

# Language and migration

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## Introduction

Migrations are acts of settlement and of habitation in a world where the divide between origin and destination is no longer a divide of Otherness, a world in which borders no longer separate human realities.

*(Sassen 1999: 6)*

The multilingual landscapes of the twenty-first century are a product of continuing transnational and translocal mobility and exchange of people, information and products across physical and virtual boundaries. Knowledge of local and global/international languages is necessary in order to gain access to a society of information, for the exchange of material goods and to be able to communicate with the people in our immediate social space and beyond (Castells 2000). Languages themselves migrate or are re-made through migration. Within this context of linguistic hyper- or super-diversity (Vertovec 2006), language plays a key role in the constitution of public and private institutions, but is also crucial for the actors who come into contact with these institutions (Heller 2003) wishing thereby to gain access to material and symbolic resources.

In the context of these multilingual landscapes of mobility and exchange, both transnational and translocal, public discourses, particularly in the media, increasingly view migration through the lenses of nationalist and racist rhetoric (Reisigl and Wodak 2001), creating atmospheres of social panic in which immigrants and refugees are seen as threatening the stable borders of national identities. Applied linguistic research aims to increase our understanding of the linguistic dimensions of migration and the subtle ways that language ideologies and practices contribute to social processes of 'othering' and exclusion in crucial institutional contexts. This applied linguistic research investigates such processes 'from the inside and from the perspective of language', while remaining attuned to large-scale social processes (political, policy-oriented and institutional), providing analyses capable of offering an 'emic' perspective and of illustrating the subjective construction of these movements of human beings, rather than their objectivist 'othering' in nationalist or racist mainstream discourses.

Applied linguistic research into language and migration is thus based on two simple, inter-related, but far-reaching propositions: (i) that for migrants in a new society, access to the crucial material and symbolic resources that enable survival and integration is mediated through repeated face-to-face interactions with institutions; (ii) that these face-to-face interactions are significantly shaped by changing policy environments and institutional arrangements as well as sometimes volatile national political and media attitudes towards diversity, integration, citizenship, and accompanying ideologies concerning who should have access to what resources and how. These face-to-face institutional encounters are typically realized through different sets of language practices: monolingual where migrants struggle with using the majority language; multilingual and mediated by formal or informal interpreting involving code-switching and mixes of various languages; and lingua franca where both sides use a lingua franca (frequently English). It is these face-to-face encounters, typically characterized by asymmetries of power between participants, which are the empirical focus of the applied linguistic study of language and migration, along with representations of them in media, political and popular discourses.

An applied linguistic research agenda on language and migration seeks to understand how language practices in domains such as health, education, the law and work are shaped both by the dynamics of face-to-face encounters and the constraints of the political, policy and institutional environment: what linguistic factors enable and constrain access for migrants to health services and education, what languages and forms of communication get used, when, why and where and what are the consequences for the migrant? Institutions can organize and deploy multilingual resources by using different modes (oral and written modes) and modalities (visual, with mediators or interpreters, using written language). Not all such multilingual practice is the same, and the way it gets organized (or not) in a given institution has consequences for migrants seeking access to services and resources.

## Development of the field of language and migration studies

Language and migration research in applied linguistics has been influenced by understandings of migration in terms of the dynamics of globalization and the new economy: emerging sociolinguistic agendas, rather than focusing on the sociolinguistic description of settled communities, a concept memorably critiqued by Mary Louise Pratt (Pratt 1987: 56), have developed in the context of globalization a sociolinguistics of movement and flows and also what Pratt terms 'contact zones':

Imagine, then, a linguistics that decentred community, that placed as its centre the operation of language *across* lines of social differentiation, a linguistics that focused on modes and zones of contact between dominant and dominated groups, between persons of different and multiple identities, speakers of different languages, that focused on how such speakers constitute each other relationally and in difference, how they enact differences in language.

*(Pratt 1987: 60)*

Of course, the notion of migration and movement has always been associated, even if implicitly, with the study of the sociolinguistics of settled communities: language varieties are formed historically by population movements and flows. So language and migration studies involve a re-centring of population movement and flows in a globalized world as a key theme in sociolinguistics. This is rather analogous to earlier insights which established

bi/multilingualism rather than monolingualism as the default sociolinguistic reality. Underpinning the emergence of multilingual environments, however, are processes of population movement, acutely so in the context of the accelerating time-space compression which theorists such as Giddens (1990) and Harvey (1989) have identified as characteristic of modernity and late modernity. So in one sense the renewed focus on movement and flow in sociolinguistics is a re-introduction of the diachronic dimension of time and history into the synchronic linguistic description. (For a fuller discussion of these issues see Collins *et al.* 2009.)

Another influence on language and migration studies has been work on institutional discourse (Sarangi and Slembrouck 1996). Migration trajectories have been characterized as repeated series of institutional encounters, mediated through talk, which can gatekeep access to resources, forming powerful means of exclusion and othering. Such research points to deeply embedded inequalities in power/knowledge, played out in daily encounters with teachers, social workers, migration lawyers and others. The work of Maryns (Maryns 2005, 2006) on the asylum hearing is a case in point of such research, as is work on legal processes and migration, for example Haviland (2003) on the impact of language ideologies on court cases involving Latino migrant workers, and the work of Trinch (2003) on Latina narratives in the disclosure of domestic violence.

As suggested above, the default sociolinguistic context for language and migration studies is multilingualism, even in contexts where powerful social forces equate migration with giving up a language in favour of the language of the country of settlement. This is not of course to deny the significance of such linguistic ideological issues, currently brought to the fore in debates around citizenship (cf. Milani 2008; Cooke and Simpson 2009). Indeed, as we shall see below, another applied linguistic strength, the analysis of media and policy discourse, can be brought to bear to investigate the discursive constructions of migration in the media and public policy.

So if the influences in language and migration studies have been largely sociolinguistic, how can we characterize the applied linguistic agendas that have emerged? Many of them, such as language learning and teaching, interpreting and translation, doctor-patient encounters, job interviews and other institutional encounters, are not exactly new in themselves, while emerging themes, such as the impact of new policies on citizenship and exclusion, also claim the attention of applied linguists (Milani 2006, 2008; Cooke and Simpson 2009). What is new is the bringing together of these disparate topics into a coherent theme, that permits their interlinking and articulation as part of general processes of migration and population flow.

To give one example: classroom-based language learning has been a major topic of applied linguistics. Underpinning all language learning is an assumption of actual or potential mobility, particularly so in migration contexts. Yet classroom-based research is curiously insulated from the other contexts and domains of social life. Researchers gain ever deeper insights into what constitutes classroom discourse and language learning, while ignoring for analytical purposes the location of the classroom in an educational institution, an educational institution in a state or national education system, the national education system and its policies in the globalized markets of knowledge and resources. Conventional categories of applied linguistic research have the effect of dislocating research efforts. Another example: Schumann's classic study of the migrant worker Alberto (1978) focuses on the emergence of a restricted, 'pidginized' variety of English and correlates this with various social and motivational factors. Yet what do we know about the other domains and arenas of Alberto's life as a migrant in California: what is the linguistic economy of his workplace, what are his preferred ways of socializing, how does he maintain contact with friends and family in his home country, are there significant others who translate and mediate for him on occasions? Schumann shines a bright analytical light on structural linguistic issues, leaving these other aspects of language use in context in the

penumbra. Other studies at about this time, such as the pan-European Ecology of Adult Language Acquisition project, attempted to address this, but instead of gathering data systematically across a range of contexts, relied mainly on interview and role play (Perdue 1993). This was perhaps in large part to do with the technical limitations of the time on recording equipment. The present day researcher has many more sophisticated and less obtrusive options for recording interaction.

Language and migration provides a powerful integrating theme for applied linguistic research, bringing together fields of research (such as language teaching, interpreting and translation, doctor-patient encounters, job interviews) which have typically been treated separately and developed in a piecemeal way. In this chapter, having identified such a framework for applied linguistic research into language and migration, I go on to present some examples of such research and identify directions for future work.

### **A framework for applied linguistic research into language and migration**

As has been suggested above, this is an emergent field of inquiry, so there is room for some programmatic statement of scope. An applied linguistic research agenda on language and migration might therefore have the following dimensions:

- investigations of the linguistic ideological influences on migration policies at global, regional (i.e. the EU), national and local levels;
- investigations of the discursive construction of migration processes and migrants in the media and in art production;
- mapping the linguistic aspects of migration trajectories and the opening up of diasporic spaces;
- analysis of the dominant and popular discourses on migration as well as the investigation of migration processes ‘from the inside’, for example through narrative and life history;
- analysis of key ‘sites of institutional encounter’, related to work, education, social welfare, health, law, both ethnographically and using tools for the analysis of spoken language interaction (including mediated interaction of different kinds), and document analysis drawn from linguistic ethnography, CA, CDA and literacy studies;
- concern with the social processes leading through categorization to exclusion and the operation of power in institutional encounters;
- concern with the role of new media in reshaping diasporic space through the compression of time-space.

While retaining its linguistic focus, such a research agenda would be alert to the work on migration in fields such as sociology, anthropology, cultural geography and political economy as theoretical sources for the description of large-scale phenomena that shape and influence migration flows and diasporic settlements. To be sure, specific research projects would focus on more than one of these dimensions: it would be hard to consider language educational issues without bringing in larger scale concerns such as national policy and the global linguistic economy. The following section reviews research that is ongoing in relation to these themes, pointing out directions for future work.

#### *Public policy and language ideology*

Language issues, particularly those concerning migration, have rarely had an explicit place in public policy at national level, with notable exceptions such as Australia (cf. Lo Bianco and

Wickert 2001), though moments of perceived crisis may trigger this focus on language. Post-war assimilationism gave way in the 1970s and 1980s to policies which emphasized to varying degrees cultural and linguistic diversity and inclusion. The 1987 Australian National Policy on Languages, for example, emphasized both 'English for all', support for linguistic diversity and the provision of services such as interpreting and translation in the languages of migration (for a historical overview of this aspect see Ozolins 2001). However, progressive refocusing of national policy in the neo-liberal political context in Australia (as elsewhere) through the 1990s shifted the emphasis away from linguistic diversity onto the mobilization of human capital through literacy and the acquisition of fluency in English at the expense of diasporic linguistic diversity, apart from those languages which could be linked with economic benefits.

There has been, however, in the last decade a profound shift away from policies informed primarily by diversity and inclusion to those which highlight citizenship and settlement in the context of social cohesion. As Cooke and Simpson point out, referring to the UK:

The relationship between national security, immigration, integration, social cohesion and language is becoming progressively tighter. In most government reports and in very much political and media discourse, a great deal of attention is paid to English as the greatest shared resource and the need for everyone to speak it to integrate fully in their communities.

*(Cooke and Simpson 2008: 10)*

Arising out of this has been a strand of research which examines the linguistic ideologies which inform policies such as language testing for citizenship (Piller 2001; Hansen-Thomas 2007; Blackledge 2008; Milani 2008). Piller looks at the interrelationship of ideologies of national and linguistic identity in Germany and their impact on ideologies of citizenship (Piller 2001: 259) using the case of the introduction of language tests for naturalization in the early 2000s. Her arguments show how at policy level the linguistic issues posed by migration and diaspora challenge basic political and moral assumptions of the nation-state. Milani (2008) similarly addresses the impact of language testing on the citizenship process in Sweden, examining debates around the proposed introduction of language testing for citizenship, showing how arguments are mobilized that language testing is a way of diminishing discrimination, while implicitly, Milani argues, testing contributes to social differentiation and exclusion. In relation to the UK, Blackledge (2008) shows how debates on language testing and citizenship create discursive links between speaking 'other' languages and lack of fluency in English and threats to social stability, underachievement in school, ghettoization: threats, as Rings and Ife put it, 'to democracy, citizenship and nationhood' (Rings and Ife 2008: 9).

This strand of research draws on the notion of linguistic or language ideology (Schieffelin *et al.* 1998; Blommaert 1999; Irvine and Gal 2000) using tools of linguistic analysis to uncover the Web of explicit and tacit assumptions about the role of language in the construction and maintenance of the social order. Anxieties concerning migration are, it seems, a special case which triggers explicit formulation of language-related policy, making explicit what have previously perhaps been tacit though widely held assumptions linking national language(s) with the nation-state.

### *Language, migration and media discourse*

Another strand of the language and migration research agenda concerns the discursive construction of representations of migrants and migration processes in the media and other forms of public discourse. An early example of this approach is van Dijk (1991). The language

ideology work on citizenship described above also draws on media texts as one of its data sources. Typical research approaches to media texts employ critical discourse analysis (CDA), as for example van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999), Wodak and van Dijk (2000), and Reisigl and Wodak (2001), although more recently combinations of CDA and corpus linguistics have been advocated (for example, Baker *et al.* 2008; Gabrielatos and Baker 2008). In a relatively large-scale study (reported in Baker *et al.* 2008; KhosraviNik 2008), media texts are sampled from periods when issues of migration and asylum reached a high profile in the media (similar perhaps to the trigger moments of public anxiety discussed above), for example the NATO invasion of Kosovo in 1999; September 2001, with the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but also attention on asylum seekers in the UK and ‘boat people’ in Australia.

The researchers (Baker *et al.* 2008: 295) propose a sequence of research interventions combining CDA and corpus linguistics. Corpus linguistics is able to track the distribution of lexical items and collocates (i.e. ‘looming’ + ‘influx’ below) in such media texts as, for example:

BRITAIN was warned last night it faces a massive benefits bill to pay for the looming influx of immigrants, including gypsies, from eastern Europe.

(Daily Express, 9 February 2004, cited in Baker *et al.* 2008: 286)

CDA, with its focus on text structure, is able to track the discursive patterns of othering that occur in reporting of immigrants and asylum seekers, through identifying textual and inter-textual chains of linguistic strategies such as referring and predicating, argumentation, discourse representation, intensification/mitigation and linking the micro textual detail (which can tell us that there is something negative about the collocation of ‘looming’ + ‘influx’) to ideological macro structures of exclusion.

### *Insider perspectives on migration (migration narratives)*

While language ideology and discourse analysis have been used to investigate the representations of migrants and migration in public discourse, narrative and life history methods have been used to investigate ‘from the inside’ the discursive construction of the experience of migration (de Fina 2003; Baynham and de Fina 2005; McElhinny *et al.* 2007). Themes in this research include issues of migration and space-time orientation in narrative (cf. Baynham 2003; de Fina 2003) and identity (cf. chapters in de Fina *et al.* 2006), migration and agency (Baynham 2005; Relaño Pastor and de Fina 2005). The Filipino Canadian Life History Group at the University of Toronto (McElhinny *et al.* 2007), for example, investigates the life stories of Filipino professionals settled in Canada, uncovering issues of agency and life choice, constructions of fate and fatality in migration narratives. Relaño Pastor and de Fina (2005) investigate the narratives of Mexican migrant women in California, focusing on narratives of engagement with school, healthcare and work, place, displacement and identity. Their research illustrates the interaction between the different dimensions of the language and migration research agenda identified above: language ideology and policy is clearly seen as constructing the life experiences of the narrators, as are their encounters with the institutions of work, schooling and healthcare; constructions of migration ‘from the inside’ are overwhelmingly narratives of encounters with the institutions of the ‘receiving’ country. The sharpness of these encounters is best demonstrated in the narratives that make up the institutional encounters themselves, as Maryns (2005, 2006) demonstrates.

Migration doesn’t always involve migration across national borders, as the research of McCormick (2005) on forced migration due to the internal restrictions on black people in

apartheid South Africa demonstrates. Here, forcible segregation pulled apart and relocated existing communities in ways that are painfully remembered in the oral history interviews that documented this displacement. The linguistic consequences of internal migration in China is a theme in Dong and Blommaert (2009). Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005) document through narrative the West–East migration movements in the post-1989 reunified Germany. Narratives also document migratory mobility in geopolitical units larger than the nation-state, such as in the expanded European Union, in the work of Galasinska and Koslowska (2009). Changes to EU legislation, leading to increased internal mobility, have emphasized narratives of short-term migration and return. Meinhof (2009) draws on life history narrative to examine the flows and movements in the migration patterns of Malagasy musicians both within Madagascar and between Madagascar and Europe.

Key themes in this research are the discursive construction of the complex orientations and reorientations that are involved in migration processes, the spatial and temporal dislocations involved. These narratives can be of disempowerment but also of agency and empowerment, of finding a voice as well as losing it. We see clearly the ways that large-scale political and social phenomena shape the interactional worlds of the migrant narrators, of the significance of institutional encounters in opening up or closing down opportunities, which will be addressed in more detail in later sections. While contributing substantively to understanding of migration processes, this research has also contributed to the development of narrative theory, most notably in the way that migration narratives foreground and problematize space in narrative, echoing de Certeau’s claim that ‘every story is a travel story – a spatial practice’ (1988: 115).

### *Diasporic spaces*

Influences from writers such as de Certeau (1988), Harvey (1989), from cultural geography and indeed the tradition of neighbourhood studies in urban sociolinguistics, have placed a research emphasis on how urban spaces are appropriated and made over by migration and diaspora. This can involve the successive making over and appropriation of neighbourhood spaces by successive migrations, as Gregory and Williams (2000: ch. 1) show in their ethnography of literacy lives in the Spitalfields area of east London. They describe a neighbourhood that has been appropriated and made over by successive migrations: Huguenots in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Irish in the early nineteenth century, Jewish in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and in the mid-twentieth century, post-Second World War, a migration from what is now Bangladesh. A caption to a photograph of a mosque illustrates this layering of occupancy and appropriation:

The London Jamme Masjid on the corner of Fournier Street and Brick Lane. Built in 1743 as a Huguenot church, it became a Methodist chapel in the early 1800s and the Machzike Hadas Synagogue in 1898. In 1975 it opened as the largest mosque in the East End.

*(Gregory and Williams 2000: 31)*

In a study of the streetscapes of multilingual neighbourhoods in Ghent as part of a larger multi-sited ethnography of language contact in urban neighbourhoods, Blommaert, Slembrouck, and Collins (Blommaert *et al.* 2005; Collins and Slembrouck 2007) have examined the constitutive indexical role of multilingual shop signs in creating these interpretative spaces or ‘linguistic landscapes’ (cf. Shohamy and Gorter 2009), involving novel cultural syntheses and

blends (businesses that might combine real estate, insurance, accounting and loans, with more generalized cultural brokering). In a sociolinguistic environment characterized more by Pratt's contact zones than by discrete speech communities, these signs attract different readerships and interpretations, ranging from the local Belgian, who might read this signage as evidence of an ethnic neighbourhood takeover, buying up houses and property, to the locally settled bilingual who sees in the linguistic choices a creative adaption to settlement processes, to the educated visitor from back home who can see traces of sociolinguistic diversity (urban/rural) in the language chosen and variable literacy, bespeaking different amounts of cultural capital, in both languages.

These diasporic spaces have also been explored by Keating (2009) in her study of the literacy practices of immigrant Portuguese women in London, one who migrated in the late 1960s/early 1970s, the other in the late 1980s. Keating contrasts the migration trajectories of Dina, towards hospital work, union activism and community involvement in London and that of Zelia towards work as a legal interpreter based in a driving school business, which mirrored those found by Blommaert *et al.* in Ghent: 'The driving school was a family-based hybrid setting serving as school, travel agency and community advice centre' (Keating 2009: 241). It is from this base that Zelia engages in her work of cultural brokering and interpreting. Vigouroux (2009) in her study of an Internet café in Cape Town as a focal site for the communicative practices of Congolese migrants, identifies a similar multifunctional space, investigating the impact of interacting time-spaces of different scale on the semiotic artefacts and language practices which are characteristic of the Internet café and its various topographical spaces as well as the indexical relationships produced through these interactions.

Jie Dong's fieldwork in China (Dong and Blommaert 2009) shows how a centre/periphery metropolitan/urban/rural dynamic is played out in service encounters in Beijing, where the capacity to speak Putonghua has a high value attached. Jie Dong interviews Xiao Xu, a street seller of breakfast dumplings:

there are several layers to Xiao Xu's multi-identities displayed in the conversation: when he speaks about the shrimps from his hometown he switches to a marked provincial accent which indexes his identity of coming from that particular place. ... During his metapragmatic talk about his Putonghua, he shifts to near-Putonghua accent which enacts his identity of high social mobility and hence an elite identity. But this identity is not stable: ... identity does not easily travel across spaces, and therefore he is in a process of seeking ratification of his identity in a new and up-scale space.

(Dong and Blommaert 2009: 56–7)

There are complex indexical relations between social spaces and linguistic forms.

### *Work and enterprise*

A number of the diasporic spaces described in the preceding section involved some kind of work: the delivery of services in small business contexts, Xiao Xu selling breakfast dumplings on a Beijing street, Zelia in her driving school, in the multifunctional enterprises of Ghent and Cape Town. This introduces another significant theme in language and migration research, that of work and enterprise. Martin-Jones (2000) takes up the notion of 'enterprising women' in an ethnographic study of the multilingual literacy practices of Gujerati women in Leicester, women for whom the process of migration has opened up possibilities that they have grasped. The Portuguese women in London that Keating studied were also enterprising women in this



sense. Dina, the other subject of Keating (2009), has another employment trajectory, in the unionized public sector workforce. Current work by Vigouroux on Congolese migrants in Cape Town examines linguistic differentiation in the informal economy.

Research into diasporic spaces has tended to see the linguistic dimension of these spaces in terms of multilingual literacy practices, or oral communicative practices such as language choice, code switching or shifting. Dina's case raises the issue of the linguistic demands of the mainstream public sector workplace, in particular issues of access via the dominant language and gatekeeping. The research of Roberts and Campbell (Roberts and Campbell 2005; Campbell and Roberts 2007) examines employment interviews as gatekeeping devices for migrant applicants, whose education and work experience has been largely out of the UK, identifying a 'linguistic penalty' for migrant applicants, weighing against them if their education, training and work experience has been in their country of origin. Campbell and Roberts (2007) additionally show how the interview requires an artful presentation of worker and personal identities expressed in narratives told in response to interviewer questions. Failure to succeed in interviews for jobs for which their training and work experience would fit them leads such applicants on a downward spiral of de-professionalization.

In recent work Beatriz Lorente has described the role of the Philippines as a sending country of migrant labour in trying to form the migrant workforce prior to migration, pointing out that the major focus in language and migration research to date has been on issues arising in the country of destination.

### *Health*

Applied linguistic research in the area of health relevant to migration has focused overwhelmingly on issues of intercultural communication (for an overview see Candlin and Candlin 2003) and mediation through interpreting, formal and informal, and cultural brokering (Valdes and Angelelli 2003). The most characteristic research focus, unsurprisingly, has been on the medical consultation, with Davidson (2000) discussing his research into Spanish-English medical interpreting in a Californian public hospital emphasizing the role of the interpreter as institutional gatekeeper as well as active partner with the physician in the diagnostic process. Micro-analysis of interpreted interactions show how the voice of the patient often disappears from the interaction due to selective interpreting and the interpreter's alignment with and recruitment into the communicative purposes of the physician. As such, the interpreted medical consultation is a very salient example of the gatekeeping institutional encounters referred to above (Sarangi and Roberts 1999). The role of interpreter can be understood both in terms of the distinction between discourse role and social role of Sarangi and Slembrouck (1996) and the potential of the interpreter to align with the communicative purposes of different participants. From an interactional perspective, the apparently marginal and neutral figure of the interpreter can thus be seen as a powerful broker of access to medical treatment. Applied linguistic issues raised here concern the professionalization of interpreters, the reliance on informal interpreting and cultural brokering, the interactional dynamics of the interpreted interaction, and the stance of the interpreter (Inghilleri 2005).

Another strategy for medical encounters is to try and optimize the communication possibilities between doctors and patients in contexts where interpreting is not available and communication is in the dominant language. The PLEDGE (Patients with Limited English and Doctors in General Practice) project of Roberts *et al.* (2004) is an example of this, with a focus on oral interaction. The research identifies contrasting interactional frameworks between patients speaking local varieties of English and Standard English and patients from

non-English speaking backgrounds, with implications for the sensitization of the healthcare professional in differences in conversational interaction in intercultural settings. Collins and Slembrouck (2006) supply a linguistic ethnography of an inner city health clinic where, in contrast, such issues are addressed by the planning and implementation of a manual for doctors designed to facilitate communication. The researchers describe a variety of organizational responses to migrant multilingualism in the health clinic, ranging from reliance on informal interpreting, with a family member or friend accompanying the patient, to the use of professional interpreters, including phone interpreting, multilingual leaflets and the manual, called in Dutch 'Ijsbreker' with connotations both of 'breaking the ice' and successful communication (Collins and Slembrouck 2006: 254). The manual is presented in Dutch, Russian, Slovakian and Albanian and is constructed round a flow chart which models the stages of the medical consultation. For a variety of reasons, the manual turns out rather predictably to be a somewhat inflexible approach to the communication problems of intercultural cross-linguistic medical encounters, influenced as it is, Slembrouck and Collins suggest, by an anxiety about the uncertainties of the oral interpreting situation and the dynamics of intercultural communication more generally on the part of the professionals involved, exemplified in the quote used as the title of the paper 'You don't know what they translate'.

### *Education and training*

Historically, this has been the most sustained area of focus for applied linguistic work on the language needs of migrants. Within it we can distinguish (i) education and training provision for adult migrants, either on arrival or ongoing (see Cooke and Simpson 2008), the latter including workplace language training with a history going back to workplace language training in the 1970s (Roberts *et al.* 1992), recent work reported in Sandwall (2010 forthcoming); and (ii) the language issues involved in the education of the children of migrants, both in mainstream schooling (for an overview see Baker 2003) and in complementary schooling (Blackledge and Creese 2009). Issues in relation to (i) include language learning and access to it through policy (Cooke and Simpson 2008; Baynham and Simpson forthcoming), particularly the current impact of citizenship on ESOL pedagogy (Cooke 2006; Griswold forthcoming); issues of adult language learning pedagogy (for example, Baynham 2006); the learning trajectories of ESOL learners (de Costa 2010); and indeed the learning identities of bilingual learners (Kanno and Norton 2003; Relaño Pastor and de Fina 2005). Issues in relation to (ii) include the impact of policy, linguistic barriers to access to curriculum achievement in the dominant language, and also opportunities to maintain and develop bilingual skills. Linking to our emphasis on institutional encounters, such encounters would include sustained engagement with education and training, but also occasions both where access to these is gate-kept by interviews and selection processes and where significant others, such as parents in relation to their children's schooling, become involved (or not) in interactions with teachers and other school representatives. While the typical interaction in the healthcare context is focused on the medical consultation, interactions with school are more diffuse and textually mediated.

In relation to the education of children from migrant communities, important studies look across from home to school and back again. Both using an ethnographic approach, Gregory and Williams examine the home-school environments of Bangladeshi children in east London, UK (Gregory and Williams 2000), and Cruickshank the language situation of teenage students of Lebanese background in Sydney, Australia (Cruickshank 2006). Such studies reflect a more holistic perspective on research into language, migration and settlement, emphasizing the

interaction between different domains typically investigated separately. Increased attention is currently being paid to the role and functions of complementary schooling in supporting the bilingualism and cultural identity of children from migrant families (Blackledge and Creese 2009).

At the policy level, the education and training of adult migrants is increasingly linked to a human capital agenda, with language training for work and economic benefit predominating, although current anxieties about integration and social cohesion, strengthening the border and boundaries of the nation-state, is also, as suggested above, a powerful influence.

### *Transnationalism and virtual space*

As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, migration has arguably always been a transnational project of trajectories and flows, but this has been increasingly highlighted by rapid change in both the speed and possibility of travel and the exponential increase in virtual means for creating connectedness between people separated by distance, shrinking and compressing space-time and enabling migrants to be in virtual and face-to-face contact with family and networks back home in regular, sometimes instantaneous ways. As Low and Lawrence-Zuñiga (2003) put it: 'This process of cultural globalization creates new translocal spaces and forms of public culture embedded in the imaginings of people that dissolves notions of state-based territoriality' (2003: 25). Developments on the Web have enabled the accelerated creation and sharing of transnational virtual spaces, in ways that go well beyond the traditional boundaries of nation-states. The impact of this on language and migration is increasingly coming into the research agenda, for example in the theme issue of *Linguistics and Education* on transnational literacies, edited by Warriner (2007). Young people from Colombia, India and Israel in McGinnis *et al.* (2007) use blogs and Facebook to create transnational, multilingual identities. Similarly, American Chinese teenagers in Lam (2004) use a bilingual on-line chatroom, an environment where global, transnational uses of English intersect with the local, as an opportunity for language socialization. Lam (2006) and Warschauer (2009) point out how the translocal varieties produced in these contexts often involve multilingual mixes and blends, with switches to Arabic or Chinese incorporated using English orthography.

Such changes, combined with the speed and availability of means of transport, suggest a blurring of the sharp distinction between 'being here' and 'being there', when the migrant may be able to simultaneously maintain a virtual presence in his/her country of origin through electronic means, giving an added sharpness to the point made by Sassen in the epigraph to this chapter. Its consequences for the emergence of linguistic varieties is just beginning to be investigated.

### **Future directions**

What is perhaps certain is that issues of language and migration, however conceived, are not set to disappear from the applied linguistics agenda. However, how we conceive of migration is liable to develop and change. On the one hand we are unlikely to see a lessening of the desire of states for control of their borders in a period of uncertainty, and there are disturbing signs of the stratification of labour markets mapping on to particular kinds of language competence, powerfully expressed in recent contributions by Piller and Lorente, in another kind of policy-driven transnationalism, driven by the push-pull of economic activity and necessity. Lorente has powerfully investigated this impact on the Filipino migrant domestic workforce, both from the perspective of the 'sending' as well as the 'receiving' countries. On the other hand, changes in the

electronic communication landscape will contribute to shape virtual spaces and their affordances that will work against the strengthening of national and ideological boundaries, tensions with which are currently in evidence in struggles over restrictions over Google in China and various kinds of Internet connectedness in the Gulf states. It is possible that we are working with an oversimplified and restricted notion of the migration process itself, which must be expanded to include other types of more short-term migration/mobility such as seasonal working, serial migration, migration ‘sans papiers’, return migration, migration associated with the collapse of the nation-state (as documented by Vigouroux [2009] in relation to the Congo), and the consequent needs of refugees and asylum seekers. There is a tendency for such changes and disruptions to problematize language in some way, and if applied linguists are alert to these problematizations, applied linguistic insights and expertise can be drawn into the search for viable solutions. Finally, there is a tendency to emphasize through sociological pessimism the negative aspects of migration and related linguistic issues. While recognizing the powerful exploitative forces at work in the economically driven push-pull of international migration flows, we have also to learn to see it in a more upbeat and positive light, as offering opportunities for agency, change and enterprise, the linguistic imagination and hybridity produced potentially contributing to new forms of language and social activity, which could not have been envisaged if everyone had stayed at home.

## Related topics

institutional discourse; language policy and planning; multilingualism; translation and interpreting

## Further reading

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