

The Search for Truth: A Psychological Analysis of Bulgarian Children's Adaptation to the Portuguese Language Environment with a Special Focus on Translanguaging

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Abstract

There is an increasing migration from Bulgaria to Brazil. The group of migrants is very homogenous since they arrive with the same aim of working and saving money for a better future at home in Bulgaria. The statistics reveal that the migrants often arrive with families, including children, who must attend compulsory schools in Brazil. According to Brazilian law, all children are entitled to education in the Portuguese language. This creates many problems for newly arrived families who have limited knowledge of Portuguese. This paper investigates Bulgarian children's meta-language and translanguaging approaches during official schooling and extracurricular activities. The theoretical framework is grounded in the theories about translanguaging and second language development of newly arrived children. The participants of the study are 55 Bulgarian children who were observed in various environments: at schools, at home and during extracurricular activities with peers. The main findings paint an interesting pattern of the various ways to convey the meaning through translanguaging depending on the contextual situation.

Keywords: Bulgarian migrants, linguistics, translanguaging, observations

Introduction

Language is the most important part of people's identity, and language development is a significant step in every child's development. Hence it is essential to ensure that a child receives a rich language input, especially in the mother tongue. Various research studies show that children learn the best when the language surrounds them (De Fina et al., 2017; Harman, 2018; Macedo, 2019; Zigler et al., 2004). However, one may naturally ask what happens when a child moves to another country where most of the population speaks another foreign language. This must definitely be a challenge and can potentially have a significant effect on the development of all language skills, including writing, reading, speaking, and understanding.

The newest statistics on world migration show that globalization strongly impacts migration patterns, and people are ready to move to even remote locations to improve their living and financial conditions (Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, 2022). Furthermore, an immigrant status can also have a positive impact on personal socioeconomic status as it is often connected with better incomes. This is also the case when we look at the migration patterns of Bulgarian people in modern times (Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, 2022). Bulgarian people started discovering new countries and places to live in medieval times (Bourne & Watt, 1983). There are records of Bulgarian people all over Europe (Bourne & Watt, 1983; Prochazka, 1962). Some records show that Bulgarian people helped to build Paris, Rome and other major European destinations. In more contemporary times, namely after the Second World War, Bulgarian people mainly focussed on

migration to Greece and Albania. And in the most recent times, since Bulgaria has become a member of the European Union and the member of the European Economic Area, it has become very popular to move to Germany and Switzerland. Despite the general public's preference for European travel destinations, many Bulgarian people also choose more exotic locations such as Asia or even Brazil. This research mainly focuses on the Bulgarian community in rural areas of Brazil. The Brazilian statistics show that there are thousands of Bulgarian people who live in the remote regions of the Amazon River where they mainly work on fruit farms. The work conditions, as well as the salaries, are very attractive in this region, and this was the main reason for this choice.

Review of the Related Literature

This research is grounded in general linguistics and theories about children's language development. At the base lies the theory of the renowned researcher Chomsky, who said that children possess a genetic sense of language that they develop during the first years of life (Chomsky, 1957; Cook, 1985; Smith, 1973). Hence, the first years are very crucial. The language environment plays an important role in catering to children's needs to develop excellent language skills in accordance with their age (Adams, 1972; McChesney et al., 1998; Smith, 1973). The language environment provides a rich language input and motivates the children to discover the new world of language with their peers. Therefore, positive communication is very important when children explore the language together in the first years. Many scientists point out

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that children learn up to 90% of language by communicating with their peers and parents, while only 10% of the language is actually learned from the formal teachers in the schools. This actually triggers an interesting discussion or, more like, a question of how we can change our educational systems to cater to more communication that will help the children to close the gaps in their language development. Apart from Chomsky's theory, the theoretical framework includes the newest studies of Bulgarian researchers in the psychological analysis of early children's speech (Karimova, 2001; Schmidt et al., 2003; Zamolodcikova, 2004). Bulgarian theories in this particular study are very important because they provide a new focus and unique point of view for the researcher, even the reader. This actually reveals that translanguaging plays an equally important role in children's language development, providing the ground for positive psychological affiliation with the new language environment where children are placed.

The Bulgarian theory of psychological evaluation of the language contexts, in connection with the focus on translanguaging, states that children apply different systems of translanguaging in different situations (Schmidt et al., 2003; Zamolodcikova, 2004). This means that translanguaging takes various forms: $L1 > L2$, $L1 < L2$ and $L1 = L2$. The forms differ depending on the geographical locations and the peers surrounding the children at the time of the active interaction (Schmidt et al., 2003; Zamolodcikova, 2004). The theory explains that in the model $L1 > L2$, $L1$ or the mother tongues dominate the scene when children are located in their home environments or accompanied by their parents or siblings (Schmidt et al., 2003; Zamolodcikova, 2004). The second form, which is $L1 < L2$, represents the situations where the new or second language dominates, and these kinds of situations are observed mainly in schools or in the official outside environments, where children don't have their families and surrounded by the strangers, who might have a very limited or zero knowledge of children's native languages (Schmidt et al., 2003; Zamolodcikova, 2004). The last situation of translanguaging, namely $L1 = L2$, is very scarce according to the theory developed by the Bulgarian team of theorists (Schmidt et al., 2003; Zamolodcikova, 2004). The model $L1 = L2$ represents the situation where both languages are actively being used in particular contexts. These contexts mainly appear when the children play with their siblings who have the same language repertoire and can communicate on equal ground. This research actually aims to test this particular theory and see how this applies in Brazilian settings with Bulgarian children and parents.

Translanguaging is described in the literature as a new tendency in approaching language mixing that has long been influential among EAL practitioners worldwide (Conteh, 2018). The official definition of translanguaging is provided by Vogel and Garcia and reads as a "theoretical lens that offers a different view of bilingualism and multilingualism. The theory posits that rather than possessing two or more autonomous language systems, as has been traditionally thought, bilinguals, multilingual, and indeed, all users of language, select and deploy particular features from a unitary linguistic repertoire to make meaning and negotiate particular communicative contexts" (Vogel & García, 2017, p. 1). Interestingly, there is little attention given to children's cultural capital, which has an enormous impact on translanguaging, in my opinion. But I will get back to this in the discussion chapter of this paper. Translanguaging has been a very trendy term in current linguistics, especially in Europe, where the majority of the researchers in the field of general linguistics are excessively focused on Chomsky and the theories that he developed. Furthermore, translanguaging theory connects easily to the theories about cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural education, which are constantly gaining attention in European schools (De Fina et al., 2017; Samuda, 1998; Wright et al., 2015). Cultural and multicultural education has been described as an education for diverse pupils that puts them at the center of the learning process and respects their backgrounds and languages (Battle, 2002; Miletta & Miletta, 2008; Wright et al., 2015). The theorists of multicultural education repeatedly emphasized that teachers should closely cooperate with parents in order to create an ethos of understanding and encouragement where every child will develop into a responsible citizen (Askeland, 2006; Karimova, 2001; Mennuti et al., 2006). Since translanguaging is described as an

inevitable part of children's psychological and societal development in new environments, it is even more important to apply cultural teaching methods in schools where translanguaging is observed on a daily basis (De Fina et al., 2017; Harman, 2018; Karimova, 2001).

The multicultural education theory also puts a strong emphasis on student's development of a sense of belonging to both the new learning environments as well as to being able to keep the important attachment to their heritage (Blackledge & Creese, 2014; Cook & Li, 2016; Dyker & Radošević, 1999). This balance between heritage and affiliation with the new culture should be carefully scaffolded during both the classes and extracurricular activities that must motivate students and build bridges (Hadley, 2010; Harman, 2018; Leistyna et al., 1996). Several studies have been conducted to reveal that extracurricular activities play an even more important role in the societal development of children than official schooling (Leistyna et al., 1996; Macedo, 2019; Samuda, 1998; Walford & Massey, 1998; Zamolodcikova, 2004). Furthermore, extracurricular activity is a great environment to trigger communication and motive language development in natural environments.

Overall, the theoretical framework highlights the importance of conducting field tests and observations in order to reveal the impacts of translanguaging approaches to L2 learning. Theorists call for more attention to the analysis of children's metalanguage.

Objectives

This research was specifically carried out with the objective of investigating Bulgarian children's ways of communicating with their Brazilian peers, teachers, and other people in the new areas of living. The problem was identified after conducting a preliminary study that highlighted the lack of knowledge of the Bulgarian children's approaches to adaptation to the new linguistic environments. Another reason that triggered the research was the lacking focus on language development in the local policy documents that mainly ignore cultural diversity and mainly focus on the Portuguese language. There is also a huge lack of awareness amongst the teachers in the public schools who receive an increased number of Bulgarian immigrant children. The main research question is: In what ways do Bulgarian children use to adapt to the new language environment? The secondary question is: How do the children use translanguaging in their everyday life, and whether translanguaging helps them to break the language barriers?

Methodology

This study is a part of a more significant research project called *Away from Home, but still Bulgarian at Heart*, which is supported by the Bulgarian Association of Cross-cultural Connections and Education. Methodologically the project belongs to qualitative studies with a focus on ethnographic and cultural approaches (Ellis & Bochner, 1996; Gilmore et al., 1982; Knobel et al., 2020; Monaghan & Goodman, 2007). Ethnography has been at the center of the discussion when it comes to revealing community practices, traditions, and approaches to learning languages (Fedorov et al., 1992; Lähdesmäki et al., 2020; Monaghan & Goodman, 2007). The ethnographic approach allows a researcher to participate fully and experience the communities from within (Ellis & Bochner, 1996; Jeanes & Huzzard, 2014). This insight is then applied later in the data analysis.

The study participants are 55 Bulgarian children who immigrated with their parents to remote areas of rural Brazil. All families have average income and medium socioeconomic status. The children were 35 females and 20 males. The age of children is between 6 and 15 years old at the time of the study. The parent's backgrounds are mainly from the cities of Sofia, Plovdiv, and Varna. The families speak fluent Bulgarian and middle Bulgarian dialects. All the children are fluent in Bulgarian. When it comes to the other languages, the majority of children have very limited knowledge of Portuguese, mainly on levels A2-B1. They were all enrolled in Brazilian public schools at the time of the study and were schooled in Portuguese, which is the official language of Brazil. Some children could speak a little English and Romanian languages.

All the participants agreed to participate voluntarily. The parents obtained the information about the study and signed the forms allowing the research team to video record their children at school and during the extracurricular activities.

The Bulgarian research team consisting of Bojana Matelova, Zlata Zamolodcikova, and Karina Mazaeva traveled to Brazil to collect the data and conduct the observations. Bojana Matelova was the group's leader and contributed the most of all researchers who participated in the data collection.

The observations were the main methodological approach during the data collection (Fedorov et al., 1992; Jeanes & Huzzard, 2014; Knobel et al., 2020). The researchers observed the children at school for three weeks, every day of the week, starting from 8:00 until 13:00. The lessons and the free time were videos and audio recordings. Besides the lessons, the extracurricular activities were recorded as well. The extracurricular activities included: football, cricket, softball, singing club, and reading club. Furthermore, two traditional Brazilian festivals were recorded on video because they happened during the data collection process, and all children had to participate actively in the celebrations. One of the festivals was Sun and Water Worshipping Evening, a very old tradition to celebrate two of the most important elements in Brazilian nature: sun and water. The second festival was the Harvesting Celebration, where the whole of rural Brazil celebrates the harvest and thanks the land for giving them the opportunity to live there. Participation in the events produced very rich data because children were very excited about singing and communicating with the people and sharing their experiences. At the end of the data collection activities, the researchers organized a trip to the Amazon jungles for three days with the families and children. This trip was video recorded as well. The children's communication with each other and the parents were very informal during this trip, producing data on the informal

circumstances. This variety of contexts allowed the triangulation of data that was later used during the analytical process.

The video recordings were partially transcribed and analyzed using a full coding approach. During the coding process, codes were created by the research team with the input of the ethnographic data coding specialist hired by Plovdiv University. The codes were then compared with the units derived from the theoretical framework (Fedorov et al., 1992; Knobel et al., 2020). Later the codes and the theoretical units were compared in order to create four themes that are presented and discussed in the following section.

Results

In this section, the findings are split into four categories and discussed in light of the theories and earlier research. Special attention is given to analyzing the examples of translanguaging that were collected during the interviews and onsite observations.

L1 > L2 – Translanguaging

Translanguaging type L1 > L2 has been mainly observed in informal settings, usually at children's homes, in communication with the parents or siblings. The characteristic part of the L1 > L2 type is that the native language, here Bulgarian is prevalent and is used as a baseline for communication. The inserts of L2, here Portuguese, are explained by the school's influence. The children are being schooled mainly in Portuguese and acquire academic vocabulary in that language. This means that they lose parts of the Bulgarian vocabulary. Table 1 shows examples of L1 > L2 type translanguaging, which clearly indicates the psycholinguistic patterns in children's speech.

Table 1

L1 > L2 - Translanguaging Examples

Bulgarian > Portuguese translanguaging	English translation
Мамо, уморен съм, не искам да ходя на <i>escola</i> .	Mom, I am tired; I do not want to go to <i>school</i> .
Вчера обядвахме паста със <i>espinafre</i> и банани.	Yesterday we had pasta with <i>spinach</i> and bananas for lunch.
Не обичам да играя софтбоул, мисля да го пропусна <i>semana que vem</i> .	I don't like playing softball; I think I will skip it <i>next week</i> .
Нека намерим нова <i>vestir</i> за мен, искам нещо, което <i>outras garotas</i> в училището носят.	Let's find a new <i>dress</i> for me; I want something that <i>other girls</i> in the school wear.
Защо трябва да учим математика? <i>Tediosa!</i>	Why should we learn math? <i>It is boring!</i>
Кога ще <i>visita</i> на баба в София?	When are we going to <i>visit</i> our grandma in Sofia?
Искам да се разходя с приятелите си от училище покрай <i>rio</i> .	I want to go for a walk with my friends from school along <i>the river</i> .

In the table, L2 inserts are shown in bold italics. We see that the words related to school or school activities are inserted in Portuguese. The word 'school' itself, 'spinach,' is served at the school cafeteria. When it comes to the word construction 'next week' – it is related to school activities as well as it is often used by teachers while giving home tasks. The last three examples of L1 > L2 type translanguaging indicate – the comfort translanguaging approach. Meaning that, for instance, the Portuguese expression for 'it is boring' only requires one word, while, for example, the English or Bulgarian equivalent includes a whole phrase. So, the children prefer to use the shorter option here. The same applies to the example of 'visiting the grandma', because 'visiting' in Brazilian Portuguese is only one word, while in Bulgarian, it is expressed via a word construct. The last example, besides comfort translanguaging, also indicates an ecological connection to the area of inhabitation. There are many rivers in Brazil and especially the Amazon River, which is loved by the entire population, including newly arrived migrants. Hence, children, in all cases, while talking about the rivers, use the Portuguese word 'Rio,' which means river.

When it comes to the parents' reactions and perceptions of translanguaging cases, the majority of parents were positive

towards children's linguistic experiments. However, there was a small group of parents who expressed concerns. This group of parents shared that they were afraid of children losing some parts of the Bulgarian vocabulary and probably will not be able to fully communicate in literal Bulgarian when they return home. Furthermore, some of the parents hoped for the children to attend Bulgarian universities in the future. In Bulgarian universities, the main language of instruction is usually Bulgarian, so it is very important for children to be able to receive instructions in their native language. As a way to compensate for language loss, some of the parents enrolled their children in online Bulgarian classes that are specially designed for Bulgarian children who are residing in Brazil. Those lessons are held weekly and especially target translanguaging issues and are aimed at closing up the linguistic gaps in children's speech.

L1 < L2 – Translanguaging

During the process of data collection, the L1 < L2 type of translanguaging has been mainly observed within the schools. L1 < L2 type is described by the prevalence of the second language,

which in the context of the study is Brazilian Portuguese. The Portuguese language is used as a baseline, and L1 is inserted in the constructions to indicate the cultural and linguistic affiliation of the language users, here children. Table 2 presents examples from the

Table 2

L1 < L2 – Translanguaging Examples

Bulgarian < Portuguese translanguaging	English translation
Ontem, assistimos a um program ана българска телевизия. Foi interessante.	Yesterday, we watched a show on <i>Bulgarian TV</i> . It was interesting.
Prefiro comer a banana do que o хот дог.	I would rather eat the banana than the <i>hotdog</i> .
Minha майка é como a modelo Naomi, muito magra e bonita.	My <i>mom</i> is like Naomi the model, very thin and beautiful.
Eu não sei onde é esse lugar. É perto da дом de Marityna?	I don't know where that place is. Is it close to Marityna's <i>home</i> ?
Ela toca piano quase tão bem quanto minha леля na Bulgária.	She plays the piano almost as well as my <i>aunt</i> in Bulgaria.
Por que você não quer brincar com o uso, não somos опасни?	Why don't you wanna play with us? We are not <i>dangerous</i> ?
Este festival é como o слънце!	This festival is like the <i>sun</i> !

The majority of the L1 inserts indicate a strong psycholinguistic connection with the home country, culture, and language. In the first example, the reader can see that the child, whilst talking about Bulgarian TV with her peers, uses a Bulgarian word for television, an indication of a strong cultural connection. Not all of the child's peers speak Bulgarian, but she expects them to make connections also because the Portuguese word for TV and Bulgarian word for TV are very similar. The communication, therefore, goes surprisingly smoothly. In the second example, the child uses a Bulgarian word for 'mother' whilst speaking Portuguese. This indicates a strong family connection to the language. The same applies in the following example when the child is talking about his home and uses the beautiful Bulgarian word 'дом' that means home. The psycholinguistic connection to the family domain is also present in the example where the child dearly calls her lovely aunt 'леля'. The child misses her aunt, who resides in the rural Bulgarian countryside and refuses to use the Portuguese word 'tia' but uses a beautiful Bulgarian equivalent. The last example was recorded during the celebrations of the Sun and Water worshipping festival. First of all, all the children embraced this tradition and participated gladly in the celebrations. Some children have been participating for several years in a row. The celebration brings culture, education, and society together. The children sing chants, wear ceremonial gowns, and participate in sacrificial rituals to celebrate the sun and water. All the rituals and activities

field observations that clearly show the active use of the L1 < L2 type translanguaging approach.

are not only performed in Brazilian Portuguese but also in the indigenous language native to this rural area of Brazil. This creates a unique opportunity for both children and parents to learn about local culture and languages and participate in community life. The Bulgarian children make the celebration even more diverse and colorful by adding elements of Bulgarian culture and languages to the activities and events. They use the old Bulgarian word 'слънце' while talking about the sun. The parents explained that the sun is also very much appreciated in the Bulgarian culture as well and in the old traditions, even referred to as a deity. The parents were very positive towards the L1 < L2 type of translanguaging because they could clearly observe that the children kept attachments to the Bulgarian cultures while mainly being schooled in Portuguese.

L1 = L2 – Translanguaging

The third type of translanguaging is probably the most interesting and the least researched. It is the L1 = L2 type, which indicates equal use of both the native Bulgarian language and the second Brazilian Portuguese language. This type of translanguaging has been mainly observed in the communications between the siblings in the villages. In these cases, all the participants of the communication possessed knowledge of both languages and hence were able to participate in dialogues without any issues. Table 3 shows examples of the L1 = L2 type translanguaging.

Table 3

L1 = L2 – Translanguaging Examples

Bulgarian = Portuguese translanguaging	English translation
Ходиш ли на училище? Eu estou esperando!	Are you going to school? I am waiting!
Взе ли си lancheira?	Did you take your lunch box?
Не съм готов para essa lição.	I am not ready for that lesson.
Essa professora é muito rígida и не говори български.	That teacher is very strict, and she does not speak Bulgarian.
Não podemos comer essa planta. Не забравяйте, че мама каза, че е отровно!	We cannot eat that plant. Remember, mom said it is poisonous!
Тя все още я няма! Provavelmente de novo na biblioteca, какъв nerd!	She is still not here! Probably again at the library; what a nerd!
Posso abraçar seu gato? Леля ми в България тем ум такава котка!	Can I hug your cat? My aunt in Bulgaria has a cat like that!

The examples of L1 = L2 type translanguaging show strong domain preferences. While using words or word combinations related to home, food, or Bulgarian, children prefer the Bulgarian language, but when there is talk about school-related topics, the children use Portuguese. It is very interesting because the children make these choices absolutely automatically without even thinking about cultural affiliations. By living between two language environments and negotiating the identities daily, the children have learned to navigate them unconsciously. When it comes to the parents' reactions, they were split half and half. Half of the parents thought that it was very exciting to observe this kind of interaction between the siblings. Furthermore, they said that they felt like they saw a confirmation of good schooling because the children have become very good in the Portuguese language and are now using it

among themselves. While on the other hand, another group of parents expressed serious concerns about the children's levels of the Bulgarian language. After all, it will forever stay their mother tongue, and the parents were worried about it dying out in Brazilian settings. This interplay and identity negotiations were also discussed amongst the teachers who were aware of the translanguaging which was happening inside and outside the schools. The teachers' perspectives on the development within the educational institutions are shortly discussed in the following section.

Discussion

The examples of translanguaging that have been collected during the rounds of interviews and hours of onsite observations

show that Bulgarian children mix languages on a daily basis. However, it is important to acknowledge that this language mixing does not happen randomly. The children follow their own defined methods and approaches that vary depending on situations and contexts. The psychological analysis applied using the framework developed by Zamolodcikova (2004) revealed the mental pictures of communications happening within Bulgarian communities that reside in rural Brazil. The children's language use indicates strong connections to the Bulgarian language that they can keep despite being far away from the natural language environment. Zamolodcikova (2004) also highlights in her theoretical framework the importance of parents' choices in choosing the home language of communication. She researched migrant children in various areas worldwide and concluded that home communication patterns are reflected in translanguaging approaches children use in schools. These findings also reflect in the current study. The children were able to replicate their parents' translanguaging styles and carry them to schools. The secondary data analysis also revealed that Bulgarian children's language usage also had an impact on the local children's language repertory. Those children who had daily contact with Bulgarian pupils were able to catch some Bulgarian words and actively use them in their everyday life. There was also another unexpected finding that indicated third-link translanguaging. This type of translanguaging was shortly discussed by Schmidt et al. (2003) in their groundbreaking work on linguistics and social adaptation. The third-link translanguaging is a sporadic phenomenon, and it is surprising that it has been observed in the rural villages of Brazil. Based on the critical analysis, the social adaptation of children has also been linked to their language abilities. The findings align with the results of the study conducted by Karimova (2001), who confirmed that language emersion results in better language skills and triggers successful integration in new societies. The Bulgarian children adopting Portuguese and other rural languages showed respect to the local communities and indicated a willingness to integrate and participate in the local social life. The examples directly confirm these claims from the traditional celebrations in the villages. The school and educational institutions play a crucial role in language development and help to counteract translanguaging practices. In the current study, the schoolteachers demonstrated open-mindedness and were able to provide support with both language learning and adaptation to local life. Hence, once again, schools' role in integration has been confirmed and highlighted as an essential element to ensure new community members' rights. The next section includes concluding remarks that further elevate the findings and put them in perspective.

Conclusion

The study on the psychological analysis of translanguaging approaches answered many interesting questions, but at the same time, it triggered an enormous discussion about balancing the workload associated with learning two languages. The findings indicated that Bulgarian children actively use translanguaging approaches daily in different settings and with different aims. This corresponds somehow to the previous findings in the studies on translanguaging issues (De Fina et al., 2017; Fenton-Smith et al., 2017; Macedo, 2019). The previous finding makes an indication that translanguaging is very domain connected and, although it happened automatically, is not completely unconscious. Children are being described as active agents (Mennuti et al., 2006; Mileta & Mileta, 2008; Schmidt et al., 2003). This has also been the case in the presented study, where the findings indicated clear choices that the children made while mixing language. Language policies and keeping a strong connection to the original culture have been discussed and presented in the literature as well. The theorists highlighted that parents often project their own views on the children's development processes and, in some cases, even tend to ignore the problems that might arise. One of the issues was discussed by the teachers who highlighted that creating a second school at home can create internal contradictions and can have a negative effect on grades in the official school because children are less focussed on following the official curricula and use a lot of time on the tasks given by the mother tongue teacher, who have little

connections to the official guidelines on education existing in children's current areas of residence.

The limitation of this study is that it is a small-scale project that only follows a limited number of children during a limited period of time. Hence it is not possible to generalize the results and conclude that all Bulgarian immigrants have the same issues. The study only gives an indication of the problems that others might have had as well. The strong point of the current study is that it is the first project that explicitly focuses on translanguaging between Bulgarian and Portuguese languages, which gives a possibility to use the results in comparative projects.

Implications for Educational Sector

Children are not passive objects of learning; they are active agents of their own development. This is an axiom in modern education practices. The teachers understand that very clearly and hence are ready to assist the children in a time of need. Many teachers observed different types of translanguaging and communicated with the parents about how to handle these issues. Parents suggested hiring a Bulgarian native language teacher to the school districts where many Bulgarian children live together with their parents. Indeed, it is not possible to hire a Bulgarian teacher for every school, but it is possible and should be financially feasible to hire one teacher per district and organize school buses to transport Bulgarian children to the places where the lessons are being held. This proposition has been submitted to the educational board of public schools in the rural areas of Brazil with a high percentage of the Bulgarian population. The editorial board's review process might take up to a couple of years. The parents, however, are not ready to wait without taking action into their own hands. Many families enroll their children in online zoom classes in the Bulgarian language that are being taught in Bulgaria. This helps to compensate in some way for the language domain loss. The teachers, on the other hand, see the problem from a different perspective. They expressed concerns about the parents pushing their children too much and creating a second school outside of the official school. This creates unnecessary pressure on the children who need to do double the amount of homework. The school psychologist who was interviewed during the data collection advised the parents to revise their puristic policies and approaches on pushing the Bulgarian language too much because it can have created an opposite effect and cause resistance and denial. Language development must be accommodated but not pushed by force. Hence, according to the psychologist, the intervention activities must be rare but focused and aimed only at closing the gaps but not creating an excessive amount of stress.

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