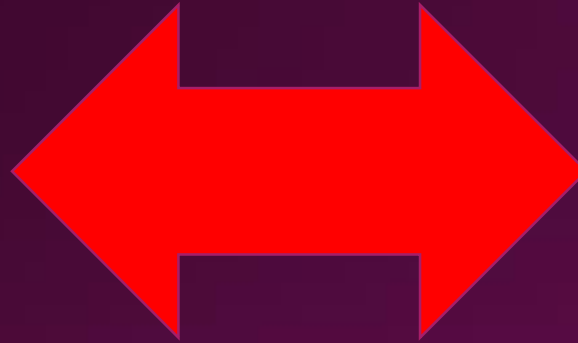


A Languages for Dignity approach

Working together

Communities positioned as languaging experts

**School
populations:**
children's
linguistic,
racial, cultural
backgrounds
and
socioeconomic
situations



**Professional
bodies:**
teachers'
linguistic,
racial, cultural
backgrounds and
socioeconomic
situations

How to create teaching-and-learning environments that are characterised by mutual understanding?

**School
populations:**
children's
linguistic,
racial, cultural
backgrounds
and
socioeconomic
situations

**'Meritocratic'
policy context
privileging
conformity and
standardisation
and not
diversities and
inclusiveness**

**Professional
bodies:**
teachers'
linguistic,
racial, cultural
backgrounds and
socioeconomic
situations

**School
populations:**
children's
linguistic,
racial, cultural

**'Meritocratic'
policy context
privileging
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standard**

**Professional
bodies:**
teachers'
linguistic,

ba
an
so
sit

**In addition how to develop
practices that counteract
negative impact of pervasive
deficit views?**

'funds of knowledge'

'historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being'

(González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005:72)

'to better describe forms of knowledge that arise dynamically from a range of everyday experiences among marginalized - and therefore poorly understood - populations who interact with 'mainstream' society via its social structures'

(Rodriguez, 2013:90)



'culture' as a construct

'Culture' in education – now an acceptable tool
to drive a wedge between groups of people?

Essentialist and tokenistic?

*'We in the West' have developed cultures, from
which we pick and mix, but in other parts,
people are 'prisoners of their backward culture'?*

'funds of knowledge'

- **transformative potential of teaching:**
 - learning is a socially mediated set of processes that reflect the influence of social history and context
 - intentionality – to encourage teachers to use resources outside the classroom, their pupils' funds of knowledge

developing translanguaging as a tool for learning in schools



families as collaborators, co-researchers and
co-constructors

“Nothing about us without us” (Roma rights, 2015)

“Help us help your children”

Me: what languages do you speak?

Parents: What do you mean?

Me: what's the name of your language?

Parents: what do you mean?

Me: do you speak Slovak?

Parents: yes

Me: do you speak Roma?

Parents: yes

Me: oh great, which Roma?

Parents: what do you mean?



Manchester website!



Welcome to the Romani Linguistics Website

The site is operated by the **Romani Project** – a cluster of academic research activities based at the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at the University of Manchester.

Email us: romani@manchester.ac.uk



Click the icons above to visit the MigRom Project site and the Romani Virtual Library

Video- The Roma: Fact or Fiction?



Quick Links

- [Database of Romani dialects \(RMS\)](#)
- [Romani Virtual Library](#)
- [Downloadable learning materials \(DVDs and CDs\)](#)
- [Bibliography of Romani linguistics](#)
- [Dictionary of English Romanes \(Angloromani\)](#)

The complexity of translanguaging practices

- fluent Roma, not much Slovak
- mostly Slovak, a few words of Roma (Slovak and Roma mixed together)
- mostly Slovak, a few words of Roma learned from other children (not from parents)
- Slovak; understand some Roma but not spoken at home
- mixture of Slovak and Roma
- mixture of Czech, Slovak and Roma.

We then began the process of 'translanguating' (translanguaged translation), and recording.

"How would you say it at home so the children will understand"

This took many hours and days to complete.

Then Marta and Zaneta helped us translate the children's conversations back into English!



Marta to talk to us about what this was like and why she stepped forward to help us. Also if she can how this is different to Slovak Republic

Roma Celebration Day and the room opening: thanking Laco and Marta and opening the room to parents



We were joined by over 40 parents and their toddlers from Slovak Republic, Czech Republic and Romania



A Grandmother and Grandfather with their daughter-in-law have now translated 2 new enquiries into a translanguaged form of Ursari and Romanian

“Is there anything else I can do? I’m too young to do nothing all day!”



An identity building tool for the parents



Parents and schools

- **Mediation: what are we talking about?**
- "An intermediary intended to reconcile people, parties" by extension "acting as an intermediary" (Robert hist 1998)
- "Mediation is an encounter, which allows us to establish free ties, to live together as an apprenticeship of better civility and better citizenship" (Six, in Patouma Moidinecouty, 2007)

Roma parents: means and objects of mediation

- Parental mediation towards their own group / culture => linguistic and cultural experts?
Mediation towards themselves / children => construction of parents

Videos will be made
available online

film_romtels2

I'll write a poem I learnt at school and
she will bring it tomorrow

03:52



Results

Videos will be made
available online

- Mediator-parents: linguistic expertise ?
 - A recognized and collaborative expertise



- But also raising discussion => Emergence of metalinguistic consciousness ? (Gombert, 1996)



Résultats

Videos will be made
available online

- **Les parents-médiateur: des experts culturels?**
 - Une compétence analytique



- Dé-hiérarchisation des savoirs culturels



Results

Videos will be made
available online

- Language mediation, an instrument of (re) construction of identity?

Plurilingual identity construction



Becoming a full social actor



Conclusion

- Question: parents as mediator and linguistic and cultural expert or mediation space involving parents?
- Recognition of language and cultural skills
(Re) construction of identity along social and school levels

What does / does it mean to work with Roma parents?

- Intercultural encounter (=> educational cultures)
- "[The school] must mobilize parents as they are, associate them with the educational model it wants to promote" (Meirieu, 1997)
- => Co-construction of a collective project
=> Continuous collaboration

Languages for Dignity in Newcastle: how has this changed relationships in the school?



Large increase in parents attending parent-teacher school meetings

Asking questions, seeking support for their children

Feeling empowered

Languages for Dignity in Romania: how has this changed relationships in the school?

As a result of the school's approach to learning more about the children's Roma language, the community have become generally more involved in the school life. For example, young mothers have become teacher assistants in kindergarten classes.

There is also an increased interest in registering children to start school this coming Autumn.

Teachers from state schools in the wider region have started to visit Tinca to learn from pedagogical practices, and have been encouraged to support Roma language use for learning and to involve Roma leaders locally in their schools.

Principles for practice in working alongside Roma communities

- Simple language surveys aren't always accurate (or sensitive)
- Find a gatekeeper (ideally a member of the Roma community or someone who has worked with the communities for many years) who the community trusts; build meaningful and reciprocal relations with the community through the gatekeeper. NOTE THIS TAKES TIME and hence commitment
- Be wary of people who present themselves as 'talking **for** a community' – find someone on the ground actually doing this work
- Once you meet the families, try a list of words (or a bank of pictures) for translation. For Roma communities use the Manchester database and work backwards.

Principles for practice in working alongside Roma communities

Roma is often kept for communication in the home/community.

Roma dialects' are often not named in the same way languages of nation states are.

All European Roma also speak a European language and translanguage between this and their Roma dialect. Only the parents will know how this works.

	Slovak Republic	Czech Republic	Romania
Newcastle	1. East Slovak Romani/Slovak	Not identified BUT can understand East Slovak Romani	Ursari/Romanian
	2. Czech Vlax/Slovak		
Montpellier			Ursari/some Kalderash/Romanian
Romania			Korturare/Romanian/some Hungarian
Helsinki			Ursari/Romanian

Principles for practice in working alongside Roma communities:

- Begin with an understanding that Roma parents like others want their children to succeed, although some they may need some convincing about institutionalised forms of education such as schools.
- Use this to allay fears by making it clear that your support is to help their children.
- Many parents may have suffered greatly from prejudices in their country of origin and have a family history of such prejudices.
- Draw on parents' linguistic expertise as funds of knowledge (languages for dignity) – see their funds as appropriate for school learning.
- Adopt a whole school approach – everyone on board, whole school policies, mothers' classes of their choosing, and special event days (but on its own this is not enough and can be tokenistic).
- Aim to shift power relations for social justice by developing 'symbiotic processes' in which families are called upon in the development of prestigious pedagogical resources that teachers use in their everyday practice .