



SLA between empowerment and gate keeping

I aim to complement the relationship of integration and language with sociological and pedagogical discussions about integration. Arguing that language is the one key to measure integration into society, as suggested in the integration-through-language-discourse (Busch, 2017) is a fundamental contradiction to Gardner's (1985) integrative approach to second language acquisition (SLA): Instead of reflecting learners' personal aspirations and desires (Kramersch, 2009), SLA is turned into a restraining and gate-keeping tool for different areas of society (Krumm, 2016). I argue that this contradiction evolved due to a theoretical lack of the concept of integration in applied linguistics. As a result, learner and (target) language community are accepted as separate entities: The learner is expected to integrate into a given language community. Not only are those notions of individual and community as given entities outdated in times of globalization, the unbalanced focus on the learner as the one doing the integration contradicts sociological and pedagogical principles. Sociology, for example, treats individual and community as an inseparable pair (Elias, 1970). Integration is hence a fundamental task for all of a community's members: Instead of one learner facing one community, it is several individuals who jointly create and shape the community they desire to live in together. In addition, being an L1-speaker of a particular language is not a freeride to escape the task of integration in a multilingual world where the speech community is in flux as well. Therefore, SLA has to consider multilingual realities and enable individuals to mediate between their personal aspirations and the societal constraints they may face.

For this endeavour, a theoretical foundation of the concept of integration in sociology and pedagogy (Freire, 1967; Treibel, 2008) is promising for the practice of SLA: It would both allow to understand language learning-itineraries based on the learners' lifeworld and require considering learner agency as a crucial element to SLA. This could enable language teachers to include the individual's relationship with their environment into their practices and to address multiple belongings. Complementing applied linguistics with a theoretical foundation of 'integration' renders SLA practices political and asks what potential implications arise for both learners and teachers out of that endeavour.

References

- Busch, B. (2017). *Mehrsprachigkeit* (2nd ed.). Wien: Facultas.
- Elias, N. (1970). *Was ist Soziologie?* München: Beltz Juventa.
- Freire, P. (1967). *Educação como prática da liberdade*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning. The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold
- Kramersch, C. (2009). *The multilingual subject*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Krumm, H.-J. (2016). Sprachenpolitik und das Lernen und Lehren von Sprachen. In E. Burwitz-Melzer, G. Mehlhorn, C. Riemer, K.-R. Bausch & H.-J. Krumm (Eds.), *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht* (6th ed., pp. 45-51). Tübingen: A. Francke.
- Treibel, A. (2008). Migration. In N. Baur, H. Korte, M. Löw & M. Schroer (Eds.), *Handbuch Soziologie* (pp. 295-317). Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.