



Innovation to promote quality education and integration

Federico Farini
University of Northampton

RSA Central Reboot Event, Birmingham,
30.3.2022



up



Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue as a way of Upgrading Policies of Participation

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No. 822400



CHILD-UP Consortium



Coordinated by:

Department of Studies on Language and Culture - University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (**Italy**)

Partners:

Université de Liege (**Belgium**)

Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (**Finland**)

Zentrum für Forschung, Weiterbildung und Beratung – Evangelische Hochschule Dresden (**Germany**)

Jagiellonian University Krakow (**Poland**)

Malmö Högskola (**Sweden**)

University of Northampton (**The United Kingdom**)

International Institute of Humanitarian Law (**Italy**)

Fédération des Régions pour la Recherche, l'Education et la Formation (**France**)

European School Head Association (**The Netherlands**)



Education and agency



The general objective of CHILD-UP is the analysis of the enhancement of migrant children's agency.

The achievement of agency needs the promotion of a child's active participation in relation to choices of action and construction of meaning in education.

Teacher-student relations are among the most important factors in the educational experience of migrant children.



Agency and hybrid identity



The meaning of cultural Identity can be constructed through migrant children's agency.

Children's agency can enhance the social negotiation of cultural identity as fluid, malleable, and contingently constructed in communication, i.e. it is a hybrid identity.

Thus, migrant children's integration can be seen as **hybrid integration**.

Education can enhance children's agency and hybrid identity, thus avoiding the individual and social construction of unchangeable traditions and motives of separation.





The Project

2019

Desktop research: Analyses of data and programmes concerning social life and educational conditions of migrant children in Europe

Survey: agency and participation, social relations and support of hybrid integration in school

2021/ 2022

Innovation: Development and dissemination of training materials and guidelines for education

2020/2021

Interviews and focus groups: experiences, approaches and methods concerning agency and hybrid integration of migrant children
Video- and audiorecordings of school activities



Language

It is all about language.

(Teacher during a project-presentation in 2019)



Language use and support (multiple answers)

Teachers (use)	
National language	71.4
Translation	52.7
Native languages	12.2
Many languages	9.5

Teachers (support)	
Resources for L2 learning	69.1
Language and cultural mediation	34.9
Resources for learning native languages	34.1

Children (support)	
Use of translation	57.4
Help in native language	53.4



Language use and support from different perspectives

Teachers

Preschool Teacher: The children [and their parents] [...] come with zero knowledge of German. But of course they should be integrated as quickly as possible [...], so communication works with hands and feet. (GT_9_F, pos. 59)

But they lack the technical language and that is a big problem, if they are eleven or twelve years old and can't understand a scientific text, even if it's very simple and they can't read it. (G_T4_F, pos. 27)

I don't know how many children there are who fall through this school system, how many children there are who have language problems, who simply don't keep up at all in school (G_T4_F, pos. 411-415)

But sometimes I have to stop it when it's only in the native language or in the language of origin. THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. We've already had that, too, when there are a lot of Arabic speakers, that it then gets out of hand and that the communication goes over the heads of the others. [...] I simply don't want to, therefore: I prefer German as the language of instruction. (G_T2_F, pos. 171-179)

Language use and support from different perspectives

Teachers

Preschool Teacher: *The children [and their parents] [...] come with zero knowledge of German. But of course they should be integrated as quickly as possible [...], so communication works with hands and feet.* (GT_9_F, pos. 59)

L2-Teacher: *But they lack the technical language and that is a big problem, if they are eleven or twelve years old and can't understand a scientific text, even if it's very simple and they can't read it.* (G_T4_F, pos. 27)

L2-Teacher: *I don't know how many children there are who fall through this school system, how many children there are who have language problems, who simply don't keep up at all in school*(G_T4_F, pos. 411-415)

Teacher: *But sometimes I have to stop it when it's only in the native language or in the language of origin. THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. We've already had that, too, when there are a lot of Arabic speakers, that it then gets out of hand and that the communication goes over the heads of the others. [...] I simply don't want to, therefore: I prefer German as the language of instruction.* (G_T2_F, pos. 171-179)

Students

Girl, 17 years old: *Well, actually my classmates were so fast and I felt that I couldn't contribute anything. So, in the group work I felt like a zero person [...]. My teacher in history when I can't answer so quickly in this subject. Because she talks the whole lesson, doesn't write anything on the board, for example. I try to understand and write it down.* (G_I44_ISCED3_F, pos. 32-35)

Boy, 13 years old: *[...] In math there is not what I have to understand. So I can do everything. [...]I don't like history, because that is too difficult for me to understand, because of German.* (G_F37_ISCED2_M, pos. 60-69; 70-75)

Girl, 18 years old: *But the subjects that use languages, like German, history, I wish I could do them. But I can't do them because of the language. [...] History I liked to do very much in Turkey. And I was also very good in literature. But only the last years not. [...] When I came to Germany, [...] this motivation of mine went down again and yes, I can't trust myself again and express myself so well. I also don't have so much courage and I also don't have so good language skills, language skills.* (G_I40_ISCED3_F, pos. 30-35)

Conclusion 1: language



Three problems in schools across the contexts of the research.

1. Availability of linguistic support varies across the contexts, from almost non-existent to robust. School initiatives above all concern L2 learning, while language and intercultural mediation and support of the use native language are much less frequent.
2. School is to some extent characterised by a structural lack of consideration for the linguistic abilities and support needs of children with a migration background. The monolingual approach in schools and classrooms has consequences for pupils' opportunities to participate in different activities and therefore hinders their agency.
3. The monolingual approach in schools affects individual educational aspirations of students with migrant background negatively. Therefore, there might be a limitation of learning motivation, self-confidence and at least opportunities for successful societal integration.



agency



migrant children's perceived agency and participation

(totally agree & rather agree)

	Migrant children
Following teacher's instruction	87.1
Listening to classmates' views and experiences	83.9
Collaborating with classmates	82.9
Asking when not understanding instructions	83.3
Listening teacher carefully	82.6
Speaking freely about thinking	73.3
Speaking freely about feelings and liking/disking	68.7
Letting teacher knowing needs and wants	72.1
Participating in decisions about school activities	69.0
Saying ideas about classroom design	64.1





Teachers' support of agency (a lot)

	%
Encouraging children to articulate and enforce their interests	58.5
Allowing children to discuss in classroom autonomously	58.5
Encouraging children to make their opinion clear	57.2
Allowing children to question teachers' thoughts or decisions	54.5
Supporting/encouraging children's creative, new ideas about teaching or other issues regarding to school	46.3
Supporting children's initiatives that are not connected to teaching and encourage them to realize them.	46.0
Supporting and coordinating children's autonomous proposals about initiatives/activities	45.7
Enhancing children's activities that are not connected to teaching	34.5



Conclusion 2: agency



Most children are positive about their participation in education with minimal difference when comparing children with and without a migration background.

Migrant children are more positive about hierarchical relationships than situation of agency. Moreover, data varies across contexts.

Teachers support agency as promotion of children's interests, opinions and questions teachers' thoughts and decisions to some extent.

Children's initiatives are less supported, whether they are strictly linked to classroom learning or not.

Further investigation is required with regard to support to agency as children's personal expression and children's participation in decision-making.



Summary



1. Agency is promoted, albeit limitedly (thick/thin agency)
2. Support of children's linguistic resources is insufficient (monolingualism, mediation, native language)

As a consequence: hybrid integration of children with migrant background seems to be rather difficult in the European countries.





Thank you

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No. 822400

