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Editorial Introduction: Migration and Language Education – Insights from Emerging Research



SANG HWAN SEONG^a

EVA MARIA LUEF^b

^a*The Center for Educational Research,
Seoul National University*

^b*Charles University of Prague*

Migration, as a defining characteristic of global mobility, deeply influences the educational and linguistic landscapes of both sending and receiving countries. In the context of language education, migration raises profound questions about how societies accommodate diverse linguistic needs, empower marginalized groups, and build sustainable frameworks for multilingual development. The complexities of these issues are highlighted in this year's contributions to *Migration and Language Education*. This issue features three studies that explore the intersection of migration and language education in South Korea, Sweden, and Singapore. Together, these studies examine critical themes of ethnolinguistic marginalization, work-integrated language learning, and the language development of third-culture kids (TCKs).

Empowering Ethnolinguistically Minoritized Women as Bilingual Coaches in South Korea

South Korea has witnessed an increase in its ethnolinguistically diverse population, with women from Southeast Asia marrying Korean nationals forming a significant part of this demographic. Despite their contributions to Korea's cultural and linguistic fabric, these women often experience marginalization and are pressured to suppress their heritage languages, both in public and private domains. The first study in this issue investigates the transformative potential of South Korea's Bilingual Coaching Program, which utilizes the heritage knowledge of these women to promote bilingualism and challenge monolingual ideologies.

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Drawing on interviews and border-thinking frameworks, the study highlights the experiences of six bilingual coaches navigating South Korea's sociolinguistic landscape. These coaches serve as vital agents of change, advocating for the cultural and linguistic rights of migrant women and their families. They localize bilingual education practices for diverse families while resisting the pressures of Korean-only ideologies. In doing so, they empower themselves and their communities, fostering solidarity among marginalized women. This study underscores the importance of incorporating heritage perspectives into bilingual education and calls for greater recognition of localized knowledge systems within migration contexts.

Work-integrated Language Learning: Insights from Sweden

For many migrants, integrating into a new society requires navigating the dual challenges of acquiring a new language and developing vocational skills. The second study in this issue focuses on Sweden's innovative combination courses, which merge language learning with vocational training. Specifically, it examines a program centered on teaching Swedish alongside cleaning skills, where students participate in workplace apprenticeships that integrate theoretical and practical learning.

Using boundary crossing as an analytical lens, the study observes how a workplace supervisor creates a boundary practice that bridges vocational and linguistic training. The supervisor incorporates two hours of theoretical language study into each workday, allowing students to develop oral and written communication skills in tandem with vocational competencies. Over time, this practice begins to resemble formal education, offering a structured framework for students to succeed in both domains. This case study provides valuable insights into the role of supervisors in fostering linguistic and professional development, emphasizing the potential of work-integrated learning to facilitate migrant integration.

Navigating Multilingualism: Japanese Third-culture Kids in Singapore

The third study explores the experiences of Japanese expatriate students in Singapore, focusing on their English language development within the context of third-culture identity. Using comparative case studies, the research examines three 16-year-old Japanese students enrolled in different types of schools—an international school, a Japanese school, and a local Singaporean school. The study evaluates how the language used in school, social settings, and media consumption, along with individual motivation, shapes the students' English proficiency.

Findings reveal that while school language, social interactions, and media exposure act as enabling factors for language development, the use of Japanese as the home language neither hinders nor supports the acquisition of English. The study also uncovers pedagogical differences across school types, offering insights into how varying educational approaches impact multilingual development. These findings highlight the intricate dynamics of language learning among third-culture kids and the need for targeted strategies to support their linguistic and cultural transitions.

Bridging Themes: Migration, Multilingualism, and Educational Innovation

Collectively, these three studies present a nuanced picture of migration and language education, illustrating how linguistic and cultural diversity can be both a challenge and a resource. In South Korea, the Bilingual Coaching Program demonstrates how migrant heritage knowledge can empower marginalized populations and challenge monolingual ideologies. In Sweden, combination courses exemplify the integration of language and vocational training as a pathway to migrant inclusion.

Finally, the study on Japanese third-culture kids in Singapore sheds light on the factors influencing multilingual development in expatriate contexts.

These findings resonate with broader discussions on the need for inclusive and adaptive educational policies that address the complexities of migration. They also underscore the importance of localized and context-sensitive approaches to language education, particularly in under-researched settings. As migration continues to reshape global societies, these studies provide critical insights into how education systems can better serve linguistically diverse populations.

This issue of *Migration and Language Education* invites readers to reflect on the evolving relationship between migration and language education, encouraging further exploration of innovative practices and policies that bridge linguistic, cultural, and educational divides.