

## **Researching multilingually immigrants' language needs in order to design a course of Greek as a second language**

George Androulakis  
University of Thessaly

This paper discusses some issues about the research undertaken multilingually by an interdisciplinary group of researchers (applied linguists, social anthropologists, specialists on education), including a number of linguistic mediators with three migrant communities (Albanian, Pakistani, Romanian) in Volos, Greece.

This nationally and EU-funded project is one of the very first systematically and scientifically organized attempts in Greece aiming at designing and implementing specialised language materials and courses for immigrants, which are based on analysis of the needs of the target group as well as on aims and syllabus which will respond to these needs. The final stage of this 2-year long project will be the delivery of specialized courses of Greek language, which will help immigrant parents (with limited or very limited communicative competence in Greek) acquire the necessary skills for an effective communication with the schools of their children.

In this context, the theoretical and methodological part of the research (review of literature, analysis of good practices from other countries) is undertaken mainly in English, but also in French, German and Italian, with translation and synthesis in Greek; fieldwork is done to a large extent in Greek, but English and Italian are used as auxiliary languages for the communication with Pakistani and Albanian immigrants. Furthermore, especially in the case of newly arrived immigrants, linguistic mediators intervene and use Albanian, Urdu and Romanian, with the respective communities. Organisation and management of the project (meetings, contacts with the administration of funding agencies) is done in Greek, but scientific publications are planned mainly in English and secondarily in Greek.

The multilingual character of our research arises many issues of data management and data analysis, as well as results, conclusions and recommendations presentation, such as translatability, necessity of code-switching and code-mixing, cultural transfer, methodological background of the researchers involved or mutual linguistic comprehension between the members of the research team. This paper intends to focus on discussion which takes place within the research team of the project on such issues and on decisions to make. These decisions are often difficult, due to the complexity of the research situation and to the lack of available methodological explorations in the literature regarding the role of multilingualism as a determining factor of research in several fields of applied linguistics