

IS MULTILINGUAL LIFE PRACTICE OF PUPILS A POTENTIAL FOCUS FOR GEOGRAPHY LESSONS?

Nikolaus REPPLINGER

University of Cologne, Institute for Geography Education, Cologne, Germany
n.repplinger@uni-koeln.de

Alexandra BUDKE

University of Cologne, Institute for Geography Education, Cologne, Germany
alexandra.budke@uni-koeln.de

Abstract

It is undeniable that societies as well as our geography classrooms become more and more heterogenous. This change requires new perspectives on how to teach and learn geography. Especially in geography education and its interculturally connecting curricula multilingualism appears to offer several advantages over strictly monolingually delivered lessons.

The aim of the article is to grasp the reality and potential of multilingual teaching and learning in the subject of geography in German secondary schools as an anchor for further studies on that matter. This article does that by presenting the results of a survey on the current status of multilingual education in the German geography curriculum as well as on the multilingual life practices and experiences of pupils with migration history. While German geography lessons are curriculumwise intended to be taught almost entirely in German, our survey revealed that pupils have positive expectations for multilingual education. In addition, the acquisition of language awareness through mediation tasks and codeswitching exercises might support identity-related and geographical education processes. More specifically, multilingualism could be used as a bedrock for a reflective approach towards multiperspectivity in geographical education.

Keywords: *multilingualism, multilingual practices, geography education, Germany*

1. INTRODUCTION - RELEVANCE OF MULTILINGUALISM IN GEOGRAPHY EDUCATION

In 2017, approximately one third of all pupils in Germany were from a migration background (see Statistisches Bundesamt, 2017) as a result of current and past immigration to Germany: "In the age groups particularly relevant to education, the proportion of persons with a migration background is 35% (under 10 years old) and around 30% (10 to under 20 years old)" (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2016, p. 161; BMBF, 2016; Statistisches Bundesamt, 2016). This migration background has resulted in widespread multilingualism among pupils, a significant part of whom use both non-German family language(s) (33.6%) and German in their everyday life. However, this linguistic competence is rarely employed in lessons in school, the majority of which are exclusively taught in the German language. Duarte et al. (2013, p. 79-94) demonstrated that in 59 hours of social science teaching in Germany only 4% of the 1,716 determined language interactions did not take place in German or in

mixed languages. German is therefore the dominant teaching language, a concept that Gogolin refers to as the "monolingual habitus" of the German school (Gogolin et al., 2012, p. 79). Consequently, command of the German language is a vital prerequisite for educational success in the local school system (cf. Kniffka & Roelcke, 2016, p. 51).

Elley's (1992) analysis of the International Reading Literacy Study demonstrated that fourth-graders with a migration background, on average, have a lower reading performance than their classmates without a migration background, an insight further confirmed by the study of reading comprehension and reading habits of German pupils by Lehmann, Peek, Pieper, & von Stritzky (1995). Studies by Schwippert, Bos, & Lankes, (2003), Schwippert, Hornberg, Freiberg, & Stubbe (2007) and Schwippert, Wendt & Tarelli (2012) further confirmed the results of the International Primary School Reading Study (IGLU) as a follow-up study. Children with a migration background were also found to be more likely to be enrolled in the lower secondary school ("Hauptschule") and less likely enrolled in the higher secondary school ("Gymnasium") compared to children without a migration background, and are therefore also less likely to graduate with a high degree (Budke and Kuckuck, 2017 in conjunction with DIPF, 2016, pp. 173-175).

The lesser educational success of pupils with a migration background compared to pupils without a migration background may be due to the multilingual competences of the former group being largely ignored, underestimated or not sufficiently utilized in schools, and that only insufficient subject-specific language support is being made available. In all school subjects from primary school to secondary school, better (subject) language support is therefore required (see Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2016, p. 187). At the same time, novel teaching concepts should be developed which better take the multilingual competences of pupils into account so that educational equity between pupils with and without a migration background may be increased.

This article postulates that the employment and encouragement of multilingualism in the classroom offers several distinct advantages over monolingual teaching, in particular for geography lessons. By using different languages in a way that is appropriate to the specific subject, situation and target group, pupils' language skills can be promoted holistically. In addition the ability of translation and code switching could support the attainment of language awareness and strengthen the identity-related and geographical educational process (cf. Weißenburg, 2016, pp. 33-49). Furthermore, multilingualism may improve the awareness of multiperspectivity in geography lessons (cf. *ibid.*, p. 33). In recent years, multilingualism has increasingly been discussed as a useful resource for a variety of subjects (cf. e.g. Weißenburg, 2015, p. 45-49; Duarte et al., 2013, p. 79). For example, sources in different languages (e.g. newspaper articles) could be evaluated in geography lessons, while access to linguistically coded spatial conceptions by people from other national and cultural backgrounds could be utilized.

2. RESEARCH QUESTION

In published research, there is currently no study investigating the spread of multilingualism in pupils' everyday lives and its use in geography lessons. Nevertheless, from the limited research available, the following central research questions arise:

- To what extent do pupils with a migrant background utilize their multilingual skills to cope with everyday life outside of school?
- How relevant are the multilingual skills of this particular group in geography lessons?
- What experiences have these pupils had when using their family's primary language(s) in geography lessons?

- What expectations do pupils have for future multilingual teaching?

Following an analysis of the state of international research on multilingual geography teaching, the article will outline the methodological considerations behind this study as well as the results of a survey concerned with the questions posed above as provided by a group of pupils in German schools. Finally, a discussion on whether and how multilingual competences might be employed to improve geography lessons concludes this article.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 MULTILINGUAL TEACHING

Due to the global migration patterns and specifically increased immigration into Germany, research into the effects of these patterns has received renewed attention in recent years (cf. Weißenburg, 2016, pp. 12-13). Likewise, the consideration and use of pupil's multilingualism in teaching has only recently received scholarly attention (cf. Gogolin, 2013, pp. 347-348). Simultaneously, the multilingualism of teachers and its influence on education has become the focus of studies (cf. Lo, 2015; Creese, 2010; Chikiwa & Schäfer, 2016; Morwaski & Budke, 2017). Despite this increase in research on the subject, there still remain significant differences in performance of German language skills between pupils with and without a migration background of different types of school, as was found in the PISA study (cf. PISA-Konsortium Deutschland, 2007, p. 18), DESI study (cf. Hesse, et. al., 2008, p. 227) and SOKKE study (cf. Heinze et al., 2011, p. 25). The changes in the language practices of everyday life have raised the question whether and to what extent "traditional scientific conceptualizations can still capture the cultural and linguistic texture of contemporary societies" (Gogolin, 2013, pp. 339-340), and what this might mean for future concepts of teaching. Multilingualism is an individual and social phenomenon and the global social rule, not an exception (cf. Hornsby, 2014, p. 75). However, no uniform definition and conceptualization of this phenomenon has materialized (cf. Coulmas, 2017, pp. 26-40). The term multilinguality should be classified as an "umbrella term" due to its diversity of terms (cf. Todeva & Cenoz, 2009, p. 18; Baker, 2011, p. 2-3) and its inconsistent boundaries, which include plurilingualism, translanguaging and bilingualism (cf. Androutsopoulos, 2018, p. 200). The roots of pedagogical multilingualism research lie in linguistics and linguistic sociology. The multilingualism of pupils is addressed in foreign language teaching concepts (English/French), psychology and educational sciences, mathematics, and natural sciences (cf. Androutsopoulos, 2018, p.193-195; Coulmas, 2017, p. 41). According to Weißenburg (2013, p.31), cooperation between all school subjects in the sense of a "language across the curriculum approach" is required in order to advance multilingualism. In doing so, an increased appreciation and promotion of all languages spoken by pupils at school may be achieved (cf. Weißenburg, 2013, p. 31). According to Budke & Kuckuck (2017 p. 8), five interdisciplinary discourses on the topic of "Language in Specialized Education" are to be differentiated, which influence the geography-focused teaching discussion of multilingualism. In the relevant discourse "Integration through language promotion", which is mainly conducted in the subjects 'German as secondary language' (DaZ), educational sciences and subject teaching (e.g. Kniffka & Roelcke, 2016; Michalak et al., 2015; Becker-Mrotzek et al., 2013), the focus is placed upon language promotion and school integration of pupils with DaZ. Studies in subjects such as biology, history, geography and mathematics have proven the positive effect of multilingualism and corresponding support programs on language knowledge and metalinguistic language awareness, self-confidence and learning performance of pupils (Hofer & Jessner, 2016, p. 3ff). Hofer & Jessner (2016, p. 5ff.) investigated the effects of early multilingual education on lan-

guage knowledge and metalinguistic language awareness in a study with primary school pupils in South Tyrol. The intervention group were given teaching tasks in their primary language, Italian, and in their secondary language, German, while the traditionally taught pupils received only lessons in Italian and six hours in German per week. Subsequently, all subjects underwent a language awareness test in their primary language. The results reveal a significant positive effect of early multilingual learning compared to regular monolingual teaching (cf. Hofer & Jessner, 2016, p. 8f.). Bourne, 2013, pp. 47ff.) examined six English schools in which pupils with minority languages successfully completed exams. Pupils who received bilingual instruction in different subjects showed significantly more self-confidence and participated better in class than pupils taught monolingually. Bilingual teachers more fully realized the competences of pupils with minority languages than those of monolingual pupils. In terms of language awareness, all pupils benefited from bilingual teaching. Duarte & Buehrig (2013, p. 245) examined the language choices of two girls while these analyzed the text of a speech in history class. During the exercise the girls spoke both German and their language of origin, Russian. A functional-pragmatic use of both languages was observed. In a further case study with pupils of Turkish origin by Meyer & Prediger (2011, p. 193-199), it was shown that the use of a pupil's primary language is advantageous when teaching mathematics. In semi-open clinical interviews in bilingual settings they observed 22 sixth grade level pupils who all spoke Turkish as their primary language but had been raised in Germany. The pupils were questioned about mathematical problems they had previously attempted to solve alongside native German speakers. Results indicated that lessons conducted in the Turkish language significantly increased learning performance and participation in German interaction (cf. Gogolin et al., 2012) and Duarte et al., 2013).

Overall, the number of studies on multilingual teaching practice is currently limited, and almost no analyses available have focused specifically on geography teaching. Weißenburg (2016) developed a model for multilingual teaching sequences in subject classes on the basis of a language-sensitive, appreciative approach. In the qualitative-explorative study, the effects of this teaching were examined with 20 eight-year-old pupils from Baden-Württemberg (cf. Weißenburg, 2016, p. 101). Essential basic prerequisites for multilingual concept development processes were established: The reference to the "world of life" and "experience and trust" [...] "reflecting, comparing and problematizing" and "learning awareness, language awareness, independence and the development of (language) spaces" (Weißenburg, 2016, pp. 3 and 123) were found to promote the multilingual competences of pupils and their application in the classroom. Additionally, Schöber (2017) investigated language practice in Italian geography classes. In this multi-perspective study, language skills, reading habits and attitudes towards geography teaching, teachers and reading books were collected and observations and analyses of pupils' texts recorded. One of the main results of this study was that although teaching was generally monolingual in Italian, pupils predominantly spoke their primary language outside of the classroom (cf. Schöber, 2017, p. 455). However, the communication of pupils in several languages in class has not been uniformly assessed positively in the school context. Migration-related multilingualism - in particular when the languages in question are considered to be less prestigious - is rarely taken into account when devising curricula and often not highly valued in school: "Linguistic heterogeneity is seen here rather as a flaw and often bears the mark 'risky'" (Wildemann, 2008, p. 15). Although there is an increasing acceptance of linguistic diversity in society, bilingualism and multilingualism in teaching are at times viewed critically from a scientific perspective (cf. Hofer & Jessner, 2016, p. 1). This controversy is described, for example, by Gogolin (2013) on the basis of two exemplary meta-studies on bilingual school education programs in the USA and Canada. The positive (learning) effects of bilingual teaching models on the reading ability of English/Spanish-speaking pupils in the USA was demonstrated for 17 of the programs studied

(Slavin & Cheung, 2005). Rossell & Kuder (2005), conversely, did not uncover any advantages in their meta-analysis of studies on the effects of bilingual support models for children with a migration background. They concluded that the assumed advantages of multilingual teaching can mostly be attributed to political-ideological demands, and the authors accordingly recommended monolingual teaching in English. Normative preconceptions were considered to wield a large influence on research results and thus on the conception of language education for bi- and multilingual children and young people (cf. Gogolin, 2013, pp. 349-350). A German study found that certain Turkish language skills do not necessarily lead to better learning outcomes in the German language (cf. Dollmann & Kristen, 2010). Among other factors including multilingualism, cognitive skills, mathematical performance and reading skills of third graders were measured. Knowledge of German and Turkish was distributed heterogeneously in the study group. The performance of the linguistically marginalized and monolingually segmented primary school children was found to be worse in all areas when compared to that of the competent bilingual and assimilated children. As expected, children with a better knowledge of the German language have greater advantages in the classroom (cf. Dollmann & Kristen, 2010, pp. 143-144). While the relevance of multilingual language skills for teaching in various subjects is increasingly being observed, there remains a lack of representative studies that measure an individual's different levels of competence in family and teaching language, which may further help determining the effect of speaking an additional language alongside German in schools.

The importance of multilingual language skills and their appearance in the media is also reflected in the recent focus of integration research on the topic of "migrants and media". Since the media fulfill important functions in the integration of migrants into society as a whole, interest in media use, especially among migrants, has increased (cf. BAMF, 2010, p. 10). Previous studies have largely focused on the significance of language use in media (television and radio, Internet) and its utilization by migrants of Turkish origin and, if applicable, by (late) ethnic German repatriates, as well as by people aged 14 and above (cf. BAMF, 2010, p.17-19). However, there exist no studies that focus on media use and its significance for speech understanding in relation to multilingual teaching.

In order to overcome this oversight, our research investigated which media are consumed in which language in everyday life by pupils in order to determine which specific language skills are available to them and how these may potentially be employed in geography lessons.

3.2 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.2.1 Collection of data - qualitative questionnaires

The aim of our empirical study was to examine the importance of multilingual skills for coping with out-of-school everyday life of pupils with a migration background, and the significance of these skills in geography lessons. The study was designed to be quantitative to obtain basic knowledge on the nature and dissemination of multilingualism in pupils' everyday school and out-of-school life. In particular, the pupils' expectations of multilingual geography lessons and their experiences when using their family language(s) in everyday school life were discussed. Data were collected from a lower secondary school, a secondary modern school ("Realschule") and a ninth grade of a grammar school, or higher secondary school in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). All of the participating schools are located in urban areas, while only the secondary modern school was an all boys' school. The data were collected by means of a structured, written, anonymous and voluntary survey using a standardized questionnaire (cf. Döring & Bortz, 2016, p. 24), which the pupils received from the teachers and completed in class. The questionnaire designed for the pupils included introductory questions

about age, gender, type of school, class level, federal state, and the test person's place of birth as well as that of their parents. The questionnaire was divided into seven topic blocks. The first block included questions about the school background. The second block was designed to determine how the family language background was composed, i.e. whether one or more languages are spoken in the family and which language(s) are preferred by the interviewees. The third block aimed to establish how well the language skills of the pupils surveyed had developed according to their self-assessment. The fourth block of questions dealt with the influence on geography teaching if pupils were allowed to speak a language other than German. The fifth thematic block focused on the extent of negative or positive experiences of pupils at school due to their family language, and whether there are school situations in which respondents are inhibited to speak their family languages. In addition, the questions in this block were designed to establish whether pupils had already experienced specialist support in school as a result of their non-German family language. The sixth block attempted to determine where and when the pupils spoke which language(s). The specific environments and times included the school, schoolyard, sports ground (after school), cafe, disco/dance club, supermarket/shopping center, leisure time, during meetings with friends, while browsing the internet, and during geography lessons. The pupils had the possibility to indicate which language and language combination they used in each situation. The final, seventh block of the questionnaire asked the pupils about their media use, with the aim of revealing in which language and language combination the media they interacted with was composed.

This method was chosen due to the large number of pupils asked for information over a relatively short time. A copied questionnaire has the distinct advantage that it can be completed in a classroom context without great organizational effort. This type of survey, in contrast to qualitative interviews, allowed the pupils more time to engage with the questions and to therefore provide well thought out answers, ultimately leading to an increased quality of the survey results. The risk of a low response rate was reduced by visiting participating schools in advance and providing an information event for teachers, pupils and parents to present the research topic and implementation. The teachers who conducted the survey received the questionnaire in advance and each question was discussed in terms of possible comprehension difficulties. In addition, the questionnaire was presented to a pupil from each participating school as part of a preliminary test to ensure that all questions could be understood and to determine the length of time needed to undertake the class-based survey. Socio-demographic data (independent variables) were: age, school type and class level, federal state, country of birth/origin (of the pupil and their parents), length of stay in Germany, and nationality. Dependent variables were: language skills in non-German family language(s), pupils' interest in speaking their non-German family language(s) in geography lessons, experience in the use of non-German family language(s) at school, and everyday use of family language(s).

3.2.2 *Data analysis*

A total of 574 pupils participated in the study, 36.59% of whom have a non-German family language, i.e. 210 pupils. These percentage results correspond approximately with the percentage of pupils with a migration background (33.6%) provided in the statistical overview of Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (2017). The majority of the evaluation presented here refers specifically to those pupils that speak a non-German family language.

Statistical evaluation of the empirical data was carried out using the SPSS statistics program (version PASW 25). For this purpose, the individual questionnaire elements were each created as variables in SPSS. The questionnaires were provided with a sequential identification number, and for this purpose a variable was added in SPSS to codify the questionnaires. These conditions allowed us to check data in case of anomalies or missing values in a questionnaire data set (Raab-Steiner & Benesch, 2010). In addition, a variable was created in SPSS for each participating school and for each class level, therefore allowing for evaluation to be undertaken for the three participating schools individually as well as in comparison to each other.

4. RESULTS

4.1 MULTILINGUAL LIFE PRACTICE OF PUPILS

4.1.1 Languages spoken at home

Arabic was the most frequently noted non-German family language (20.9%), followed closely by Turkish (20.5%), then Russian (7.6%), Polish and German-Polish (5.7% each), German-Russian (4.3%) and German-Portuguese (3.3%). Other family languages were represented by <2% (e.g. French, Italian, ligála, German-French, German-English, Spanish). The statistical overview shows that the most common nationalities of foreign pupils in North Rhine-Westphalia are Turkish (17.4%), Syrian (12.8%), Iraqi (5.3%), and Polish (6.4%) (cf. Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2017, p. 173). Overall, the pupils surveyed rated their language skills highly in their respective family languages (see Fig.1). Most pupils believed they could understand their family language very well (87.1%). Slightly fewer pupils rated their ability to speak their family language as "very good" or "good" (overall: 75%). On the other hand, only 45.2% of those surveyed rated their writing skills in their family language as "very good" and "good". Reading skills in the family language were assessed similarly to writing skills.

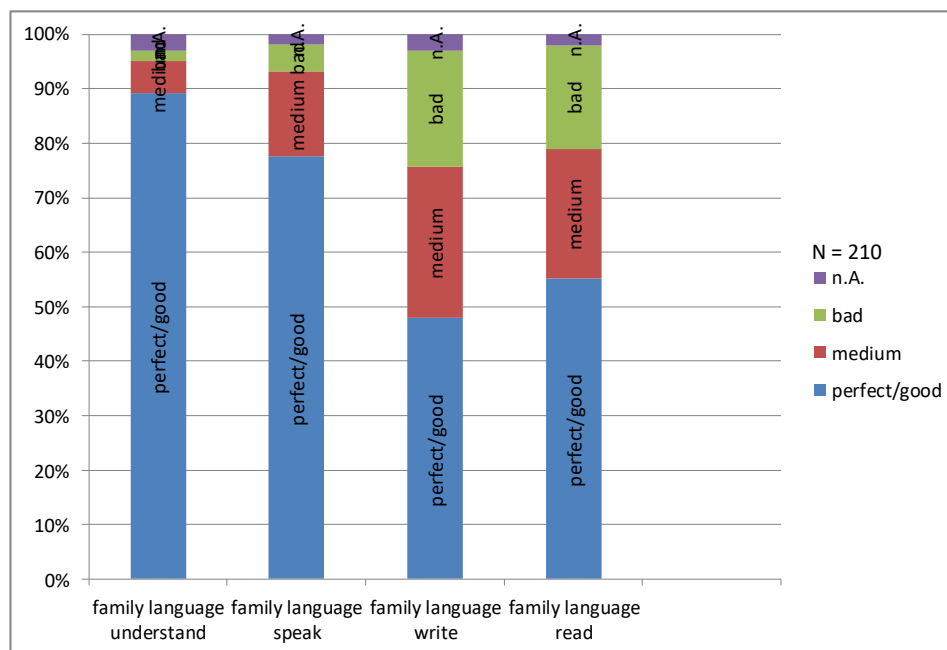


Figure 1. Language skills in the non-German family language (understand, speak, write and read)

These data indicate that the majority of pupils believe they can speak and understand language much better in their non-German family languages than reading and writing these. In their families, pupils noted that they interacted verbally in their family language(s) on a daily basis and were therefore experienced in understanding and speaking the language. Reading and writing skills, on the other hand, were mainly acquired in a school context or in outside lessons in the original language. A large portion of pupils who could read and write their respective non-German family language had experience of this language prior to migration, i.e. they were born abroad and attended school there before migrating. Yet not all pupils who considered themselves capable of writing and reading their family language very well had personally experienced migration, leaving the source for their competence indeterminate. One possible explanation, however, might lie in the fact that their parents attach particular importance to literacy in their family language and either have educated their children themselves or have allowed them to attend classes in their native language elsewhere.

4.1.2 Pupils' experiences with the use of family language at school

Overall, 63% of the surveyed pupils with non-German family language did not recall any negative experiences at school when using their non-German family language(s). The majority of respondents (63%) also have no inhibitions speaking their non-German family language(s) at school, while 24.8% of respondents did report such inhibitions. This may stem from the assumption that their family language(s) do not belong to the so-called prestige languages and instead are counted among the migrant languages (Turkish, Polish, Russian, Arabic, Albanian) with relatively low cultural and social standing. However, such experiences were influenced also by the type of school they attended.

While 41% of the lower secondary school pupils reported to have had "no" or "less" negative school experiences with their non-German family language, only 20% of the secondary modern school pupils and a very small group of higher secondary school pupils (approx. 2%) responded similarly. The question "Are there situations at school in which you are inhibited from speaking your non-German family language(s)" was answered with "not at all" or "is/are less true" by approximately 40% of lower secondary school pupils, while 21% of secondary modern school pupils responded negatively. The proportion of higher secondary school pupils surveyed that gave this response was extremely low, at approximately 0.5% and 1.5% (a total of approximately 2%). On the question "Have you ever experienced special appreciation at school because of your non-German family language(s)?" 27% of the lower secondary school pupils responded "is absolutely correct" or "is less true", while 16% of the secondary modern school pupils responded "is absolutely correct" or "is less true", and less than 1% of the higher secondary school pupils responded "is less true". On the one hand, an overall majority of 63% reported they have had no negative experiences or inhibitions at school due to their non-German family language(s); while on the other hand the results revealed that roughly a third of the lower secondary school pupils, a quarter of the secondary modern school pupils, and under one percent of the higher secondary school pupils reported appreciation of their non-German family language(s). Thus, both negative and positive experiences with non-German family languages appear to be rare.

4.1.3 Everyday use of family languages

In most of the specific locations surveyed (see Fig.3) around half of the respondents speak a non-German family language, and in none of the locations surveyed the family language is spoken exclusively by all respondents; in fact, half of the respondents speak German at the places surveyed. Between 15.2% and 28.6% of respondents at the schools surveyed alternate between German and their family language(s) and 16.7 - 20.7% of respondents speak their

family language, a practice referred to as code switching. Overall, most of the pupils surveyed spoke either German or German in combination with their respective family language(s) while in different environments of their everyday lives.

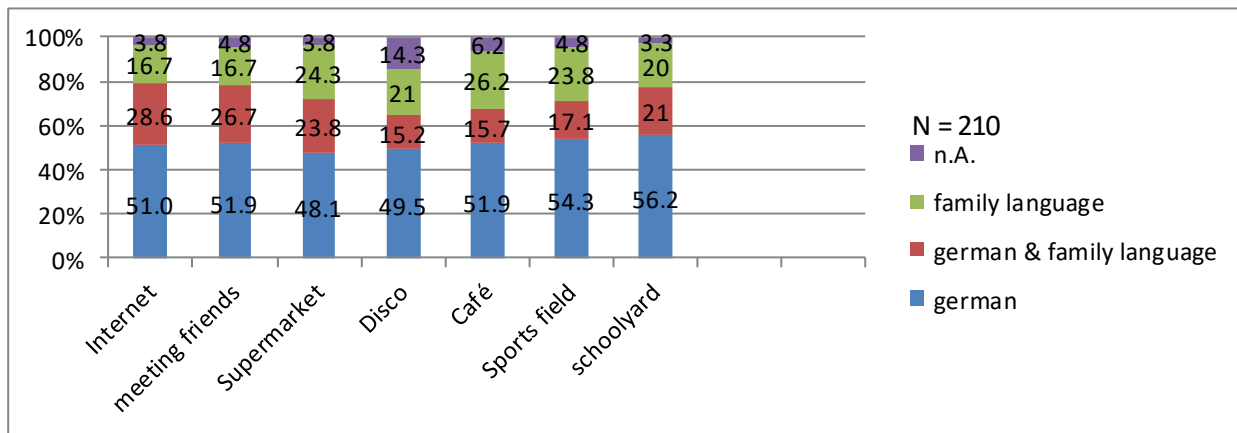


Figure 2. Everyday use of family language(s)

4.1.4 Media use and family languages

The evaluation of the study data on the use of languages in the consumption of print and electronic media by the pupils surveyed revealed the following results:

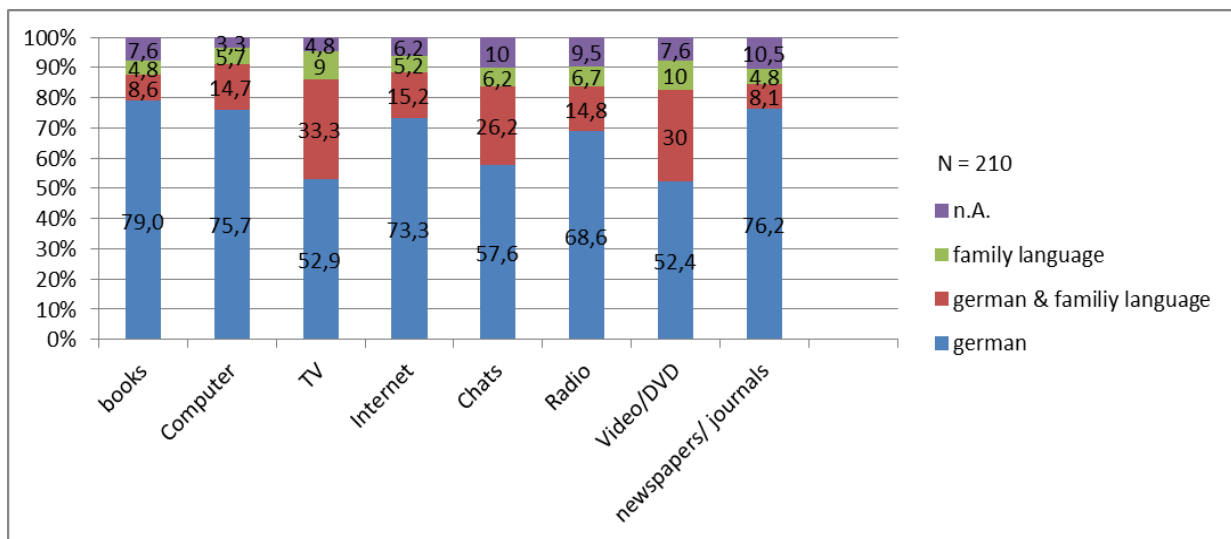


Figure 3. Media use and family language(s)

Most of the pupils surveyed responded that they read books in German (79%) (see Fig. 4), and a similar distribution was true for reading newspapers/magazines, as well as when using computers and the Internet. New media such as chats in social networks are used by 57.6% of multilingual pupils exclusively in the German language, while 26.2% employ a combination of German and their respective family language and 6,2 % chat mainly in their respective family language. So-called traditional media such as television, radio and video/DVDs are predominantly consumed in German (52.4%). The same applies to the new media forms, which are largely consumed in German and the respective family language (14.7-33.3%),

depending on the medium. Only a small percentage of 5.2 -10% consume traditional media exclusively in their respective family language.

4.2 CURRENT LANGUAGE USE IN GEOGRAPHY LESSONS

The multilingual pupils surveyed were found to speak exclusively German in geography lessons, confirming that their family languages do not play a role in geography class. These pupils mention four ways in which, in their opinion, multilingual geography lessons would be positively distinguished from monolingual German geography lessons. Most of the pupils expect such lessons to be more interesting, while multilingual teaching would also allow faster and more effective communication during group work, as a wider range of expressions would become available. Many pupils also predicted more of their own participation in class due to such an incipient multilingualism (cf. Fig.2). Conversely, 20.5% of the pupils surveyed were critical of the idea of multilingualism as they believed some pupils might take advantage of the opportunity to speak their non-German family language(s) in class to exchange information on subjects irrelevant to the lessons, due to the lack of control by the teachers. Another 9% of the pupils surveyed said that multilingual geography lessons would decrease their understanding of the German language; these pupils most likely fear that they would have fewer opportunities to employ and practice their German language skills in class.

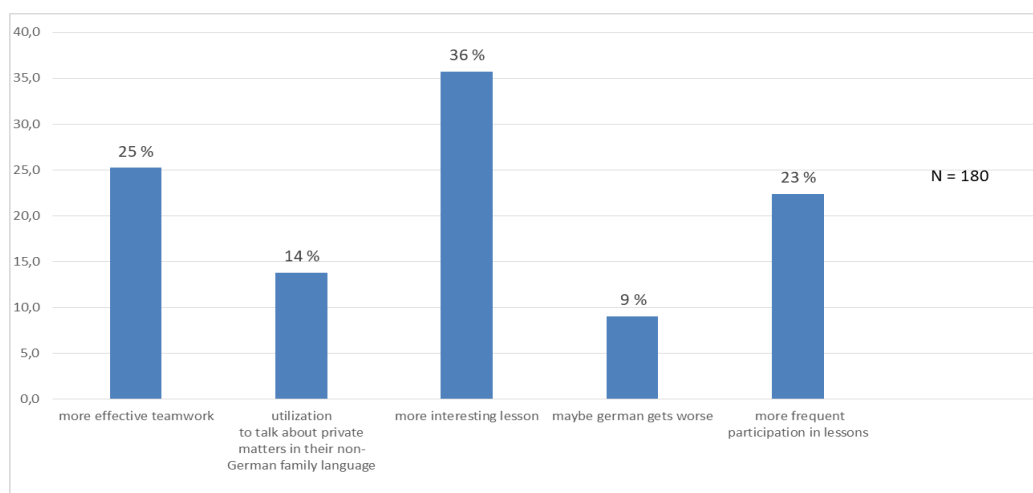


Figure 4. Pupils' expectations of multilingual geography teaching

In contrast to their multilingual classmates, the exclusively German-speaking pupils expressed six expectations for multilingual geography lessons. Like their fellow pupils, they expect more interesting lessons, more effective group work, as well as more frequent participation by pupils in lessons. In addition, these pupils also expressed a general curiosity for non-German languages as well as the expectation that they could improve their own foreign language skills. However, a small number of pupils expressed fear that they might not understand all of the content taught in multilingual lessons.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

For the majority of multilingual pupils the German language has become an integral part of their everyday lives, to the extent that they predominantly use German language media in their leisure time. A 2010 study by the Landesanstalt für Mediennutzung Nordrhein-Westfalen (LfM) which examined the "media use of young people with a migration back-

ground", in particular from Turkey and Russian ethnic German immigrants aged 12 to 29, arrived at a similar conclusion:

„German-language media use is increasingly preferred to (exclusive) Russian-language information or entertainment. Conversely it is extremely detrimental to the assimilative mainstream in this population when Russian language media are consumed. Accordingly, those who (still) concern themselves with their Russian origin and culture do so via media. However, in the long run most cannot avoid German and in particular German-language everyday life.“ (Trebbe, Heft & Weiß, 2010, p. 173)

The results of our study confirm the conclusions of the LfM with regard to pupils of Turkish and Russian origin. However, the results presented here also indicate that exclusive media use in the German language is gaining acceptance not only among pupils with a Turkish or Russian migration background, but also for pupils of Arabic, Kurdish, Moroccan, Polish or Portuguese origin. The representative study "Lebenswelten Deutschtürken 2002", which examined the living and media usage habits of the 14-49-year-old Turkish population in Germany, and the study by Bernart and Billes (2004), arrived at the concurring conclusion that "a mix of Turkish and German media predominates in media usage. Use depends primarily on individual language competence" (Bernart & Billes-Gerhart, 2004, p. 66). One striking finding of this study was that the use of new media such as computers mainly occurs in German, while traditional media (radio, television, newspaper, book) are more commonly consumed in a combination of German and family language. This result can be explained by the fact that the linguistic understanding of multilingual pupils is heterogeneously distributed, and therefore not all pupils are able to access every medium equally.

In the extra-curricular everyday life of multilingual pupils a combined use of family language and German is apparently widespread and the respondents employ their language skills variably depending on the situation and environment. The choice of language(s) used by multilingual pupils in their everyday multilingual world is influenced by several factors, including the individual understanding of the language, the exact linguistic abilities of the respective student and the language skills of their interaction partners.

In order to consume radio, video and audio media, only competence in understanding the respective language orally is required. However, comprehension of print and press media requires pupils to be capable of reading in their family language. Only a limited percentage of the multilingual pupils are completely literate in their family languages and are therefore able to employ them both verbally and in writing. For this reason, many multilingual pupils use text media in German because they learned to read and write this language due to their attendance of German schools.

The work of Gogolin and Neumann (1997, p. 29) confirms the results of our in regard to the increase in multilingualism in non-school areas. They found "that in the comparison of teaching, in extra-curricular and extracurricular language practice, as far as we were able to record it using a cassette recorder, the (almost) exclusive use of German decreased while the multilingualism of communication increased". Our study provides similar results, although German remains the most important language for multilingual pupils in the environments surveyed. Respondents expressed having few inhibitions to speak their family languages, indicating that the pupils surveyed have encountered little discrimination, and the multilingual pupils are instead experiencing social acceptance. However, experiences of appreciation due to the non-German family language are comparatively less present, indicating that these languages do not provide any advantages for the pupils at school, as the teaching takes place predominantly in German. Although a large proportion of pupils expect positive effects from multilingual teaching, e.g. more interesting teaching, faster and more effective working in groups and more frequent participation in class, they also point to possible undesirable side effects of such teaching.

Our study revealed the presence of good language comprehension and speaking skills of multilingual pupils in their family language(s), but also indicated minimal skills in writing and reading these languages. Other studies similarly prove varying competence levels between the primary and secondary language (cf. Dollmann & Kristen, 2010). At this point, researchers do not understand nearly enough about the distribution of multilingual language skills among pupils in German schools. Thus, as this study confirms, when we talk about multilingual competences of pupils in Germany, we must always imagine a vastly heterogeneous group.

Concerning the conceptualization of geography lessons, we recommend that the heterogeneous language skills of multilingual pupils must be taken into account when planning and conducting multilingual lessons in this subject.

6. CONCLUSION AND RESEARCH OUTLOOK

Multilingual education in general should take the heterogeneous distribution of multilingual competences into account by developing a variety of approaches for the presentation and processing of educational content. Within this context, the interests, knowledge, skills, age, gender and also the in-class performance of the heterogeneously assembled learning groups must be taken into consideration. The inclusion of family languages in geography lessons does not imply that the pupils possess similar language levels and can therefore, for example, comprehend tasks in their family languages equally well and thereby improve their performance. It may rather be assumed that the inclusion of multilingual aspects, e.g. in small group or partner work, and the relinquishing of the obligation to communicate in German, would allow pupils a wider range of expressions/term formulations and exchange thereof. It could thus allow the addition of valuable communication on specific topics.

However, this approach presumes that the respective teacher is willing to transfer more responsibility to the pupils, since one cannot expect and demand every teacher to possess the multilingual language skills necessary to communicate in every language spoken by pupils. In effect, multilingual lessons would require more preparation for didactic planning as well as the introduction of binding class rules in order to maintain oversight over communication between pupils. Teachers might, for example, explicitly permit English as an auxiliary language to be employed in the absence of words in the respective family language. This would allow teachers to actively intervene in the multilingual teaching sequence at any time and thereby continuously steer the pupils towards their respective tasks.

Accordingly, the distribution of multilingual competences in a respective class should be determined and tested before planning a multilingual geography course. For example, in the case of a lack of reading and writing skills, a lesson may not include a written assignment, instead opting for an oral assignment recorded in the family language, or an exchange in small groups if the sufficient family language skills are available. Currently there is still a lack of practicable methods for measuring and verifying the language skills of multilingual pupils. During teaching in the classroom this heterogeneous distribution of multilingual competences must similarly be incorporated, e.g. when designing tasks for in-class completion and homework. Simultaneously, the addressing of heterogeneous multilingual competences should be included in a motivating and meaningful way for the mutual benefit of both mono- and multilingual pupils, regardless of whether they are generally performing highly or poorly.

Even if one hearkens the plea for "language-sensitive geography teaching" due to its ability to take "into account the subject-specific linguistic requirements for understanding and answering geographical questions in class" (Budke & Weiss, 2014, p. 127), it still remains undetermined how specifically multilingual groups of pupils should be encouraged. Clarification would require appropriate models for effective teaching-learning sequences, as presented

by Weißenburg (cf. Weißenburg, 2016, pp. 110-111). Language teaching concepts that realize and begin with the pupils' real competences, such as human geography questions (e.g. "my country of origin") have yet to be designed (cf. Budke & Kuckuck, 2017, p. 22; Weißenburg, 2016, p. 192). There is no doubt that multilingual geography lessons are still in the experimental phase, requiring further development of multilingual practice models to move forward. The multilingual competences of pupils constitute an available potential for future educational concepts and should be investigated more extensively before finally being incorporated into geography lessons.

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