

Let Diversity Speak!

A handout

Suggestions to work with linguistic diversity in Global Learning


Imprint and references

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The coloured worldmap (format: 137,5 cm x 96,2 cm) can be ordered free of charge together with this handbook at weltkarte@engagement-global.de . Please include the title "Let Diversity Speak!" in your e-mail.

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The feedback from practitioners is very valuable for BtE, as it allows us, to incorporate the tips and suggestions directly into the development of further Global Learning material. For suggestions, hints, criticism and praise, please use our contact form:

www.bildung-trifft-entwicklung.de/kontakt.html 

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Sources languages:

- CIA World Fact Book: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/> 
- Ethnologue - Languages of the world: www.ethnologue.com 
- Lexas: www.laenderdaten.de/staat/amtssprachen.aspx 
- Wikipedia: List of the countries of the world, list of the Official languages, etymological list of country names, Etymological list of capital city names

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Editorial

Dear speakers of Global Learning, Dear teachers and learners,

The worldmap "Change Perspectives" has accompanied numerous educational events in the field of Global Learning during the last years and has thus become one of the most important didactic materials of *Bildung trifft Entwicklung* (BtE). The map of the world is often used as a guide for information on other regions of the world and countries and is very suitable for working with international learning groups (e. g. for encounters, refugees or international volunteers). Since then, more and more reached us for an English version of the worldmap.

We are pleased to make it available to you now. Hang up the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" with the South up, and you will find all the country names in English. If you want to work with the German version, simply turn the booklet in which you are reading, and start reading from the other side of the cover.

In the discussion about the English version, we came up with the idea of making greater use of linguistic diversity in the world as a resource for Global Learning. With this new world-

map we are offering educational material that makes the languages of the world visible and thus makes them part and parcel of cultural spaces, in addition to geographical and political perception. When many people can recognise their own languages on the worldmap, they feel heard and have a reason to share their thoughts and experiences with us. That gives us the opportunity to recognise, appreciate and learn from our cultural diversity and that of our world.

This booklet offers suggestions on how the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" can be used in educational work. We invite all trainers of *Bildung trifft Entwicklung* to complement, fill and develop these ideas with their own experiences from the countries of the Global South. We look forward to a versatile use of the worldmap in school and extracurricular contexts.

We wish you an inspiring reading and successful educational work with the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!"

Shila Auer and Katrin Volck

The worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" - an orientation

Hang the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" as usual with the South down: What do you notice? What can you read or understand, what not? What irritates you? Each country is marked on the map in white or light grey in a language used in that country.

For example, China is written in Mandarin, Algeria in Arabic, Germany in German, etc. Due to the different alphabets of many languages, we see the names of the countries also in different fonts. In all countries of the world, however, there are several languages spoken by the inhabitants.

Since we did not want to classify or categorise them, we decided to select each represented language randomly.

To advance in linguistic diversity, it is necessary to discover the "white spots" of this map: The white boxes below the country names with the small plus signify that there are several official languages in these countries. Use your learning group to find out which other language(s) can be entered here! If there is no white field, there will still be other languages spoken by the inhabitants: minority languages or dialects, for example. Do you know any?

For reasons of space, we couldn't print them all on the worldmap. So we wanted to choose one language per country – but which one should we pick? First of all, we have narrowed the selection down to the official national languages, i. e. the official languages enshrined in a country's constitution. But even here there are multiple languages in about every fourth country.

In many places you probably can't read the script or understand the languages – same for us! Often, precisely this gap in knowledge is the incentive we need to become curious and investigate, making discoveries and initiate learning processes. Nevertheless, a little tip: Turn the map over and read the country names in English.

The international designation of the countries in English becomes legible when the South is at the top. On pages 20 and 21 you will also find a list of all country names and their phonetic transcriptions. Can someone from your learning group read and pronounce specific country names? Just ask around!



What do I use the map for?

"Recognising diversity"

We have developed the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" for educational work to present cultural and social diversity in our environment and world-wide. Through languages, we want to encourage learning from other cultures and arouse curiosity about the people of the world.

"Creating linguistic diversity"

Another goal is to perceive languages as vibrant and use them in a dynamic way. Learning groups should reflect about how we can get into intercultural exchange through languages, how we enable multilingual education and how this can stimulate human development. But it is also important to recognise where language becomes an obstacle to development.

"Strengthening southern perspectives"

With the map, we also want to strengthen the perspectives of the Global South by letting people from these countries speak for themselves. Learners should complement the official attitude of governments with that of minorities. The analysis of languages makes power relations clear - those that still affect us from colonial times, but also those that are currently being newly produced.

"Irritating (old) worldviews"

Like with the worldmap "Changing Perspectives!", we want to irritate worldviews with this worldmap. The continents seem distorted to us by the Peters projection, which correctly represents the proportions of the countries correctly. This questions our view of the world as we are used to and perceive as "normal" and prompts us to rethink our perceptions. The upside-down map also reveals that our habits influence our view of the world. When first approaching the map of the world, it may make sense to prefer these disputes.

This and much more can be processed and discovered with the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!". We invite you to get confused, to investigate further, to ask many questions and sometimes you might admit ignorance, too. In this handbook, you will find orienting information, exercise suggestions and ideas for further thinking.



Exercise suggestions:



- **Language diversity in the group:** List the languages you know. Who can speak which language? Collect all the languages in the group (board/flipchart/cards) which at least one person can understand and/or speak. The list of all languages shown on the worldmap on page 7 can help with the collection.
- **Listen to the sound of speech:** Let individual participants read out the names of countries whose language they speak. Try to repeat the country names in the different languages together. Maybe someone in the group knows people who can understand other languages on the map.

- **Self-designation and foreign-designation:** Find out together how the English name of a country on the worldmap differs from the local description. What do the words sound like? What is the difference between them? Ask people who can speak the national languages.
- **White fields:** The learners should write at least one additional official language in the white fields (or on post-its which are stuck on the worldmap). Divide regions or continents into groups and then compile the research results. What do the results tell us about the respective countries? Which questions arise?



Would you like to invite facilitators who enrich the discussion of the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" with their own methodical and substantive experiences from countries of the Global South? Then get advice from the regional partners (Regionale Bildungsstellen) of *Bildung trifft Entwicklung* or use our search for trainers.

www.bildung-trifft-entwicklung.de/regionale-bildungsstellen.html 

www.bildung-trifft-entwicklung.de/referentinnensuche.html 

Languages printed on the worldmap

Bislama ● Cook Islands Māori ●
English ● French ● Kiribati ● Māori ●
Marshallese ● Na Vosa Vakaviti ●
Nauruan ● Niuean ● Palauan ●
Samoan ● Tok Pisin ● Tongan ●
Tuvaluan ●

Oceania

Afrikaans ● Akan ● Amharic ● Arabic ●
Chichewa ● Comorian ● English ● French ●
Hausa ● Kikongo ● Kinyarwanda ● Kirundi ●
Kituba ● Malagasy ● Ngola ● Portuguese ●
Sango ● Sesotho ● Setswana ● Seychellois ●
Creole ● Shona ● siSwati ● Somali ●
Spanish ● Swahili ● Tigrinya ●

Africa

Dutch ● English ●
Guaraní ● Portuguese ●
Quechua ● Spanish ●

South America

Arabic ● Azerbaijani ● Bengali ● Burmese ●
Chinese ● Dhivehi ● Dzongkha ● Eastern
Armenian ● English ● Filipino ● Hebrew ● Hindi ●
Indonesian ● Japanese ● Kashmiri ● Kazakh ●
Khmer ● Korean ● Kyrgyz ● Lao ● Malay ●
Mongolian ● Nepali ● Persian ● Russian ●
Sinhalese ● Tajik ● Tetum ● Thai ● Turkish ●
Turkmen ● Urdu ● Uzbek ● Vietnamese ●

Asia

Albanian ● Belarusian ● Bokmål ● Bosnian/Croatian/
Serbian ● Bulgarian ● Catalan ● Croatian ● Czech ●
Danish ● Dutch ● English ● Estonian ● Finnish ● French ●
German ● Greek ● Greenlandic ● Hungarian ● Icelandic ●
Irish ● Italian ● Latvian ● Lithuanian ● Luxembourgish ●
Macedonian ● Maltese ● Montenegrin ● Old Greek ●
Polish ● Portuguese ● Romanian ● Serbian ● Slovak ●
Slovenian ● Swedish ● Ukrainian ●

Europe

English ●
Haitian Creole ●
Nahuatl ● Spanish ●

Central America

French ●
Hawaiian ●

North America

Our goal: recognising diversity

Approximately 7.097 languages are spoken worldwide by small groups or even by several million people. It is difficult to count the languages of the world accurately because the difference between dialect and language is often controversial or some languages are no longer known. Different languages often have a variety of scripts, some languages are not written at all but only spoken. On the other hand, sign language can only be seen but not heard.



What does language tell us about society?

Behind every language are people with their cultures, values and worldviews. Through language we can express and

understand each other. Thus, languages foster forms of communication and relationships between people and nature. It also reflects political and social systems.

By focusing on languages, we see new realities which facilitate the confrontation with various global social and cultural issues.

Who decides which language is spoken?

Our language skills are passed on to us by our parents. Colloquially, the first language that a child learns is called "mother tongue". This language can be a dialect, a regional language, rarely it is precisely what is understood by "standard language". National official languages are used in society, especially in the education system, in politics and jurisdiction as well as in the media of a country. If your first language is not an official language, the challenge is to learn at least one additional language to participate in society.

In addition to the national, there are many regional or local official languages in almost every country. Also, there are many national (but not official) languages. As prime example of incredible linguistic diversity, in Papua New Guinea 841 languages and dialects are spoken. In Luxembourg, Lëtzebuergesch is defined by law as a national language, but is not enshrined in the Constitution.

There are also numerous recognised or non-recognised minority languages which are of great importance to individual sections of the population, such as Armenian in Turkey. Also, each language has several dialects and expressions.

Who decides which language is spoken?

Whether languages are recognised as official languages depends in many countries on the government or on political decisions. In Chile, despite the fact that many people speak indigenous languages, the government, which is strongly oriented towards national unity, did not include them in the Constitution. Instead, it declared Spanish as official language.

Mostly, languages do not stop at the border. This clarifies that the countries are also culturally and historically connected beyond their current political order. Quechua is spoken in Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador, for example. Such regional-spanning languages are often neglected because nobody feels responsible for their promotion.

If a language is not taught at school, it is often used rather orally than written. A language which is also written seems "more important". But languages without writing are also valuable expressions of culture, identity and society. For example, the sign language used in New Zealand is recognised as an official language alongside English and Maori. Languages are often deliberately determined as "dialects" in order to take away their social and cultural significance. Because unlike languages, dialects cannot claim to be officially recognised.

Get involved in all these complexities with the worldmap. Question the official perspectives and include linguistic diversity as an important and fascinating subject into your educational work.



Definitions

Official language The legal language of a state, which is enshrined in the Constitution and applies to all areas of public life.

National language The high-level or standard language of a historically and politically defined linguistic community.

Minority language The independent language used by ethnic groups or other minorities.

Dialect Regional delimitable language system that is structurally similar to another language, hardly codified and written.

Regional/local language Language spoken in an area which is not a state entity.

In linguistics, different definitions of all these terms are used. This depends on, among other things, the political or ideological interpretations.



Exercise suggestions:

Recognising diversity

- **Brainstorming:** Collect together on a poster why language is relevant and what we need it for.
- **My Language-Ego:** The participants use colours to add all the languages that matter in their everyday life to a drawn silhouette of a person. Then it is jointly reflected why which language was connected to which part of the body and in which colour. Which languages from the group also appear on the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!"? (Copy templates: <http://maledive.ecml.at/Home/Studymaterials/Individual/Visualisinglanguagepertoires/tabid/3611/Default.aspx>)
- **First languages:** We all have one or more languages that we were taught first and we know pretty well, the so-called "mother tongues". Discuss: Which languages are these for the participants? What positive or negative feelings, experiences or relationships do they associate with these languages? Why do they like their first language or why not? How often do they use them?
- **Languages on paper and in reality:** Research for country X (e. g. Germany): What are the official languages? Which national languages exist? Are there minority languages in this country? If so, which ones? Discuss whether you perceive these languages in your everyday life (e. g. in the subway, at school, on television).
- **Languages in numbers:** Let the participants do some research in which country most languages are spoken. Count them and discuss which problems arise through this variety. How many countries in the world have more than one official language (shown on the worldmap by the white fields under the names)?
- **Dialects:** Ask the participants: Which dialects do you know? Do you speak a dialect? When do you use dialect? What are the advantages and disadvantages of a dialect? How important is your dialect to you?
- **Language Meaning:** In Burmese, there is no word for "no". Invite learners to avoid the word "no" for a period of time, e. g. for an entire day or during a break. Then think about it together: What were the consequences? How did they replace the word? How did the conversation change regarding content and impact on the relationship. What does it say about a culture if there is no word for "no"? Are there other examples of different expressions in certain languages?



Our goal: Strengthening southern perspectives

Why do three of the five most widely spoken languages come from the comparatively small continent of Europe? That is no coincidence, of course, but has its roots in the colonisation of Africa, Asia, Oceania and America by European countries. The introduction of English, French and Spanish, in particular, was one of the colonial powers' most essential strategies from the end of the 19th century onwards to impose their own cultural, economic and political systems on colonised countries. By doing so, local languages and their cultural and social significance for the people were suppressed, fought, banned and (finally) often exterminated.

Until today, colonial languages are widespread, such as French in West Africa and Spanish in Latin America. Societies have adapted these languages and are modifying their education systems, policies, administration and public life accordingly. On the other hand, in many countries, several languages coexist side by side in everyday life, whereby often people understand local languages better than the official ones. However, since the former colonial languages are much more present in official life, even the speakers often do not feel that their local languages are that valuable.

The worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" wants to raise awareness of local languages and thus strengthen the perspective of people from the formerly colonised countries.

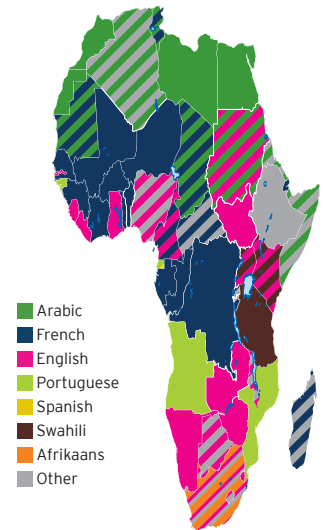
Traces of colonisation

Where possible, other languages than those of the European colonial powers were deliberately chosen on the map. However, the traces of colonial times are still visible in many places.

For example, many local languages that were initially no written languages are now represented in Latin script. In addition, some countries are described differently in the local languages than in the international version. For India, for example, there are at least three terms whose backgrounds have different meanings and connotations: The older terms "Bharat" and "Hindustan" contrast with the name "India", which was mainly used by the English colonial power.

But it is not only the European colonial languages

Official supra-regional languages in Africa



that are spread worldwide and still have cultural and political significance. In the 7th century, the spread of Islam led to the spread of Arabic in North Africa and parts of Asia. Today Arabic is spoken in more than 26 countries on the African and Asian continent, in most of them as an official language.

Sometimes – as in Rwanda, for example – states use language policy to distance themselves from their former colonial powers. After independence from Belgium in 1962, French became the official language. With the addition of Kinyarwanda and English (since 2003) as additional official languages, Rwanda is turning away from the former colonial sphere of influence of Belgium.

Even today, language means influence

On the one hand, the English language as a "language of world communication" is helpful for coming to terms with international groups, but on the other hand it also makes a new form of colonisation visible. The fact that it is precisely the language of the rich countries of Europe and North America that is used primarily in political negotiations, in international economic relations or science, underlines the unequal worldwide power balance. For those who communicate in their familiar language in these key areas of society it is easier to express their interests, stand up for their rights and have access to the information

needed to do so. People who do not speak this language or do not speak it well are often excluded from political and social participation.

English, the lingua franca of the world, also has a decisive influence in cultural terms. For example, Anglophone music or film culture from the USA is distributed worldwide. Global technologies developed in the English-speaking world, such as software, allow English words to find their place in other languages.

In other regions of the world, however, increasingly important languages are gaining influence. For example, Mandarin (Chinese) has been the central lingua franca in East Asia for thousands of years. With 1.1 billion speakers in the world, Mandarin is not so far from English, with 1.5 billion speakers (2017) being the world's most widely spoken language. 982 million people describe Mandarin as their first language (English: 375 million).

The worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" invites to point up and reflect traces from the colonial era, on the one hand, and on the other, it intends to stimulate a debate on current global power relations.



Strengthening southern perspectives

Exercise suggestions:

- **Colonial Languages I:** Invite students to search on the worldmap for colonial languages. Afterwards, small groups can look up the web for colonial languages in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Which languages are spoken where and why? An in-depth study of colonialism can follow after.
- **Colonial Languages II:** Which languages were prohibited by colonial powers and why? How was the ban enforced? Search for examples in selected countries.
- **Colonial Languages III:** Why did the countries in Africa decide to continue using French, English, Spanish or Portuguese as their official language even after independence? Find examples.
- **"Mother tongue" versus educational language:** In many countries, children learn the official language of the country only when getting into school. Consider how it would have been like if you had entered primary school and they taught everything in Arabic, for example. What difficulties could arise?
- **"If colonisation hadn't existed":** ...then perhaps Africa would look like the Swedish Artist Nikolaj Cyon suspected. Compare his hypothetical map with the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!": What is different, what is equal or similar? How do you imagine the linguistic situation on Nikolaj Cyon's map? <http://cyon.tictail.com> 📄
- **"Denglish":** Collect English words which are commonly used in the German language. Consider where they come from and why we use them. Then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of English as a world language.
- **Power structures in language:** Let the learners play a short dialogue three times, once the speakers are using their first names, then – with the same content – but with their surnames and the last time, one is using his/her first name and the other one his/her surname. What has changed in each case? How did the speakers feel? Discuss how power relations become visible through language.



Our goal: creating linguistic diversity

Through globalisation and migration patterns we live in societies where diverse cultures and languages coexist. Monolingualism is the absolute exception worldwide. The challenge is to deal with this linguistic diversity around us in such a way that it enriches us and does not lead to conflicts. Language, therefore, plays a central role in Global Learning in the pursuit of a prejudice-conscious, solidarity-based and equal world community.

Social framework

Language depends on the recognition of people's identity, which makes linguistic equality such an important responsibility of states. A monolingual policy can, therefore, lead to severe conflicts.



There is no doubt that multilingualism is coupled with challenges as well – let it be in the education system, administration or in public communication. At the same time, however, language is central to personal development, political participation and access to people's resources. It is therefore primarily up to the state and social structures to create the conditions for this. Switzerland is a well-known European example where multilingualism is anchored in the constitution. With its four official languages (German, Italian, French and Rhaeto-Romanic), it promotes the recognition of multiple identities and values among its population. However, in a global comparison, some countries have declared many more languages to be their official languages: South Africa, for example, has eleven official languages and India recognises 23 (regional) official languages.

Discover new things and broaden your horizons

However, the development of multilingualism does not only take place at the political level. Every individual is also called upon to shape linguistic diversity. Learning a foreign language makes it possible to make contacts, opens up new perspectives, creates security and orientation when travelling and is usually beneficial for your job. Curiosity, friendships and love give the motivation to learn a new language. Digitalisation is increasing the need for multilingualism by making it possible to communicate across the globe.

At the same time, the computer-based world also offers translation programs or apps and this helps people find their way around in linguistic diversity.



Many people in Germany continue to learn English, French and Spanish, the languages of European neighbours and popular holiday destinations. In contrast, the willingness to learn other languages is much lower and the language course offers for Mandarin or Arabic, for example, are still rare, especially in the school sector. Many other languages that surround us in our everyday lives – such as those of minorities or migrants – are hardly promoted by authorities and in addition, many people perceive them as a social problem. But instead, what about seeing this as an opportunity to learn the languages of our fellow citizens?

Moreover, migratory movements around the world do not only bring new languages into our environment but also contribute

to changing languages. Pronunciations change, words are added or even reinvented, languages are mixed and grammatical rules are broken. For example, more and more people are taking over the Spanish influenced diminutive form "-ita" or "-ito" or the Arabic word "Yalla!" ("let's go!") into their English parlance. The speakers adapt the languages to their needs and develop them further. This is by no means a modern but a recurring phenomenon in the course of world history. In the context of colonisation, for example, the Creole languages were created by mixing the colonial with the pre-colonial languages.

Educational opportunities

However, several studies have shown that the positive psychological and cognitive effects of multilingualism only come into play, if literacy has already taken place in the first language and if it is further promoted. In many former colonies, people were denied educational opportunities in this way if their first language was banned or ignored in schools, sometimes with punishment.

In Germany, teaching in the language of origin is an integration factor in some federal states such as North Rhine-Westphalia. Politically, on the other hand, the obligatory German course is focused but also controversially discussed.

Unfortunately, rarely we talk about how our society could benefit from the many languages in its midst. This leaves open the question of how the enormous potential of language diversity in German society and in increasingly heterogeneous learning groups can be better exploited.



Exercise suggestions:

Creating linguistic diversity

- **Multilingualism using the example of Switzerland:** Research what multilingualism in Switzerland (with four official languages) encompasses and in which areas of life it is expressed. What does this mean for the education system, for politics, for the media and for the identity of the speakers?
- **Role-play on multilingualism:** Simulate a parliamentary session with different actors (pro and contra) on the topic: Should Germany become a multilingual state?
- **Loss of languages:** Find out which languages or dialects in Germany got lost in the course of history. How did this happen and what does it mean? Further information: Society for Endangered Languages, www.uni-koeln.de/gbs/ and UNESCO, www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/index.php
- **Linguistic diversity in the neighborhood:** Encourage learners to look around at kiosks in their neighborhood to see which newspapers and magazines are available in which languages. Compare the offers and discuss why some languages are available and some not.
- **New languages:** Find examples of mixed languages, variants and dialects in the learning group (e. g. Turkish-German, "Pidgin English", regional variants of French in Cameroon).
- **World dictionaries:** Invite learners to search in a library for dictionaries in different languages. How many languages can you collect? Are all languages of the group available? Discuss what this means for the speakers. Find out together who stands behind the official reference works, such as Duden, Oxford English Dictionary, Real Academia Española etc. and who officially recognises a language. For example, who decided that there is a dictionary for the language "Elvish" from the book "Lord of the Rings"?
- **Digital language I:** Summon the participants to look into the lists of their electronic devices and compare them with each other: How many languages are there? Is a language missing?
- **Digital language II:** Translation programs help us to understand and write texts in foreign languages. Will we still have to learn foreign languages in the future? Discuss what speaks for and against this.
- **Discriminatory language:** Compare how the term "people with disabilities" is used in different languages. What is behind the terms? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of politically correct language. Learn more about racism-critical language: <http://eineweltstadt.berlin/publikationen/ber-publikationen-bestellen/>

Our goal: irritating (old) worldviews

Like the predecessor version "Change Perspectives!", the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" opens up the possibility of a double irritation for the viewer: Through the true-to-surface representation in the "Gall-Peters projection" and through the reversal from "above" and "below", in which the map can be used hanging "upside down". Both are irritating and are intended to alter the naturalness of the usual representations and thus call our worldview into question.

"Upside down"

We usually know exactly what is up and down on a worldmap. The north is "on top", the "northerners", the so-called "industrialised countries" of North America, Europe and Russia. "Down" in the south are the so-called "developing countries" of South America, Africa and Oceania. That is usually connected with conscious or unconscious value judgments, e. g. above – developed, below – underdeveloped. The orientation "up and down" entirely depends on the perspective. If we imagine the planets as celestial bodies orbiting around each other and themselves, it is evident that from another perspective the top and bottom are not perceived in the same way. Representing the north on the worldmap above is no more plausible than depicting the south in the upper part of the worldmap.

Another representation

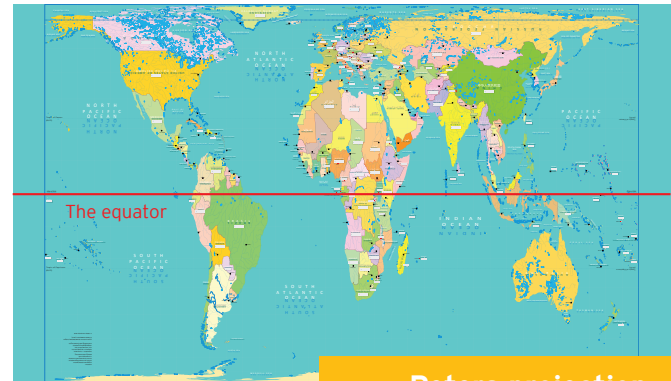
The representation of countries and continents in the so-called "Gall-Peters projection" (or only "Peters projection", according to Arno Peters and James Gall) is at least unfamiliar. It renounces the cylinder projection of other maps and displays the meridian circles vertically instead. All surfaces of the earth are reproduced on the same scale. Also, the equator is in the middle of the map. In this way, the Peters projection succeeds in depicting the proportions of the continents and countries more realistically than in the Mercator projection. This underscores that the "northerners" are not the dominant centre of the world.

This map representation is neither "correct" nor the other "wrong" because it is and remains impossible to adequately depict a three-dimensional body (globe) on a two-dimensional surface (map grid). We have chosen the Peters projection for the worldmap "Let Diversity Speak!" to question traditional worldviews of European predominance. Europe is not the center of the world – and no longer the determining factor in world affairs. We are a small part of the globalised world, not only area-based but also in many other dimensions. It is time to develop a new world view that focuses on solidarity and shared responsibility for the one, common and threatened world.



Mercator projection

- The areas of the individual countries are shown incorrectly. Also, the northern hemisphere appears larger because the equator is not in the middle of the map and the north has more space as the southern hemisphere is granted.
- The low equal-area projection conceals the actual proportions: Europe is larger than South America / Scandinavia bigger than India / USA twice as big as China.
- The Mercator projection presents the angles (directional position) of the continents to each other well and has therefore been extremely useful for navigation thanks to their angular accuracy.



Peters projection

- The Peters projection shows the countries in their area ratio to a large extent correctly. However, the contours of the continents and their positions relative to each other are not reproduced realistically.
- The large surface area shows the actual proportions: Europe only half the size of South America / India three times larger than Scandinavia / USA (9.8 million square kilometres) and China (9.6 million square kilometres) nearly the same size.
- The angular projection is only small due to the distortion of the contours and the substantial deviations from the actual angles (directions) of the continents to each other.



Exercise suggestions:

Irritating (old) worldviews

- **Cause irritation:** Hang our worldmap upside down in the classroom without comment. Ask learners what they notice. Write down keywords to the annoyances.
- **What is right?:** Then turn the map (the north is now on top) and ask what is different now. Discuss what the "right representation" of the world is. See also: Statements on the Peters projection of various scientists, www.heliheyne.de/Maps/Eval31.html and German Society for Cartography, <http://dgfk.net/download/DGfKzurPeterskarte1985.pdf>
- **Compare:** Hang a worldmap with the Mercator projection next to our worldmap. Ask learners to identify similarities and differences.
- **The Orange Test:** Each person brings an orange and a waterproof marker (thin). Get a peeling knife. The orange (globe) is painted with the contours of the earth and then carefully peeled. The peels are then to be laid out as a two-dimensional worldmap on paper (incisions are permitted). This makes immediately visible that it is impossible to reproduce a three-dimensional body on a surface precisely.
- **Search game "upside down":** Let the students search for certain countries on the reversed worldmap (time limit: 30 seconds): their own countries of origin and vacation countries; Germany – Turkey – Tanzania – Thailand; Brazil – Gabon – Kiribati – Ecuador (countries which are located on the equator); Nepal – Paraguay – Rwanda – Czech Republic (more difficult to find).
- **The surface giants:** Search together with the learners the five largest countries (Russia, Canada, USA, China, Brazil).
- **Top five:** In small groups, participants should identify and justify the "five best countries in the world". A controversial discussion immediately arises about criteria why and in what respect one country is "better" than another according to the opinion of certain participants. You can also enter your criteria, such as those of the "Happy Planet Index" (www.happy-planet-index.com/).
- **"Change of direction":** All participants hold a pen at a horizontal position with outstretched arm facing up and turn the pen clockwise. While they continue to turn the pen in the same direction, they lower their arms until the "clock" has reached chest height and they now look at it from above. Is the pen still turning in the "right" direction (clockwise)?