

EDITORIAL

Institutional and family support for multilingual development

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As transnational migration has increased over the course of the 20th century and even more so in the early 21st century, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity has become an important issue of linguistic, cultural and religious discourses in Europe. This can be considered a major change in countries that since the formation of the European nation states in the 19th century have an understanding of identity and unity to a large degree as being distinguished by a national language. While more extensive migration movements and increasing diversity have reached different parts of Europe at different times in the past century, migration has in more recent times become an urgent, and often emergency, issue for many European countries. Meanwhile, EU policies have broadened their scope and not only focus on foreign language learning but include forms of multilingualism connected to migration, such as the maintenance of home and heritage languages (also see Szczepaniak-Kozak et al. 2023).

This development is grounded in an understanding that languages are not only a means of communication and social interaction but also a crucial element in a person's identity (Daase 2017; Masterson 2017). With increasing linguistic diversity and extensive research in the area of multilingualism, there is a recognisable move towards an understanding of languages not as separate units but as fluid and flexible constructs that are interrelated and active in a multilingual speaker's linguistic repertoire (Green 1998; Grosjean 1989, 2001; for an overview also see Ballweg & Havkic 2022). This also includes an understanding of language acquisition not as a process with so-called native-like competencies as a final point but rather as an ongoing process which includes elements of language acquisition, language attrition or loss and domain-specific competencies.

This understanding challenges many education systems which usually have a strong focus on a societal dominant language and are based on a monolingual habitus (Gogolin 1994). In order to increase equity and prepare all pupils for social participation, schools in multilingual societies are required to embrace diversity, include all multilingual speakers with their full linguistic repertoires and move away from puristic and monolingual norms and ideals of so-called native speakers. This process has already started in many European countries, where multilingual approaches to teaching and translanguaging practices are appreciated and tentatively introduced into teaching. Thinking about and attempting to share good evidence based practice may help educators to think creatively about new possibilities, more inclusive approaches, and effective strategies, to move away from mindsets and pedagogies that fail to recognise multilingualism as contributing to transformative and effective teaching and learning for all pupils.

In general, while there have been significant advances in the field of education broadly, there has not been enough attention given to catering for pupils from minority language backgrounds in schools, especially in an era of increased migration of learners in Europe. This special issue of *Glottodidactica* (2023/1) focuses on institutional and family support for the development of multilingual children, adolescents and young adults in school and family environments. As multilingualism in our society and school systems becomes more ubiquitous, educational providers and stakeholders are seeking knowledge and support to manage increasingly diverse learning environments more than ever before. Multilingualism is part of a school's community as well as of our societies as they reflect the social conditions in our countries. Inclusive approaches aim to provide for the well-being and best possible linguistic (or multilingual) and cognitive development of children.

There is a clear message: it is necessary to bring about change in how educators cater for the needs of multilingual pupils and an enhanced understanding of what multilingualism can offer teachers and other educational stakeholders. We want to encourage multilingualism in our schools and communities and, to do this successfully, teachers, pupils and their families need guidance and opportunities to collaborate and work in organic and innovative ways. As the articles in this issue reinforce, although multilingualism is the common thread, there is nonetheless not a singular or universal model for implementing multilingualism.

In this special issue of *Glottodidactica*, some contributions focus on the teachers' beliefs and practices in the context of facilitating the acquisition of the societal dominant language or discuss challenges in doing so and introduce possibilities of language-sensitive teaching.

Angela Farrell, Mary Masterson, and Michelle Daly of the University of Limerick in Ireland report on a qualitative study that was conducted with teachers and school managers in several post-primary state schools in Ireland to explore the current position regarding language-sensitive teaching as an emergent response to the growing reality of linguistic diversity in schools. Their study shows that language-sensitive teaching remains in its infancy in the Irish post-primary educational context with an urgent need for teacher awareness-raising and upskilling in relation to this approach and its implementation in different subject classrooms. The researchers recommend that language support teachers have a central role in developing language-sensitive teaching at the whole school level, but findings from their study demonstrate that this potential remains largely under-exploited in the Irish post-primary educational context.

Joanna Rokita-Jaśkow of the Pedagogical University of Kraków in Poland draws on a larger qualitative study (Rokita-Jaśkow et al. 2022), investigating the factors that impact EFL teachers' agency in the socialisation of multilinguals into new primary school environments in Poland. She reports that teachers' agency appears to stem from their plurilingual competence and prior teaching experience. Surprisingly, teachers' personal experiences of intercultural encounters (e.g. time spent living abroad) or verbalised empathy, had little impact on their agency. This finding implies that even language teachers find it difficult to put themselves in the position of the multilingual learner and need specialist training in order to work with multilingual learners, which may convey an important message for educational decision-makers in reference to the formulation of future teacher education guidelines and curricula.

In their contribution, Aspasia Papasoulioti and Maria Fountana of the Computer Technology Institute & Press "Diophantus" in Greece together with Anna Szczepaniak-Kozak and Sylwia Adamczak-Krysztofowicz of Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań discuss the issue of increasing linguistic diversity in Greek and Polish schools and approaches to teaching. The authors discuss education policies and the availability and production of teaching materials in both countries to show that despite vast differences in contextual factors, both countries face many similar challenges. To address these, they give recommendations for teachers to support pupils from migration backgrounds and sources of useful additional materials.

Another group of papers investigates possibilities of introducing multilingualism and more specifically home languages into teaching and learning. These approaches aim to recognise pupils' full linguistic repertoire and their linguistic identity in schools (as, for example, suggested by Gogolin & Lange 2010; Kirsch et al. 2020; Mary & Young 2020).

Martina Irsara of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano in Italy asks whether and how languages should be treated together in school programmes to cater to a multilingual environment. Findings from her case study conducted in several primary schools in the Italian province of South Tyrol show how multilingualism has become more embedded in language teaching pedagogy. Her study advocates for instructional designs that enhance and support multilingualism and plurilingualism. She observed that incorporating more than one language in lessons could be viable and legitimate at specific points in the curriculum, where multilingual practices complement monolingual strategies in a well-informed and balanced way.

Hadrian Lankiewicz of the University of Gdańsk in Poland in his paper analyses the attitudes of foreign language teachers towards young migrant pupils' mother tongues or heritage languages. This quantitative study explores language teacher beliefs (both of Polish and other foreign languages) regarding the coexistence and the use of other languages in mainstream education settings in foreign language classrooms. The study attempts to compile good practices reported by the sample teachers surveyed. Findings convey teachers' awareness that their teaching reality and recent social changes require a more flexible approach in the language learning classroom. However, only a few of them are going beyond their own educational experience and adapting to the new situation.

The learners are the focus of two further contributions. These show us that a holistic, sociocultural view on multilingualism also includes aspects of identity, culture, including national culture, and social interaction.

Kübra Aksak of Bursa Technical University and Feryal Çubukçu of Dokuz Eylül University in Turkey in their paper explore the cultural intelligence levels of bilinguals and multilinguals in order to investigate the relationship between cultural intelligence on language learning. In this qualitative study, bilingual and multilingual primary school students were selected and administered the cultural intelligence questionnaire to detect whether there is a relationship between these two or not. The results of this case study showed that the multilingual participants in the study had higher scores in cultural intelligence, revealing that those who are open to other cultures and can easily adapt themselves to new patterns of thinking are likely to learn languages with ease.

A qualitative research study on newcomers to the school system is presented in the paper by Andrea Daase of the University of Bremen and Nastassia Rozum and Viktoriia Rubinets of Bielefeld University, both in Germany, argue that learner-oriented approaches to teaching require deep insights into the pupils' perspective. Therefore, they use the case study of a young adult who reflects on her experiences as a migrant coming to Germany in her pre-teen years to explore how reconstructive approaches in research can be used for an in-depth reorientation of the interviewee's perspective. They conclude that all stakeholders in the school system should de-

velop contingency competence, including participation and involvement in different environments, ambiguity tolerance, the ability to create a picture of a coherent self and the acceptance of subjective and consequently varying normalities.

A holistic, learner-centred perspective does not only mean to integrate a learner's languages into the classroom but also to consider linguistic practices and language acquisition in the family. Research in the area of family language policy and also education has shown how interdependent home and school environments are and how the collaboration of families and schools can support children and adolescents (Ballweg 2022; Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yağmur 2018a, 2018b; Carvalho 2001).

Emilia Wąsikiewicz-Firlej of Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań and Michelle Daly of the University of Limerick focus on family language policy in a Polish family in the context of return migration. In their case study, they inquire into the subjective perspectives on language use and language acquisition of a mother and her two daughters. The authors show how the family, who lived in Germany for seven years, took multiple measures to maintain the children's proficiency in their L1 Polish while leaving the responsibility for the majority language German to the education system and the children's peers. Upon their return to Poland, one of the daughters tried to maintain her skills in German while the younger daughter accepted the loss of German and embraced a Polish-only language policy in the family. This in-depth study shows how the parents' lay theories on language acquisition constitute the language policy and indicate the important role of the education system in supporting multilingual children and adolescents and their families in their language policies.

The final two contributions tackle the issue of multilingualism in Higher Education, which for a long time tended to promote the majority language or English as the international language of science. Only slowly is the realisation gaining ground that existing multilingualism should be supported and developed not only in general education but also in tertiary education, as it is of crucial relevance for society, education and the labour market.

Mateusz Furman and Magdalena Aleksandrak of the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań (Poland) designed a qualitative study to explore questions about the relationship between English as an academic language education (EAP) in higher education among foreign students in Poland and its influence on shaping or reshaping identities among students who have decided to continue their education outside their native language environment in a multilingual context of a university language department. Findings revealed that their individual identities were impacted greatly by the level of EAP proficiency and are also connected with the students' self-concepts, especially in regard to how they imagine their public selves or, more specifically, their future "career-selves".

Fabienne Baider and Sviatlana Karpava's (both from the University of Cyprus) paper delves into the social and linguistic inclusion of refugee and international students at universities that are members of the network of the YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe). Findings from a survey with administrators, staff members and students at these universities show that international students can draw on many resources and a strong infrastructure, especially based on EU programmes such as Erasmus+, whereas students from a refugee background face more challenges and receive less information and support. Baider and Karpava demand more focused support for the group of students from a refugee background.

We hope that this publication will appear insightful for those who work towards creating better educational opportunities for multilingual children at schools and in the home environment. Fulfilling this wish is the main goal of the MaMLiSE project, which rests on two main positions:

[f]irstly an acknowledgement of usefulness and centrality of language skills for inclusive education, and secondly, the recognition of the right to use (a) first language(s) as a means of communication and learning and as an expression of linguistic and cultural identity. From this comes a shared appreciation and belief that schools can and should play a vital role in the development of individuals, communities and societies, and in enhancing appreciation and respect in relation to difference, through the implementation of inclusive education" (Szczeplaniak-Kozak et al. 2023: 19).

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