Concepts for managing linguistic diversity in schools of South Tyrol

PhD research project of Dana Engel

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Contents

1. Background
2. State of the art
3. Research objectives, research questions
4. Research design and methodology
5. Expected results and relevance
6. Work in progress impressions
1. Background: my research interests

- Language politics
- Educational linguistics
- Multilingualism research
- Didactics of multilingualism

Managing linguistic diversity at schools in South Tyrol
1. Background: research dimensions

- **Multilingualism in education**
  - EU language policies
  - assimilationist vs. pluralistic approaches

- **Minority regions with good practice**
  - majority and minority languages
  - «old» and «new» minorities

- **South Tyrol as a complex example**
  - majority and minority languages
  - recent migration processes
  - concepts for managing linguistic diversity?
1. Background: South Tyrol

• **Historical development**
  ◦ long-embattled border region
  ◦ Second Statute of Autonomy 1972

• **Linguistic groups**
  ◦ German / Italian / Ladin language group
  ◦ separate structures in education sector
  ◦ ethnic proportion, bi-/trilingualism exam

• **Language barometer 2014**
  ◦ “South Tyrol has many resources to be tapped in“
  ◦ dialect for social integration and identification with the region
  ◦ good language competences as a basis for living together
2. State of the art

- **Studying multilingualism in South Tyrol**
  - Dialect(s) / Standard(s) (Egger, Lanthaler), Pluricentricity of German (Hofer)
  - Language biographies of plurilingual South Tyroleans (Franceschini, Dal Negro)
  - L1 and L2 competences of high school students (KOLIPSI project, EURAC)
  - Integrated Language Didactics (Gelmi, Saxalber) (Verra, Cathomas)
  - Supporting students with a migrant background (Faust, Cennamo)
  - Developments in language learning and support (Scochi, Karadar, Frigo)
  - Curriculum for multilingualism (Patscheider, Schwienbacher)

**Integrating languages at school ↔ Didactics of multilingualism(?)**
2. State of the art: South Tyrol

EURAC Project “One school, many languages” (SMS)

• **Duration:** 01/2012 – 12/2018

• **Partners:** EURAC Bolzano, Competence Centre / Linguistic centres, German school board, Italian school board, Ladin school board

• **Aims:**
  - Surveying linguistic diversity at South Tyrolean schools
  - Promotion of language awareness and language valorisation
  - Scientific monitoring of school projects and development
  - Establishing multilingualism as an educational objective

• **Info:** [http://sms-project.eurac.edu](http://sms-project.eurac.edu)
2. State of the art: South Tyrol

Pre-study for the project “One school, many languages“ (2012)

Facts & Data

- lack of data on linguistic repertoires at schools
- “immigration background“ as unreliable criterion
- > 25% of students with an “extended“ ling. repertoire
- both students and teachers are multilingual; while the schools continue to appear and work monolingually

Models & Methods

- wide range of concepts and ideas for dealing with multilingualism in schools
- lack of methods for integrating both “old“ and “new“ languages in class
- models rarely based on CLIL or ILD approaches
- no systematisation, hardly any exchange

Representations

- multilingualism seen as ‘institutional trilingualism’
- “new“ languages mostly underrepresented
- positive attitude towards own multilingualism vs. problematisation of multi-lingualism at school
- students very interested in multilingual learning

great demand in school and teaching development based on principles of multilingual education
2. State of the art → my research interests

Pre-study for the project “One school, many languages” (2012)

**Facts & Data**
- language didactics?
- language education policies?

**Models & Methods**
- wide range of concepts and ideas for dealing with multilingualism in schools
- lack of methods for integrating both “old” and “new” languages in class
- models rarely based on CLIL or ILD approaches
- no systematisation, hardly any exchange

**Representations**
- concepts, representations, terminology?
- stakeholders, implementation?
- great demand in implementing development-based on pre-existing multicultural education

Dana Engel, Linguistic Colloquium Language, Region, Identity
Academy of German-Italian Studies, Merano, 15 Oct. 2015
3. Research objectives, research questions

Objective: Developing a systematised overview of present concepts for managing “old“ and “new“ multilingualism at schools in South Tyrol as a Grounded Theory of approaches, conditions, stakeholders, benefits, and challenges

Research Questions:

(1) Which concepts, approaches and methods for managing multilingualism exist in schools of all three language groups in South Tyrol?

(2) How established are these concepts, approaches and methods, why and how have they been developed and who profits from them?

(3) To what extent do these concepts apply for both “old“ and “new“ multilingualism at South Tyrolean schools?
4. Research design and methodology

- **Objective:** Developing a *Grounded Theory* on concepts of managing multilingualism at schools in South Tyrol
  
  - integrating, **qualitative** research methodology
  
  - “closing the embarrassing gap between theory and empirical research” (Glaser/Strauss 1967)
  
  - “explaining phenomena within a *theoretical frame which is developing* during the course of the research itself“ (Strauss/Corbin 1996)
  
  - “constant **comparative method**“: theory adaption
  
4. Research design and methodology

• **Objective:** Developing a *Grounded Theory* on concepts of managing multilingualism at schools in South Tyrol

• **Method:** defining the research gap; desk research & first theory draft; at least 2 – 3 phases of data collection in the education sphere of South Tyrol with interviews, documentation, questionnaires, and class observation; developing and adapting the theory

• **Data:** qualitative and (complementary) quantitative data collected at the 3 school boards & 18 schools of all levels & linguistic groups

• **Analysis:** according to GTM, using ATLAS.ti for in-depth analysis (transcription, orientation, coding, developing categories, generating & adapting a model/theory, forming networks)
5. Expected results and relevance

• presenting a systematised **overview** of the current state of didactics of multilingualism at South Tyrolean schools

• creating a **data-based theory** for the development and establishment of concepts and approaches to manage both „old“ and “new“ multilingualism in South Tyrolean schools of all three language groups
... first impressions and comparisons:

**group**
- **German-speaking schools**
- **Italian-speaking schools**
- **schools in the Ladin valleys**

**concepts & approaches**
- T: mothertongue, second language, English, other
- projects, support, (CLIL), (Integrated Lang. Didactics)

**stakeholders**
- school board, principal, teachers?
- school board, principal, coordinators?
- school board, inspectors, university?
- principal, teachers?
- families?

**old / new ML**
- school languages, dialect
- projects with B-S-C, Spanish, French, Russian
- language cafés

- focus on German (and English), team teaching
- projects with other languages?

- all school languages
- evaluation of language competences, integrating all languages in class

Dana Engel, Linguistic Colloquium Language, Region, Identity
Academy of German-Italian Studies, Merano, 15 Oct. 2015
... second impressions and comparisons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Types</th>
<th>Concepts &amp; Approaches</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Old &amp; New ML</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>focus on languages</td>
<td>- ‘exponentiation’ of languages, many projects</td>
<td>- school boards, principals, individual teachers</td>
<td>- school languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>periphery</td>
<td>- trying out new approaches of integrating lang. didactics</td>
<td>- principals with staff, often w/o school boards</td>
<td>- single lang. projects</td>
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<td>whole-school curr.</td>
<td>- Integrated language didactics, joint planning</td>
<td>- school boards, principals, scientific monitoring.</td>
<td>- dialect(s) (GER/IT)</td>
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<td>high level of diversity</td>
<td>- fast integration, involving parents, intercult. projects</td>
<td>- principals with teachers for language support</td>
<td>- school languages</td>
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<td>focus on exchange</td>
<td>- joint didactic concepts and projects involving 2 schools</td>
<td>- principals, teachers, involving parents?</td>
<td>- multilingual projects</td>
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<td>- support in school lang.</td>
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5. Expected results and relevance

• presenting a systematised **overview** of the current state of didactics of multilingualism at South Tyrolean schools

• creating a **data-based theory** for the development and establishment of concepts and approaches to manage both „old“ and „new“ multilingualism in South Tyrolean schools of all three language groups

• developing a **transparent instrument** for feedback, reference and further practical and theoretical work

• providing a **feedback to individual schools** on the current situation of their linguistic diversity and models & methods for managing multilingualism

• contributing to **theory and practice in didactics of multilingualism** in increasingly diverse contexts such as South Tyrol
Selected references


