

Abstract

Adolescents in multilingual families: a generational linguistic gap?

Despite the fact that the family is one of the primary instances of socialization, the language practices and ideologies in the family are scarcely examined. In this talk I will present my newly started PhD project, in which I study the language practices and ideologies in Russian and Latin American immigrant families in a Northern Norwegian city. I focus in particular on the role of the adolescents in the family's formation, maintenance and management of multilingual practices and ideologies.

As many previous studies have stated, youngsters are an interesting age group regarding identity construction (e.g. Bucholtz 2011, Eckert 2000), which could possibly affect the intergenerational trading of the family's heritage language. One of the questions I will try to answer is to what degree identity and language practices come into conflict across generations within the families. Thus, the youngsters will be studied in interaction with their family members, as a part of the small linguistic community of the family. I conjecture that studying the multilingual practices, ideologies, language policies and identity at a micro level, ideally will give interesting insights to discourses at a meso- and macro level (e.g. King, Fogle, and Logan-Terry 2008).

To study how multilingualism is maintained and managed within the families I use multiple method design based on qualitative, sociolinguistic methods, such as interviews and ethnographic fieldwork. As the project still is in the planning phase, and the data collection is on going, I will in this talk mainly focus on a) a review of previous literature and research on multilingual youths through in a family context, b) methodological issues concerning the execution of qualitative research on adolescents. Although teen-agers normally are treated as adults in different interview settings, I will discuss different methodological issues related to the matter of executing qualitative research on teen-agers and youngsters below full age and legal capacity. And finally I will c) show some preliminary findings from the pilot study and the on-going data collection.

- Bucholtz, Mary. 2011. *White kids : language, race and styles of youth identity*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eckert, Penelope. 2000. *Linguistic variation as social practice : the linguistic construction of identity in Belten High*. Vol. 27, *Language in society*.
Malden, Mass: Blackwell.
- King, Kendall A., Lyn Fogle, and Aubrey Logan - Terry. 2008. "Family Language Policy." *Language and Linguistics Compass* 2 (5):907-922. doi:
10.1111/j.1749-818X.2008.00076.x.