

Migrants, language and motility

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MIME Conference "Interdisciplinarity and the future
of multilingualism research"

Young researchers' perspective

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The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme under grant agreement No. 613344 (Project MIME).



The case for motility I

- Concept from biology
- Urban sociology: Kaufmann et al. (2004)
- *Potential* mobility
- Connecting socio-linguistic and migration theory
- Three characteristics:
 - Access (e.g. linguistic infrastructure)
 - Competence (e.g. language skills)
 - Appropriation (perceived skills and mobility)



The case for motility II

- **Advantages**

- Comprehensive migration analysis
- Studying the interplay between integration and migration
- Accounts for policy effects on mobility options
- Focus on transnationalism



Field-work

- Three countries (Sweden, The Netherlands, France)
 - Reason: each represents a ‘national model’ for integration
- Two immigrant groups (Poles and Turks)
 - EU and Non-EU
- 83 interviews made, approx: 20-40 minutes each.
 - Main topics
 - Perceived language skills and language use
 - Migration history
 - Transnationalism
 - Intra-EU mobility
 - Language education and citizenship courses



Some conclusions

- Mother tongue skills could improve migrants' motility in EU
- Government discouraging bilingualism has very little negative effects on migrants' motility. Government promoting bilingualism (i.e. teachers promoting bilingualism) has strong positive effects
- Host language education poorly organized.
- Mother tongue education poorly organized
- All communities engage frequently in transnational activities. Consequence: linguistic assimilation is complicated to enforce.
- Mother tongue skills improve motility for half of the groups
- Low socio-economic status equals little interest in cultural aspects of language skills. "Erst das Fressen und dann die Kultur".



Future of multilingualism research

- Engage with concepts such as motility
 - Bridging theoretical gap between migration and socio-linguistics
- More research incorporating perspectives of immigrants



Thank you for your attention!

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