

Immigrant children's language practices and their implications for language policy and teaching

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In contemporary literature there is a significant shift in terms of understanding migration, since it is approached beyond the well-known dichotomies of the past: residence in and out of the nation state, assimilation vs. pluralism, heritage language vs. the national language. It is also emphasized that there is a need for research that understands children not only as members/speakers of a minority social group, but as international social agents that activate multilingual repertoires (Duff, 2015; Blommaert, 2010). Although this description encapsulates very well the spirit of this new global reality, it rarely focuses on policy and language education issues related to immigrant children. This is exactly the gap that this presentation aims to fill: how to research immigrant children's language practices in this new global reality, so as to effectively capture the linguistic diversity and, at the same time, to inform policies in heritage language maintenance and teaching.

Our presentation draws from on an ongoing, long-term ethnographically-oriented research project conducted in Australia and Germany aiming, on the one hand, to map the repertoires of Greek neomigrant children's language practices and, on the other, to discuss the complex, dynamic and value-laden way in which these children employ their 'translingual repertoires' (Hiratsuka & Pennycook, 2019) by highlighting the social, ideological and technological factors underlying their choices. Our analysis will be based on 40 ethnographic interviews with parents and children (11-15 years old) who migrated to Australia and Germany during the deep economic crisis in Greece (2010-2018).

Our presentation will be organized in three parts. In the first, the new orientations in literature concerning immigrant children's language practices in the new global reality will be presented. In the second, emphasis will be placed on presenting our theoretical perspective and our research design. Our aim is to map the children's everyday language practices across the whole spectrum of their everyday life (school, family, free time, internet) and to connect these practices with the languages they use (e.g., English, Greek, German). To this end, we

employ the notion of ‘repertoires of language practices’ to explore the possible connections between specific practices and languages. In the third part, the main findings will be presented and emphasis will be placed on connecting them with education policy initiatives and on providing a better understanding of language education in migrant populations.

References

Blommaert, J. (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press.

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Hiratsuka, A., & Pennycook, A. (2019). Translingual family repertoires: ‘No, Morci is Itaitai Panzita, Amor’.” *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 41(9), 749-763.