

Dialogical view on learner agency and identity of immigrated children in a Finnish preparatory language classroom

Dukkeum Sun

University of Jyväskylä

This study addresses the process of language learning and formulation of additional language identity of newly arrived immigrant pupils of age 8 to 10 in a Finnish preparatory language classroom. A central concept in this work is agency; the participating children are seen as the learning subjects who make active meaning of the relationship with others such as their teachers, classmates and families for their language identity development. This view on the language learners supports their socioculturally interacting properties with an emic perspective, rather than etic one where the language learners are only seen as passive linguistic input receivers or performers in a classroom. The research question is: “How does their agency resonate with the voices of their own and others who related to their language learning and identity?” The data were collected both in and outside the classroom and included classroom observation, linguistic activities and semi-structured interviews. Based on some meaningful moments in the classroom when the learners exercised agency, this study aims at describing the interplay between the agency and identity within the meaningful relationship with the felt others the learners evaluate for themselves. I would like to place Bakhtin’s dialogical approach to analyze the data to the fore. I would get some constructive feedback whether the analytic method would have been clearly and effectively able to answer the research question and the objective of this study in general.

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