Foreign language
  - c) Difficulties with the subject
21. Is provision made for students to receive extra language lessons in your school?
- Yes  No
22. If so, which students take advantage of this offer?
- a) minority students
  - b) majority students
  - c) both

## **ADDENDUM C**

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### **Questionnaire for the Director of Education in each of the nine provinces of Austria**

Title: Educational Provision for minorities in Austria

Dear Sir/ Madam

I am presently involved in research for my M.Ed. on **EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR MINORITIES IN AUSTRIA** through the University of South Africa, as shown by the enclosed letter from the Head of Department, Professor O J Van Schalkwyk.

The research is of great importance and relevance to countries with multicultural populations of ethnic diversity like Zimbabwe and South Africa. I am greatly interested in this topic as it may highlight and provide insight into how newly independent countries like South Africa or Zimbabwe could handle the provision of education for minority groups in a multicultural student body. The study is carried out in strict confidence, and the names of schools and principals will not be used.

To conduct the study satisfactorily, I would need to have an interview and discussion of about two and a half hours with you to discuss the problems and relevancy of this study.

Your cooperation will be appreciated. The interview could take place on a day suitable to you.  
Yours faithfully

(Mrs) E.B. Atzinger

## **ADDENDUM D**

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### **Instructions for the completion of the questionnaire**

Please give the answers to the questions as follows:

- Make a cross in the box next to the appropriate answer.
- Write your comments in the space provided, when explanations are required.  
(Additional comments will be appreciated.)

All answers are kept in strict confidence.

1. What minority groups are present in your province (eg, guest workers, refugees, asylum seekers)?

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2. What is the Austrian policy on the provision of education to minority groups?

- a) integrative (allowances for some aspects of minority culture)
- b) separative

3. How are these minority groups integrated?

Explain briefly:

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12. If not, why are they not accepted?

Explain briefly:

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13. Does the existing policy on the provision of education to minority groups deal with matters of the curriculum, such as home language instruction?

Yes  No

14. Are there specific curriculum guides for each curricular area offered?

- a) none available
- b) available for a few curricular areas
- c) available for all curricular areas

15. In the case of specific curriculum guides offered do students perform:

- a) better
- b) worse
- c) equally good

16. Who determines the policy of the provision of education to minority groups in your area?

Explain briefly:

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17. Is any provision made for parents to take part in the policy making of the provision of education to minority groups?

Yes  No

Explain briefly:

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18. How would you describe the concentration of minority groups in your province?

- a) high concentration
- b) average concentration
- c) low concentration