The Pedagogy of Translingual Communication

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Questioning the priority of relationship between school and standard language use

Finding ways to deconstruct concepts of monolingualism and double monolingualism (Jørgensen 2008) in everyday school life

based on the example of a Roma community in Eastern Hungary using language resources linked to Romani and Hungarian
Outline

• Multi-layered ethnolinguistic fieldwork in a Roma community (about 3,000 people) in Tiszavasvári (12,000 people), North-East Hungary
  • Exploration of the translingual language practices (García 2009)
  • Heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981)

• Pedagogical approach: common work with the school and kindergarten administration to include the translanguaging pedagogy (García-Kleyn 2016) into everyday school practice
Our project

• spreading García’s theory and methods to a non-standardized way of speaking
• the pedagogical approaches (García et al. 2017, Paulsrud et al. 2017) originating from García’s translanguaging theory are elaborated
  – to help immigrant pupils
  – using linguistic features linked mostly to standardized languages (other than English)

• Speakers in Tiszavasvári
  – use language resources linked to Romani, which are non-standard
  – not affected by the efforts to standardise Romani in Hungary.

„Ezt a sajátos cigány nyelvet. Ezért is alakult ki itt ez a sajátos lovari nyelv, hogy nagyon keveredett a magyar szavakkal. […] Vannak a rakamazi és a hodászi cigányok. Ők nagyon szépen beszélík a cigány nyelvet. Ha tőlünk cigány elkezd cigányul beszélni velük, akkor néha mosolyognak, hogy ez nem is valódi nyelv.”

„This special Romani language. Even that’s why here this special lovari language evolved, very mixed with Hungarian words. […] There are Roma from Rakamaz and Hodász. They speak a very nice Romani. When a Rom from us begins to speak Romani with them, they sometimes smile saying that it isn’t even a real language.” [pedagogical assistant at school, member of the Roma community]

Eliminating linguicism at school without any attempts to develop standard (romani) varieties.
Exploration of language practices of a Roma community
multi-layered ethnolinguistic research (Marcus 1995)

• The main domain is the school (and the pre-school, kindergarten) attended by the children of the community – macro level
  – Visiting classes and other types of training, taking observation notes

• Other domains: day-board, family homes, common places on the community settlement (micro level)
  – Interviews with the participants (teachers, students, parents)
  – Exploration of the community attitudes towards language practices at school

• Long-term goal: a role within education for language resources and practices linked to Romani
Bakhtin’s modell of heteroglossia (1981)

• Countering the idea that language practices are to be described merely along the diversity of languages and varieties
• The concept of heteroglossia describes the complexity of language practices by the dimensions
  • Diversity of codes (raznojazyčie)
  • Multivoicedness (raznogolosie)
    – The word in language is half someone else's
  • Multidiscursivity (raznorečie)
    – Social, cultural, religious, etc. belonging
The diversity of codes

• Language socialization ensues by the utilization of codes mostly linked to Romani, but the school language is thought to be also in the community inevitably Hungarian
• The monoglossic ideology became an internal belief in the community

From a recorded focus group interview, Participant1 = J. I. Heltai r2 = first grader girl
p1 szerettek cigányul beszélni? / Do you like speaking Romani?
px neeem! / nooo! <in chorus>
p1 nem? No? <laughing> és miért nem? / and why not?
p2 mer magyarul kell az iskolába beszélni / because it is a must to speak Hungarian at school!
Multivoicedness

- Language resources used by us seem to be everyone’s; in fact neither the meanings linked to words (1), nor other connected evaluations (2) are shared by the pupils and the educators.

- (1) Az első osztályomnál mindig meg voltam ijedve, hogy <tanárnéni, tanárnéni, a misi megölte a palikát!>. Úristen, megölte, gondoltam én. Az ő nyelvükbe, hogy <megöli> az az, hogy megfojtogatta, a gyerek elkezdett sírni, tehát valami rossz, és a <megöli> azt jelenti / With my first class, I were always shocked, because of <miss teacher, miss teacher, Misi killed Palika!> Oh my God, I thought. In their language <kills> means to strangulate him a little bit, the child began to cry, that means actually something bad, and <kills> means only that. (recorded interview with an educator)
Multivoicedness
(2) differences in the evaluation of words according to their belonging to the Hungarian or Romani language

(p1 = teacher, p2 = 8 year old boy, p3 = 8 year old boy, they are speaking in front of the class about their home language practices while being filmed by their teacher)

p1  *mi a kedvenc ételetek, akkor beszéljetek arról.* / What is your favorite dish, tell us something about that.

P2  *na, phen, son tu KEDVENCO ÉTELO?* / (...) *na, phen r2. kanak tu.* < tell me, what is your favorite dish? tell me p2, now you!

p3  *ne kem a csipsz-* / *my favorite is chips*

p2  *de cigányul, úgy phen la!* / but Romani, say it that way!

p1  *cigányul mondd!* / say it in Romani!

p3  *mango CSIPSZO thaj TEKERCSA* / my favorites are chips and sponge cake roll

THE WORDS WRITTEN IN CAPITALS are
- Outside the community they are considered to be Hungarian language resources with Romani suffixes
- For the children they are part of their home language practices, counted more as Romani language resources
Multidiscursivity

- Factors impacting the utterance – time, social, cultural, religious, etc. belonging
- the common apperceptive mass guarantees the success of the dialogue

Hospitation note from a first grader lesson:
Teacher: mi az a pap? /what does preast mean?
Student: paprika /paprika
Teacher: nem tudjátok, mi az a pap? hát nem voltatok még templomban? a pap az, aki a misét tartja a templomban. /you don’t know what a preast is? Have you not been to church? The preast is the man who holds the mass in church.

- In the community there is a pastor who leads worships...
- differences between the social conditions of teachers and students
Translanguaging in Tiszavasvári

• Educators: non-Roma
  – without knowledge of Romani language resources
  – non-Roma with monoglossic language ideologies

„Most mi mindent kipróbáltunk már. Mindent ami létezik” / We've tried everything already. Everything that exists. All kinds of books. (From the interview with the schoolmaster)

• García’s well known concept of translanguaging (2009)
  – based on the insight that verbal communication is not necessarily bound to named languages with clear boundaries
  – disturbs widespread conceptions of mono- and bilingual education
The teacher offers students several opportunities to use their home language practices during the lesson.

Involvement of the parents and other community members.

Cultural relevant and multimodal resources (collecting tales, songs and other stories in the settlement).

Involvement of grassroots literacy linked to Romani in the community.
Translanguaging events

• “Mikor cigányul kellett beszélni, mint a havazás, úgy jött”/When they had to speak Romani, it came like snowfall (community member Roma pedagogical assistant after observing a translanguaging lesson)

• Transition of power relations
  – students get teacher roles
  – students with learning disorders gain good experiences

• they are less stressed when speaking with the teacher and speaking publicly

• Increased interest and cheerful participation
Starting translanguaging classes

- One of the two primary classes starts in September 2017, the other one in February (for measurement purposes)
- Development of measurement/placement tests for the participants
- Free participation for educators from other grades (most of the educators reported)
- Translanguaging workshops for teachers and preschoolers (sharing good practices)
- Developing translingual linguistic landscape
- Elaboration of lesson plans and curricula
• Celebrating fluidity (Otsuji-Pennycook 2010) becomes part of the language reality of school life in an environment defined by highly monoglossic ideologies

• The pedagogy of translanguaging communication
  • teaches to adjust the speaker to the world of the national languages through increasing their Hungarian linguistic practices
  • questions the status of national languages by focusing on the entirety of the language repertoire of the students

Summary
Thank you!

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