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Editorial

Pluri/Multilingual Education

In recent decades, there has been growing interest in the pluri/multilingual learner's language repertoire and foreign language learning. Multilingual learners use their linguistic repertoire and cultural knowledge in everyday life and interact fluidly with other speakers and texts in different languages. According to the Council of Europe (2001: 34), individual language components are "unevenly differentiated according to the learner's experience and in an unstable relation as that experience changes". Several studies provide arguments in favour of multilingual education because it (1) enhances multilingual learners' cognitive and multitasking skills; (2) enables higher language proficiency in multiple languages; (3) promotes cultural awareness and understanding of cultural diversity; (4) improves academic achievement in a variety of areas, not just language-related subjects; (5) equips learners with problem-solving, interpersonal and intercultural communication skills; and (6) promotes empathy and tolerance. Plurilingual learners can better appreciate diversity and belonging in multicultural societies. In addition, various European Commission policy documents underline the importance of pluri/multilingual education.

In teaching contexts and everyday life, however, plurilingual education presents various challenges: lack of resources and support, diverse needs of students, curriculum design, assessment methods, prestigious languages, sustainability of languages used outside the classroom, etc. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, wise language policies, community engagement and cooperation between government agencies.

In this context, the editors invited submissions that investigate different aspects of plurilingual education in diverse learning and teaching contexts and the associated challenges and opportunities. More specifically, this special issue welcomed articles that discuss the following issues/questions: multiple language acquisition and learning additional languages, translanguaging, psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic aspects of plurilingualism, literacy in multiple languages, languages of schooling, minority languages, heritage languages, multilingual language policies, assessment challenges of plurilingual learners, non-dominant and indigenous languages in education, materials design and development, multilingual identities, multilingual strategies and pedagogies, pluralistic approaches, parents' involvement, inclusive education through multilingual pedagogies, multiliteracies etc. We were pleasantly surprised by the enthusiastic response from the numerous contributors who sent in close to 40

abstracts on pluri/multilingual education. After a careful selection process, six articles have been accepted as the focus articles of this issue. Next to these, the issue also brings three varia articles and one book review.

The first article, entitled *Fostering Language Awareness in a Plurilingual Learning Environment* and written by Špela Jolić Kozina, Silva Bratož and Mojca Žefran, highlights the importance of promoting language diversity and nurturing language awareness from an early age. The authors present the findings of a qualitative study analysing the potential of using pluralistic approaches to language teaching for developing young learners' language awareness. By exposing the participants to a set of plurilingual activities following the DivCon model, the authors could observe and identify their language awareness development. The results of the study indicate positive outcomes, demonstrating an enhanced level of language awareness among the pupils, as well as an increased appreciation of language diversity.

Since plurilingual competence is crucial for effective communication, cultural understanding, cognitive development, and professional and personal growth, it should also be prioritised in education to enable the continuous development of individuals. However, there is little research on pupils' perceptions of plurilingualism and its role in providing a stimulating environment at the primary level. The second article, entitled *Slovenian Primary School Pupils' Perception of Plurilingual Competence* and written by Tina Rozmanič, Ana Kogovšek, Žan Korošec and Karmen Pižorn, therefore investigated primary school students' perceptions. The results indicate that pupils are inclined towards language learning, perceive the importance of plurilingual competence, and express confidence in speaking foreign languages. However, pupils seem unable to assess their metalinguistic and metacultural knowledge and skills.

The next article, entitled *'English is a Subject that You Should Teach Yourself': Power and Learner Identity in the Language Introduction Programme in Sweden* and submitted by Jenny Bergström, explores students' perspectives on English language learning regarding the Language Introduction Programme in Sweden, which is an individual transitional programme for newly arrived immigrants that seeks to rapidly transition adolescents into further education or the job market. The results show that the importance of proficiency in English for a successful educational transition from the Language Introduction Programme is rarely communicated to students. Furthermore, English is positioned as a subject of low importance within the organisation. The results also show that monolingual norms and language hierarchies limit the students' ability to use their first language when learning English.

In the following paper, *Survey on the Attitudes of School Community*

Members Regarding the Role of the Language(s) of Schooling in the Integration Process of Pupils with an Immigrant Background in Slovenia, Tina Čok presents the results of research on the role of languages of schooling in the success of all pupils in Slovenian primary education institutions, with a particular focus on those with an immigrant background. The study found that while school staff recognise the importance of multilingual education and linguistic integration, there are significant gaps in teacher training and support mechanisms. Although schools generally support the use of multiple languages, there is a lack of cross-language awareness and visible promotion of multilingualism in the school environment.

The next article, *Examining Indonesian English as a Foreign Language Lecturers' Attitudes Towards Translanguaging and Its Perceived Pedagogical Benefits: A Mixed-Methods Study* written by Mohammed Yassin Mohd Aba Sha'ar and Nur Lailatur Rofiah, examines Indonesian lecturers' attitudes towards translanguaging and its pedagogical benefits in their English as a foreign language classroom. The findings reveal that, in general, Indonesian lecturers hold optimal, virtual and maximal attitudes towards translanguaging. They perceive translanguaging as beneficial, as it facilitates student-student and student-teacher interactions, scaffolds students' understanding, and creates a familiar and secure classroom atmosphere.

The last article of the focus part of the issue, entitled *Language-Related Expressions of Personality* and written by Željko Rački, Željka Flegar and Mojca Jurišević, aims to bridge the gap between prospective multi/plurilingual education and overarching personality psychology by examining how language constructs and basic personality traits are interrelated in pre-service teachers, who are fundamental to language education. The findings suggest that there are personality-embedded nuanced language-related expressions of trait structures reflecting psychological needs for language competence, relatedness and autonomy in (co-)creation. The research underscores the importance of considering both language constructs and internationally validated personality traits in teachers and their students.

The first varia article, entitled *Remote Learning and Stress in Mothers of Students with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder during the Covid-19 Lockdown* and written by Daniela Cvitković, Ana Wagner Jakab and Jasmina Stošić, aimed to examine the spatial and technical preconditions and the quality of support for children with ADHD during remote learning, and to determine the burdens faced by the mothers of these children with regard to school tasks during the first lockdown. The perspective of mothers showed that spatial conditions were inappropriate for holding online classes. Furthermore, teaching

materials during online classes were not adapted to the child's needs, teachers did not send teaching materials through the available online services in a proper manner, and more than a third of the mothers stated that there was no interactive teaching at all and that there was no individual contact with teachers.

The second varia article, entitled *The Impact of the 5E Learning Model Improved with Concept Maps on Motivation* and written by Lütfiye Varoğlu, Ayhan Yılmaz and Şenol Şen, examined the use of the 5E learning model with concept maps to support students' motivation and compared the 5E approach and the classical approach to teaching chemistry in terms of motivational dimensions. The main subject of this study was an assessment of students' motivation using the 5E learning model, which promotes student-centred teaching. It was determined that the EG students' motivation scores showed a significant difference with regard to the CG students' motivation scores. A significant difference was also established between the EG and CG students' intrinsic goal orientation and test anxiety post-test scores.

The last varia article, *Primary School Teachers' Personal and Professional Beliefs on Diversity* written by Željka Knežević, presents research conducted among Croatian primary school classroom teachers and subject teachers regarding their personal and professional beliefs about diversity. The results indicate that teachers show different levels of openness towards certain aspects of diversity in the domains of both personal and professional beliefs, but that their personal beliefs are statistically more positive than their professional beliefs. The results also indicate a need for further research in this area, that is, research that primarily investigates the factors that influence teachers' professional beliefs.

The issue ends with a book review by Andreja Retelj, who selected *Multilingualism and Identity: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* edited by Wendy Ayres-Bennet and Linda Fisher. This monograph consists of 18 contributions by eminent researchers in multilingualism and is characterised by its interdisciplinary insight into the various aspects of multilingualism in our society. The authors' contributions cover fields such as applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and education, among others, illustrating the book's commitment to exploring the complex and multifaceted nature of multilingualism. Multilingualism cannot be seen as a rare phenomenon, but rather as a shared social phenomenon with many benefits and challenges. These challenges have given rise to much of the research in the field of multilingualism and identity that is reflected in this volume. The contributors see more potential than problems in multilingualism, and their studies present findings relevant to both the immediate and broader social contexts.

We hope researchers and practising teachers alike will find much on offer here to enhance their understanding of pluri/multilingualism in education.

ANDREJA RETELJ AND KARMEN PIŽORN

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