

## **Engaging Language Policy from Macro to Micro Level: Migration and Language in Europe**

This symposium is situated against the backdrop of the current migration crisis in many EU countries. Focusing on language policy issues in school context, the papers in this panel critically examine the role of language in migrant children's educational development, integration process, and maintenance of culture and heritage language. To illustrate the powerful role of schools in socialization, the papers investigate one of the most important aspects of language policy: language policy engagement.

Engagement is a process that involves agents from different levels to appropriate, interpret, negotiate and co-create a language policy (Johnson, 2014). As a starting point, it recognizes the "unplanned language plans" (Egginton, 2002, p. 4) from various forces on different local levels. These forces may or may not be congruent with the language ideologies ascribed by policy makers, resulting from different language practices, language attitudes, and language values in linguistic markets and political contexts.

Policy engagement takes into consideration the role of various policy actors/agents (such as teachers, students) in the process of policy enactment. It places the focus on policy actors as they interact with each other to make sense of the linguistic environment, sociopolitical settings and educational contexts in which the language policy occurs. The presentations in this symposium explore how ideological beliefs are at work when policy actors engage in policy making from different geopolitical contexts in Europe. By looking at societal and institutional discourses' influence on teachers' and students' perceptions of migration and language, the papers provide an insight into how macro language policies are interpreted and appropriated, what micro language policies are created, and how such language policies are manifested in school and classroom practices. In this panel we adopt Kaplan and Baldauf's (1997) use of macro and micro level. Macro level refers to national level or governmental level organization whereas micro level refers to small organizations, such as a school or a classroom.

The presentations will contribute to the studies of migration and language policy by providing timely informed evidence that have implications for both the migrants' future and that of the host society.

### **Presentation 1**

#### Policies and Practices: Tensions in teaching migrant children with English as Additional Language

Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen & Naomi Flynn

While there is a growing number of language policy studies from many different countries, there are only few studies investigating language policy issues related to immigrant students in the UK (Flynn, 2015; Foley et al., 2013; Safford et al., 2013) and even fewer that focus on how explicit or implicit government/institutional policies shape teachers' perceptions and practices when teaching students with English as an additional language (EAL). Despite the rising number of primary school students with EAL, support for teachers facing a changing pupil demographic has been declining. Addressing this gap, our paper reports the findings of an inquiry exploring how teacher ideologies and beliefs about EAL students are constructed through their interpretations of evolving language and literacy policies in the UK. Involving 100 teachers from 11 schools in four local districts in South East England, we present teacher accounts of policies, policy implementation (or lack thereof), and practical

realities concerning students with EAL. Data sources include documents, official and unofficial policy texts, and questionnaires administered to teachers.

The findings indicate that national expectations of assessment in English create tensions between what teachers feel they should do for their EAL students acquiring English and what they have agency to do within the confines of policy-related drivers. The findings also suggest that declining support for students with EAL will intensify the tension between daily teaching practices and the needs of migrant students. Implications for both practitioners and policy makers are discussed in relation to the teaching of EAL to members of migrant families in the UK.

## **Presentation 2**

### Educational Professionalism, Migration, and Multilingualism in Germany: Minority teachers' views on migration

Argyro Panagiotopoulou: [a.panagiotopoulou@uni-koeln.de](mailto:a.panagiotopoulou@uni-koeln.de) University of Cologne, Germany

Prof Lisa Rosen: [lisa.rosen@uos.de](mailto:lisa.rosen@uos.de) Osnabrück University, Germany

In this paper, we explore how minority teachers view migration-related multilingualism, linguistic diversity and translingual practices in Germany. This paper presents initial findings from ethnographic observations we conducted in 2015 in Welcome-Classes in Germany. It focuses on the actual language policy in Germany which aims to integrate newcomers through language assimilation in schools, and by doing so (re)produces the monoglossic hegemony in place.

Thus, our research question is: Do the experiences gained by pedagogical professionals in multilingually organized educational settings interrelate with their views on migration-related multilingualism, linguistic diversity and language practices at school? If so, how?

## **Presentation 3**

### Dynamic interplay of language policy, ideologies and pedagogy in a preschool in Luxembourg

Claudia Kirsch, [claudine.kirsch@uni.lu](mailto:claudine.kirsch@uni.lu) University of Luxembourg

This presentation focuses on the relationship between the language policy, language ideologies and language practices in a nursery class in trilingual Luxembourg. Individual multilingualism is an educational goal in Luxembourg, a small country in central Europe, and, thus, children learn Luxembourgish from the compulsory nursery school, become literate in German in Year 1 and learn oral and written French from Year 2 and Year 3, respectively. Currently, 62.4% of the children do not speak Luxembourgish on school entry (MENJE 2016). Many speak Portuguese, French or a language of the Balkans. As a result, educational policies focus on the teaching of Luxembourgish from preschool, sometimes at the expense of other languages. Gretsch and Kirsch (2015) developed the app iTEO in order to promote innovative teaching methods that capitalize on the children's diverse language resources and that promote a dynamic view of bilingualism. This ipad app, which allows for the recording and editing of oral speech, was designed with social-constructivist theories and Bakhtin's theory of dialogism in mind.

This case-study presents the ways in which a preschool teacher's ideological beliefs influence a child's language use over a period of two years leading to the child's understanding of the legitimacy

of translanguaging. The focus lies on the interplay between the educational policy focusing on the teaching of Luxembourgish, the teacher's language ideologies rooted in her multilingual identity and in societal multilingualism, and the child's experiences of separating languages at home (Kirsch, 2014). The data stem from a qualitative, longitudinal study using a multi-method approach. The study shows that dialogue between teachers, parents, children, policy-makers and researchers can contribute to shifting ideologies and to opening up dynamic languaging spaces.

## **Presentation 4**

### Finnish teachers as policy agents in a changing society

Mirja Tarnanen and Åsa Palviainen, University of Jyväskylä

Global changes during the last twenty years, and particularly the unexpected flow of asylum seekers in 2015, have led to increasing diversification in Finland.

Finland as a nation has a long history of bilingualism where Finnish and Swedish have the status of national languages. In 2014, the number of registered mother tongue speakers of other languages than the national languages (293 540, or 5.4 %) for the first time in the country's history exceeded the number of Swedish speakers (290 760, or 5.3 %) (Statistics Finland 2015).

Finnish-medium as well as Swedish-medium schools in Finland have thus experienced an increased level of diversification in students' ethnic and language backgrounds. The current curriculum for basic education underlines the importance of language awareness, multilingualism and multiliteracy. While the educational policy and ideology promote this approach, studies have shown that students with migrant background have lower educational achievement in comprehensive schools and this tends to have a large effect on their final educational attainment (e.g., Kilpi-Jakonen 2011; Harju-Luukkainen et al. 2015).

In this paper, we focus on teachers as policy agents and as holders of and (re-)producers of ideologies in Finnish- and in Swedish-medium classrooms. We perform a meta-analysis of recent studies (n=6) on teacher beliefs and discourses around teaching in multilingual and multicultural settings. In doing so, we try to get behind the official policy documents (curriculum and legislation) to understand how teachers are influenced by policies, when policy is understood as a multilayered and multispatial, as well as a locally informed, process where people produce and reproduce policies in interaction with each other.