

Diana Maak/Julia Ricart Brede

Summary

This book focuses on (pre-service) teachers' attitudes and competences when it comes to handling a (linguistically and culturally) diverse classroom. Results from a research project called "Einstellungen angehender LehrerInnen zu Deutsch als Zweitsprache und Mehrsprachigkeit" ("pre-service teachers' attitudes towards German as a second language and towards multilingualism") that brought together researchers from several universities and subjects are presented. These results are enriched with findings and insights from other research done on questions similar or complementary to ours. In the following, we present our research questions, our research design and our research objectives at first. After that, all articles will be presented in a few words.

Above all, we wanted to find out which role the topics 'German as a second language' and 'multilingualism' play in pre-service teachers' training, and which attitudes pre-service teachers have towards these topics. With respect to this research focus, a questionnaire containing open- and closed-ended questions seemed to be the appropriate tool to us. After pre-testing and revising this questionnaire (cf. Maak/Ricart Brede/Born 2015 for further details), we collected and analysed data from 655 students.

The results presented contribute to the ongoing debate on how to prepare pre-service teachers with respect to handling (linguistically and culturally) diverse classrooms in a resourceful and responsible way. Since multilingualism is the rule and not an exception, teachers should be able to value multilingualism and to integrate this valuable resource systematically into everyday schooling. Hence, universities should try hard to prepare later teachers accordingly, however not only language teachers, but teachers from all disciplines.

In the following you will find short presentations of all articles in the order of appearance which is due to content and not to connections with the research project.

At first, *Diana Maak* and *Julia Ricart Brede* outline the corner stones of the research project. They focus on data collection and study sample in order to avoid repetition in project-related articles of the publication. Then, *Julia Ricart Brede* presents the editor's notions of attitudes within the context of the research project and places these notions into the current discourse of research. Within this context, the so called "culture of multilingualism" ("Kultur der Mehrsprachigkeit")

developed by Ingelore Oomen-Welke (1997) depicts a crucial reference point. In her following article, *Ingelore Oomen-Welke* provides insights into the genesis of this model as a way to include and to appreciate multilingualism in daily teacher's practice. Subsequently, *Sebastian Born*, *Diana Maak*, *Julia Ricart Brede* and *Anja Vetterlein* examine whether this heuristically developed model can be validated empirically or not. Since we did not only aim to examine attitudes in national but also in international contexts, particularly in Denmark, the project's questionnaire was translated into Danish, too. *Kathrin Wild*, whose article comes next, examines the possibilities, pitfalls and constraints of translating the questionnaire.

"Vignettes are short stories about hypothetical characters in specified circumstances, to whose situation the interviewee is invited to respond." (Finch 1987: 105) *Una Dirks* shows in her article how vignettes can be used to improve pre-service teachers' intercultural competence. *Franziska Liefner* and *Diana Maak*, on the other hand, analyse answers given to a vignette that was part of the project questionnaire focusing on the effects of teacher action on pupils ascribed by the respondents.

Whereas most of the articles so far are concerned with attitudes, *Wilhelm Griefshaber* takes a close look at competences of pre-service teachers, for example when it comes to estimate the level of difficulty of schoolbook-texts. *Julia Ricart Brede*, then, analyses a set of data that responds to the question how well prepared pre-service teachers feel to handle a (culturally and linguistically) diverse classroom. Pre-service teachers, that's the picture that emerges, don't trust in their competences very much and at the same time lay high stress on university courses that would prepare them for that specific situation. *Ralf Schieferdecker*, as well, deals with heterogeneity. Applying the documental method developed by *Bohnsack* (2007), he analyses so called 'shared experiential spaces' of teachers discussing heterogeneity. *Diana Maak*, finally, examines attitudes and the body of knowledge of pre-service teachers when it comes to use multilingual product descriptions. Within this context, she also presents ideas of how to work with a special product description (out of the project questionnaire) that the respondents came up with.

One very important perspective remains unexplored so far – that of (multilingual) pupils themselves. This gap is closed by the two articles from *Simone Amorocho* and *Katja Wermbter* on the one hand and *Enisa Pliska* on the other hand. *Amorocho* and *Wermbter* examine multilingual pupils' opinions and attitudes towards heritage languages, which have, as it becomes obvious, an immense impact on identity construction. *Enisa Pliska* eventually sheds some light

on language policies in Bosnia-Herzegovina and their effects on pupils when she asks among other things if Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian are three distinct languages or three varieties of one common language.

Literature

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