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THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION CRISIS ON ADULT  
MIGRANTS' LANGUAGE EDUCATION. A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE  
TOOLKIT: "LANGUAGE SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES" PROVIDED BY THE  
COUNCIL OF EUROPE.

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## Summary

This dissertation addresses the influence that Adult Migrant Language Education (AMLE) has received during the past decades in Europe, especially under the impact of the recent migration crisis. The research question focuses on the political and social factors that are open to investigation in Europe today, and has been developed into three sub-questions that deal with: a. language ideologies that are found in public discourses, b. language policies applied by nation-states and international institutions and c. the challenges that AMLE faces in this framework. After a brief description of the historical context and the political responses to the migration crisis, the literature review examines the themes of the research question. In considering language ideologies, as one perspective, it becomes clear that monolingualism and its nationalistic connotations is the dominant tendency now in Europe, even in discourses promoting plurilingualism, while the linguistic reality of the western superdiverse societies is multilingualism. In considering language policies as another perspective, it becomes apparent that they increasingly aim at the linguistic integration of migrants while linguistic thresholds are being used in various gatekeeping practices. Finally, cuts in funding, promotion of monolingualism and a “surviving” orientation to the curriculum are the dominant features of AMLE in Europe today. A discourse analysis of the Toolkit “Language support for adult refugees” produced by the Council of Europe as a case study, focuses on the relationships between the participants and the way language and linguistic integration are perceived. Despite the claims of the opposite, the analysis reveals that even this initiative is underpinned by the monolingual imperative which ignores linguistic superdiversity and promotes hierarchical top-down policies that do not take learner’s need for meaningful learning into account.

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# THE IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION CRISIS ON ADULT MIGRANTS' LANGUAGE EDUCATION.

A discourse analysis of the Toolkit: "Language Support for Refugees"  
provided by the Council of Europe.

## 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In the early 90's thousands of Albanians together with other populations from countries that were former members of the Eastern Bloc, illegally crossed the borders of Greece deciding to build a new life as economic migrants in the country. Rapidly, and despite the regular deportations, most of them managed to get a work permit and survive by doing a wide range of mainly labour jobs. Language had not been an issue for the migrants in terms of getting a residence permit or finding an occupation, although, when they developed their knowledge of Greek, their social life improved and they had the chance to find better jobs. The lack of institutionalized language education had been balanced to some degree by the participation of their children to the Greek schools and the use of television, which together brought the language norm into their family life. When asked years later during a research study, they answered that they wish they had had the opportunity for language education to help them overcome social and economic barriers earlier, however, it came out that it took them an average of just six months to learn to communicate in Greek (Mogli and Androulakis, online). In reality, that was what Greek migrants to Australia and the USA experienced in linguistic terms during the huge migration movements in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century resulting in special mixed varieties of Greek and English (Tamis, 2009; Seaman, 1972).

In 2017, I was myself an internal EU migrant from Greece to Belgium, in a Flemish town just outside Brussels, the actual capital of the EU. I had arrived there by crossing legally the open borders and applied for a job-seeker's residence permit within the framework of the EU common market. Although I could communicate perfectly in English with the vast majority of the people and services I met, I soon realised that I should first ask permission to do so, with few people refusing to give it. Moreover, in order to register in the job seeking lists, I was strongly recommended to start following Dutch courses, organised and partially funded by the government, otherwise I was risking the rejection of my application. In those courses I met both EU and third countries nationals, many of them working already in English-speaking jobs, who had arrived at the classes by some similar administrative process to mine. The strong ties between the functioning of the language courses and the governmental services responsible for migration, employment, welfare and health systems, together with the imposing of not using any other language (for example, English) but Dutch in the educational practises, confirmed my feeling that something has totally changed in the way Europe now perceives language and language learning and this change is not for the good. It became apparent that explanations for the difference between the way language learning affected the lives of the migrants from the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc in Greece thirty years ago, and the way it does now in Europe for internal and third countries migrants and for refugees and asylum seekers amidst the migration crisis, lies in the exploration of the political and social events that took place in the years in between.

### **Research Question**

That being the starting point for this research, this analysis of the field of Adult Migrant Language Education (AMLE) during the last decades in Europe has been developed based on the following research question:

- What are the political and social factors that influence adult migrant language education (AMLE) in Europe today?

To further explore the social, political and educational aspects that the research question contains, this is divided into three sub questions:

1. What is the general ideological framework regarding language in contemporary public discourses?
2. What are the language policies, according to which official institutions design AMLE?
3. How is AMLE realised in action and what are the challenges for its educational purposes?

In my endeavour, I choose to focus on the correlations of AMLE with the political and social responses to the recent refugee crisis, a decision based on the assumption that policies and laws are applied more easily and more directly to situations where there are limited alternatives for those concerned, and that, when policy makers have little or no contestation or resistance to their decisions. In such circumstances their intentions become more apparent and their rational clearer. After describing the particularities and the historical context of the migration crisis, my research further develops upon the axes of language ideologies, language integration and the interrelations they have with the current migration and integration policies of the European institutions. To ground an investigation of the influences AMLE has been shaped by within this context, I selected as a case study, the Toolkit, a recently (in 2018) launched educational tool designed and provided by the Council of Europe, intending to offer language support to migrants that are located at their first entry points to Europe. The reason for this choice is that the Council of Europe is the most active agency on language integration matters together with a claim to be the guardian of human rights in the broader European area. As it emerged that even this initiative is underpinned by the sovereign language and immigration ideologies, I argue that the seeking of real educational policies and practices for AMLE must continue.



## 2. THE MIGRATION AND REFUGEE CRISIS IN EUROPE THE YEARS 2013-2018

### 2.1 A brief history

Europe's 'refugee' or 'migration crisis' is defined in terms of the massive migration wave that emerged in the years after 2010; following the events of the so-called Arab spring, during which huge populations from Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia streamed into Europe. It also includes the complications resulting from the way the EU and the European governments responded to the migration wave. Migration has always been an ever-present challenge for the EU, the member-states and other supranational organisations that are active in Europe regarding migration and European cohesion, such as the Council of Europe (CofE), the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). Successive geopolitical events took place in the last two decades of the previous century, such as the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and the civil wars in the Balkan, which led to migration flows towards the European countries. Those challenges had been successfully confronted by the EU which in the beginning of the new century had achieved through a number of common treaties (Amsterdam, Lisbon, Schengen) the establishment of a single market, a monetary union and freedom of movement within its territory. In the same period, it was ready to welcome a large group of new member-states from the Eastern Europe, expanding its territory and widening its eastern borders.

However, the most recent migration wave proved to be an enormous challenge for Europe. This massive movement of populations, which has been characterised as the worst humanitarian crisis of our times (Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016), and which is currently still unfolding, acted as the most catalytic phenomenon in unveiling policies, practices and social beliefs that were subtly working in and between the member-states of the EU. Apart from its unprecedented intensity, which posed serious challenges to the core

humanitarian values that have been regarded from the very beginning of the union as the foundation of the European civilisation (Wodak & Boukala, 2015), it has also triggered new questions and critical reflections upon the ideal of European cohesion, the position of Europe in the globalised world and the relations between its component member-states. Moreover, the way Europe treated these populations, by the many fluctuations of its migration policy, reflected a troubled construction of a “we” on a consequent contrasted “others” that needs to be reflected on. There are two facts related to this process. The first one, and related to who are the “others,” is anti-Islamic, xenophobic public discourses and, in accordance with it, restrictive migration policies that have been applied since the ending of the previous century in Europe and were established more forcefully after the 11/9 attacks. The second one, which is relevant to who are “we,” is the fact that the crisis occurred at a moment when the European integration, meaning the integration of core State powers that was expected to follow after the success of the common market, seemed to be in trouble, especially after being challenged by the recent debt crisis, (Genschel, P. & Jachtenfuchs, M., 2018). Those who expected the EU to function collectively as a supranational organisation through international institutions have been defeated empirically by the re-emergence of nation-states as the core factor in decision making within Europe (Zaun, 2018). These two facts, present in Europe before the migration crisis exploded, were to shape the reactions of the European governments and the decisions which the EU subsequently took.

## **2.2 The responses of the EU and the member-states to the migration crisis.**

According to Jacobsen (1996, in Skleparis, 2017) when governments face mass population movements there are three alternative reactions to choose from: to response positively, negatively, or do nothing. These responses are expressed through political actions such as “specific asylum policies, unofficial actions, and migration policy implementation” (Skleparis, 2017:279). The factors that

are responsible for the decision of the governments are: past policies adopted on the field of migration and international laws, interactions and relations at the international level, the real or/and the perceived capacity of a country to receive migrants, and concerns about security issues. In the case of the stance of governments in Europe towards the migration crisis, not all the countries responded the same way, nor did they remain constant in their responses. There have been examples such as Germany, Sweden and Austria, which started with a positive reaction and then, for unambiguous reasons, turned dramatically to negative, or in the case of Greece, which after a U-turn from a strict migration policy to an unprecedented openness, was forced to re-introduce restrictive measures.

It seemed that the countries which first decided to open their borders to refugees were being overwhelmed having placed their faith in a belief that the EU will act collectively and impose cooperation on member-states so sharing the burden. This view, however, tended to dramatically ignore the limits that governments meet when trying to balance national and international politics and the resistance of nation-states to share certain areas of politics such as defence and foreign policy (Genschel, P. & Jachtenfuchs, M., 2018). An example is the case of the Visegrad countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia), all of them late members of the EU, with significant nationalist domestic pressures and a particular migration history (as former members of the Eastern Bloc they had huge migration outflows during the previous decades). It also underestimates the importance of power competitions and correlations between the member-states, like these that have led to the distinction between wealthy North and poor South countries, after the travails of the recent debt crisis, as well as between internal and external countries, with the borders of the latter coinciding with the borders of the EU. Official expectations for solidarity within the member-states would require the suspending of collectively decided past policies, such as the Dublin regulation. It should not be a surprise when unilateral abolition of such policies led to the unilateral suspension of free movement by several countries which kept a negative stance towards migration.

Applying Jacobsen's typology of the factors that influence responses of governments to migration movement it can be noted that at the heart of the problem lies a past administrative policy, the Dublin regulation (Dublin Regulation III, 2013), according to which refugees can seek asylum only at the countries of their first entry in Europe. Given the fact that refugees are very unlikely to approach Europe by a legal route that could help them land directly to their desired destination countries, complying with Dublin regulation implies the uneven distribution of migrants in the European countries, with those located at the external borders forced to receive the most. When the German government decided in summer 2015, at the height of the crisis, to suspend Dublin III and accept the relocation of almost one million refugees, they faced the reaction of the German people who started to press for restraint of the inflows and finally forced the government to bring back restrictive migration policies (Zaun, 2018). At that juncture, an endeavour started for a solution to be achieved at the international level with the European Commission proposing the adoption of a quota system in receiving refugees, where every member-state should participate by sharing the burden accordingly to its capacity. Despite the exhaustive discussions that lasted from October 2015 to March 2016, the endeavour finally failed at the expense of European integration and in favour of those individual member-states which had blocked the process.

Before the formal articulation of the new migration policy and the announcement of the EU-Turkey statement, which signified the failure of the EU to correspond to its foundational values and expectations for becoming a collective supranational organisation, freedom of movement had already been abolished and walls alongside the borderline of the European countries were raised again. This, according to Skleparis (2017), was the reaction of the other countries to the U-turn that the newly elected leftist Greek government of SYRIZA attempted earlier in 2015 in an endeavour to apply the humanistic ideas of its political programme. The Greek government, apart from the power interrelations within the EU, seemed to also ignore the importance of another two of the main factors of the Jacobsen's typology. The binding international policies from the past, mainly the Dublin regulation III, and the capacity of the

country to receive such a massive inflow of population. When Greece opened its borders for the refugees, aiming to relieve domestic pressure, it suspended the Dublin regulation, letting migrants cross its northern borders and enter the Balkan route. Such a unilateral decision caused a chain reaction by the European countries which one after the other closed their borders. The freedom of movement and the abolition of internal borders proved that had been established upon the precondition that the external borders should be kept strong (Skleparis, 2017) and the way Greece acted by denying the differentiation upon the axes of geopolitics, left Europe 'unprotected' and open to the East.

Respecting all the countries who responded negatively to the migration crisis, Zaun (2018) argues that the core actor in decision making was the voters, which mobilized by far-right political parties (dominant in Hungary and Austria and gradually increasing in the rest of Europe), forced governments to amend their policies in order to maintain their power and popularity. The reasons why people in the European countries expressed a negative stance towards migration is relevant to the dominant public discourse that connects migration to economic and security problems. According to Jacobsen's typology, the former shapes the perception of the voters about their country's capacity to receive and support refugees. The intention of migrants through this lens is to seek a better life at the expense of the host country's welfare system and work market. Where poverty and inequity are present as a social phenomenon, even if a state has the capacity to receive incomers, voters tend to perceive them as a threat. In the case of the migrants from the Arabic world, the reluctance became stronger after 9/11; Muslims and Arabs in the social and public discourse of the West became associated with the threat of terrorism. This is actually the reason why it was so easy for France and Belgium which had been exposed to terrorist attacks in 2015, to mobilise security issues as an undeniable cause toward adopting highly restrictive migration policies, border controls and militarisation.

### 2.3 The EU migration policy after 2015

The organ that expresses the migration policy of the European Union is the European Commission which aims to involve the “EU countries and institutions, international organisations, civil society, local authorities and national partners outside the EU” (European Commission, online) in common actions respecting border control, visa and asylum policies. Before 2015 there have been two main policies, the Global Approach to Migration in 2005 EU (COM, 2007), and the ‘Global Approach to Migration and Mobility’ in 2011 (GAMM, online). In both, the EU’s migration policy is characterised by the expansion of its legitimacy beyond the European territory, to countries of origin and transit countries and particularly by the interest in promoting mobility as an aspect strongly connected to development. The demographic problem that Europe faces is expected to increase the need for an additional work force. As it was mentioned in the Global Approach to Migration in 2005, “immigration policy strikes the right balance between labour market shortages, economic impacts, social consequences, integration policies and external policy objectives” (COM, 2007). While this first approach focused more on migration control, the fight against ‘illegal flows’ and readmission agreements with the countries of origin, the revised version of 2011, also takes into consideration the unfolding refugee crisis and adds legal migration to the agenda of international cooperation.

It was upon these two pre-existed policy frameworks and after the political events of 2015 that the agenda on migration formed to what is now displayed on the European Commission’s official website. The failure of the EU and the Member-states to adopt a common asylum policy and a quota system in receiving refugees meant the failure to maintain the “balance between labour market shortages, economic impacts, social consequences, integration policies and external policy objectives”, mentioned above, and resulted to harsh and restrictive measures against migration. The first one, under the title ‘Reducing the incentives for irregular migration’ includes the battle against smuggling, effective external border controls with participation in FRONTEX (the European border management agency) and encouraging return to the countries of origin.

The second, with the title 'Saving lives and securing external borders' is a set of measures added to the agenda after the events of the migration crisis in 2015 and aims to secure the free movement within the Schengen area, by making stronger the external borders. The third one is 'A strong common asylum policy' that completes the policy design for handling the refugee crisis and the fourth, 'A new policy on legal migration' which focuses on the attraction of high-skilled workers to Europe.

In March 2016 the EU-Turkey statement (Council of the EU, 2016) sealed the turn of the EU migration policy to restrictive measures. The agreement between the two parties consists of controversial arrangements on the number of refugees accepted by the EU and returned to Turkey, with international organisations such as the Amnesty International (Gogou, 2017) raising concerns over the protection of migrants' human rights. Turkey's involvement in the EU endeavour to stop the migration inflows through the Greek islands, confirmed the expansion of its migration policy to third countries.

The external dimension of the EU migration policy, as it is explicitly articulated by the Commission (COM, online) also involves international organisations. So-called supranational organisations, which have a global influence regarding international law, such as IOM and UNHCR, work together with the EU when the latter's policies involve third countries. In order for a third country to be regarded as a safe destination for refugees and therefore the cooperation of the EU with them to be legitimised, the action the supranational organisations take can have different forms. Lavenex, (2015) describes three kinds of strategies: when organisations act as counterweight, correcting and complementing EU policies, when they act as subcontractors, implementing EU policies where the EU cannot, and as rule transmitters, when diffusing the EU norms and promoting them as international norms supported by international treaties. By funding and cooperating with these organisations the EU manages to establish a strong regime in migration politics that supports the strict framework that has developed the past few years, a framework that despite being intensively criticised; cannot be contested in practise due to being so institutionally protected.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 Introduction

This literature review aims to explore the current theoretical approaches to the concepts that form the focus of the research question and sub-questions. As the main question: 'What are the political and social factors that influence adult migrant language education (AMLE) in Europe today?' is divided into three sections, each section corresponds to a theme in the literature review. Hence, the first part is dedicated to the endeavour to answer the first sub-question that is: 'What is the general ideological framework regarding language in contemporary public discourses?'. The works of Gal (2005), Wodak and Boukala (2015), Spotti, (2016), Simpson and Whiteside, (2015), Blommaert (1999), and Stevenson (2015), deal with the definition of language ideologies, their generating mechanisms, the most representative trends that are active in Europe now and engage critically with their content. The second theme refers to the question: 'What are the language policies, according to which official institutions design AMLE?'. Gal (2005), Stevenson (2005), Spotti (2016, 2018), Simpson (2012, 2015), Pöyhönen and Tarnanen (2015), Wodak and Boukala (2015), Kurvers and Spotti, (2015), Gardner-Chloros *et al* (2016), review the language policies that the European Institutions and Nation-States develop regarding the linguistic integration of migrants and the procedures of citizenship, and entry, residence and work permits. They investigate through a critical lens the hidden purposes of these policies and conclude that they constitute part of migration control mechanisms. Finally, the third theme, addresses the question: 'How is AMLE realised in action and what are the challenges for its educational purposes?' Selected works of Simpson and Whiteside (2015), Pöyhönen *et al* (2018) and Gardner-Chloros *et al* (2016), describe the influences that AMLE has accepted by language policies, the challenges that teachers and learners face, the special framework of language



learning for refugees and asylum-seekers and the opportunities that can be used for the future of AMLE.

The academic papers have been selected because they offer a critical perspective on the themes mentioned above and they take more or less some account of the historical context of migration in Europe within the last two decades. They are taken from the fields of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and language education. They all can be reached online through Shibboleth, Google Scholar and the Library of the University of Glasgow and are written in English.

### **3.1.1 Criteria for selection**

The reviewed papers have been selected by searching across the following broad themes and key terms: Language, Migrants, Language Ideology/Policy, and Language Education. Using the search machine Google Scholar and the University of Glasgow Library online, by adding also the limitation of publication within the last twenty years, 50 papers in total were identified. From these papers, 19 have been reviewed as eight of them met all four search criteria; nine met three out of four and two met two search criteria.

## **3.2 Language ideologies**

In the endeavour to define the theoretical background upon which language policies and AMLE practises develop, the notion of language ideologies provides a deep understanding of how language is perceived and conceived by individual speakers and institutions. Language ideologies emerged as a new and rapidly developing scholarly field in the last decades of the twentieth century and has since become tightly linked to the fields of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. They have been defined as “socioculturally motivated ideas, perceptions and expectations of language” (Blommaert, 1999:1), or

“metalinguistic assumptions” (Gal,2005:14) and “presumptions and presuppositions with which different social groups name, frame and evaluate linguistic practices” (Gal, 2005:13). As social representations of the relation between language and human activity, they are not just about language, but they “link language to identity, power, aesthetics, morality and epistemology’ (Schieffelin *et al*, 1998:3). Such a set of assumptions can be called an ideology, because it consists of well-established, manifested ideas which take “a perspective on the empirical world, erasing phenomena that do not fit its point of view” (Gal, 2005:15). Moreover, because these ideas come together with political entailments, as they “often index the political interests of individual speakers, ethnic and other interest groups, and nation-states” (Kroskirty 2001, cited in Poÿhonën *et al*, 2018:490).

Language ideologies are generated by individual speakers, institutions and the media and reproduced through discourses of semi-public and public spaces, such as every day conversations, the news, popular culture, education, politics, and academic works (Wodak & Boukala, 2015). They are also shaped during debates on language that from time to time become more intense (Blommaert, 1999). These debates are part of wider socio-political processes which involve the society’s linguistic situation to issues related with power, inclusion and exclusion, nationhood, identity, freedom, social justice and other aspects of the socio-political life. The ideas that these ideologies provide about language refer to evaluations and attempt hierarchical rankings of specific linguistic forms against others, usually negotiating the acceptance of linguistic diversity or the promotion of homogeneity in several degrees. If seen as a continuum, language ideologies have at their one edge the idea of language as a fixed, homogenous entity that functions as a technology for naming the world and at the other edge language as a social process constantly changing, implemented and adapting to diverse situations (Poÿhonën *et al*, 2018). Being broadly demarcated between the terms ‘monolingualism’ and ‘multilingualism’ these two ideologies have in the space between a number of varieties and versions that negotiate and contest the notion of language, in several degrees. In the

next part, these sets of metalinguistic assumptions are explained in more detail with emphasis on the beliefs that are dominant now in Europe.

### 3.2.1 Monolingualism and standard language

Monolingualism is the most active ideology in Europe today and is based upon a specific approach to language, that of the 'standard language.' According to Gal (2005) what is understood worldwide today as language was first a European invention that has roots back to the European Enlightenment and the Romantic movements that followed. In contrast to the natural capacity of speaking which human beings employ in their social interactions, language in the monolingualistic context refers to an artificial, institutionalized, cultural construction with specific characteristics. First, languages have a name, such as French, English, Greek, and they are countable, as someone can possess more than one. They are, however, autonomous, homogenous and bounded entities that differ significantly from each other (Poÿhonën, 2018; Gal, 2005). They also have written literature, grammar and structure as well as a norm of correctness. Human nature is supposed to be monolingual too, that is, every person has only one language, the so-called native or mother tongue. Native language is also national, as it functions as an indexical for national identity based on the equation that "if someone is a speaker of language x' therefore is 'a member of group y" (Spotti, 2016:263).

This approach to language emerged as a philosophical movement together with the political establishment of the nation-state. Philosophers like Johann Gottfried Herder, whose name has been closely attached to the philosophical construction of the nation ideal and nation-state, promoted, among others, 'the normative isomorphism of language, nation, and state' (Kamusella, 2009:29). Apart from national identity, monolingual ideology connects language also to territorial belonging, therefore it can be considered accordingly as a 'boundary ideology' (Wodak & Boukala, 2015:257) that (re)produces the distinction between 'us' and 'them' upon cultural criteria or as 'border politics' that through political actions excludes 'the stranger' from the nation-state

exceeding its political borders (Wodak & Boukala, 2015). Considered essential for shaping national identity and securing territorial belonging standard language is employed by national institutions to function as a “unifying glue” for the nation (Pöyhönen *et al*, 2018:491). For the member of a nation must speak the national language, avoid varieties or mixed forms, and, if coming from another nation-state, be assimilated, that is, abandon the use of own mother tongue and speak the dominant national language (Kamusella, 2009).

In such a linguistic regime, nation-state’s institutions impose the standardisation of language by rejecting non-standard varieties, ignoring and eliminating the actual practices especially them of minorities and migrants (Gal, 2005). Standardization is achieved through education and language policies with the cooperation of political elites and linguistic science. The standard language is promoted and privileged as a high-status indicator. All other varieties (oral and geographical dialects, social linguistic practices, mixed forms) are characterised negatively as chaotic, hybrid and threats to the purity of the mother tongue, hence the homogeneity of the nation and the political stability of the state.

Although this set of beliefs may sound anachronistic and naïve in comparison to contemporary linguistic imperatives, it is widely believed (Gal, 2005; Simpson and Whiteside, 2015; Spotti, 2016; Wodak and Boukala, 2015) and is still dominant and promoted even by mainstream, liberal discourses. The reasons for the survival and the wide spread of this language ideology are relevant to the nationalist political shift and the reinforcement of nation-states. Being globally the only legitimized kind of political constitution, nation-state celebrated new waves of revival after the world wars, the decolonization of many areas that evolved into independent states, and the end of the Eastern Bloc in Europe. Additionally, the nationalist trends that emerged in Europe during the recent migration crisis, manifest monolingualism; re-positioning linguistic nationalism as a language ideology.

### 3.2.2 Multilingualism vs plurilingualism

Europe has always been characterised by cultural and linguistic diversity despite its institutional division in nation-states. The recently introduced term of 'superdiversity', first introduced by Vertovec in 2006 to sketch the situation in the UK, is employed to describe the multifarious dimensions of multiculturalism in western societies due to population movements that have an unprecedented size and variety of motives and forms (Spotti, 2016). Freedom of movement within the European Union, globalised economy and knowledge market, together with the forced migration waves of the last decade have significantly increased diversity in already diverse European societies (Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016). In contrast to monolingualism, which rejects multiculturalism and regards it a problem, multilingualism is both a linguistic phenomenon and ideology which welcomes diversity as a resource for communicative practices enrichment and social coherence (Pöyhönen *et al*, 2018).

The term, however, is being used in several ways resulting in different meanings depending on the context in which it is deployed. For the Council of Europe, the supranational institution responsible for Europe's language policy, multilingualism is a term that is used only to declare the presence of more than one language simultaneously within the same region. Hence, it is a characteristic of a society and not of its speakers, who preferably are called plurilingual. Plurilingualism, refers to one's competence at several degrees in more than one language and the linguistic practise which is in line with it is called 'code-switching.' The languages in such a situation 'are used intra sententially or intersententially' (Park, 2013:50), and the switch is an intended involvement of the grammar and the structure of each languages alternatively. In the same way EU language policy promotes multilingualism by setting the objective 'that every European citizen should master two other languages in addition to their mother tongue' (European Parliament, online). Although, the views of the CofE and the EU seem to welcome and promote linguistic diversity, the understanding of languages as distinguished, countable codes, links to the

imperative of 'standard language' and what this actually propagates is a set of 'parallel monolingualisms, not a hybrid system' (Poÿhonën *et al*, 2018:491), with Gal characterising the emphasis on linguistic diversity as "deceptive" (Gal, 2005:16).

What though is getting increasing attention among academics in sociolinguistics is multilingualism not only as a characteristic of diverse societies, but as linguistic practice that involve the notion of speakers 'linguistic multilingual repertoires' in communication and the construction of meaning. Linguistic repertoires are defined by Blommaert as "biographically organised complexes of resources, [that] follow the rhythms of human lives" (Conteh, 2018:476), and as such, they differ from the plurilingual approach that understands speaker's multilingual repertoire as the capacity to use many and distinct languages, through the practise of code-switching. The linguistic practise that is connecting with the understanding of language as an open social process is called 'translanguaging.' First used in the bilingual context of Welsh schools, translanguaging is a verb that describes what speakers do with their linguistic repertoire, which is constantly informed by their social communicative needs and experiences. As "the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy, *et al*, 2015:281) translanguaging differs from code-switching. Also, increasingly introduced to education as an inclusive practise, it is believed to better serve the educational purposes of language learning.

### 3.2.3 The Contradiction

With the monolingual ideology being still dominant in political and social discourses in Europe, and in some degree supported by supranational institutions, increasingly the voices of academics (Gal, Simpson, Spotti, Wodak, Boukala, Poÿhonën, Gardner-Chloros, Blommaert) are stressing or insisting on a paradox. While societies become more and more diverse and multiculturalism together with multilingualism is now the norm on the ground of everyday

linguistic practices, educational and language policies seem to surprisingly ignore the phenomenon and keep on with ideologies which are not in line with contemporary societies anymore. It is what Blommaert “has described as modernist reactions to postmodern realities” (Blommaert, 2008 in Simpson, 2012:2). Hidden economic agendas, the interests of political elites and nation-states challenged by migration are some of the factors that shape both general and national language policies. The content, the political purposes and the competition among these policies are discussed in the next section of the literature review.

### 3.3 Language Policies

#### 3.3.1 From language ideologies to language policies

The second part of the literature review covers critical approaches on specific Language policies. Language policies are “regulatory tools governing how language should coexist and be used in specific social, political and economic contexts” (Wodak, 2014, cited in Wodak & Boukala, 2015:258). Sociolinguists understand policies that run in Europe now as the way “European States and Institutions deal with the specifically linguistic challenges of ‘superdiversity’” (Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016). They have also identified a multilayer pattern of political practices that consists of two broad categories: integration policies and policies functioning as gatekeepers. Although they seem to have different aims, yet they both promote the homogeneity of nation-states as they follow the values of monolingual and standard language ideology.

The transformation of an ideology that consists of the views of various social actors into policies happens with the assistance of public discourses that infuse and embed these views into political decisions. Simpson and Whiteside (2012), Stevenson (2005), Wodak and Boukala (2016), Spotti, (2011) describe how political rhetoric and mass media in the UK, Germany, Greece and Europe in general reproduce the opinion that migrants should learn the ‘country’s

language' and use it in their everyday life, instead of their native language. This is a narrative that accords to monolingualism, which sees linguistic diversity as a threat to the purity and homogeneity of the nation and the national language. Such beliefs can be found within policies that set as their aim the integration of migrants into the national culture. Similarly, Gal (2005), Wodak and Boukala (2015), Gardner-Chloros *et al* (2016), Pöyhönen *et al* (2018) highlight in their work the negative representations of migrants that nationalist parties in Austria, Greece, the UK and other countries use in their propaganda and the mass media reproduce, linking migration to criminality, ghettoization, and security issues. Upon the negative image of the migrant is built an exclusion argument for populations that don't share the arbitrary idea of each national identity. Finally, Spotti (2016), Gardner-Chloros *et al* (2016) show how, with language playing the role of indexicality for national identity, policies and practices that involve language testing in obtaining citizenship, work permit and entry permission function deliberately as gatekeeping devices.

### 3.3.2 Supranational and national policies

Before presenting the language policies that promote integration or attempt the exclusion of new-comers it is important to comment on the relations between international policies supported by European institutions and national policies by individual governments in member-states. In many cases, policies designed by international institutions and the organs of the EU offer a more tolerant approach to linguistic diversity and align language use to human rights. However, since the main purpose of these organs is the achievement of European cohesion and the cultivation of a European identity, their policies include progressive linguistic practises as far as they serve this purpose. It is important to remember that Europe is not a nation-state but an institutional union of different states. Hence, the way Europe promotes cultural and social integration within its territory has to do with the managing of the pre-existing diversity inside as well as the demands of the rapidly globalised economy that is followed by population inflows outside its borders. Gal (2010) claimed that



the EU can indeed be considered a “top-down regime of multilingual standardization that tries to manage increased diversity in the same ways nation-states managed non-standard varieties” (Wodak & Boukala, 2015:255). In this sense, the role of both national and international policies serves the aim of integration and the exclusion of the stranger. Moreover, general regulations, when policies are proposed that are opposite to national legislation or the political climate, they often fail at implementation, as they are not binding or lack acknowledgement and participation. What mostly happens is that the European institutions support national governments to build their policies while providing them technical and practical means for their implementation (Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016).

### 3.3.3 Language Integration policies.

#### European policies

As the online documents of the European Parliament clearly declare (European Parliament, online), the focus of the EU’s language policy is on the communication of languages within the group of the official European languages. Part of its policy is the categorization of languages in official, lingua franca, minority, regional, migrant and so forth (Gal, 2005). Nevertheless, as discussed above, this approach to linguistic practises conforms in a subtle way to monolingual assumptions. The main target that the EU has set respecting its citizens is that everyone should acquire at least two more official languages apart from their mother tongue. States should also facilitate this endeavour providing educational means for their citizens and promoting their language in other states. Through specific programmes, such as Erasmus for young people and the establishment of international Language days (for each one of the official languages), the EU, despite what it claims, limits its interest to the promotion of “parallel monolingualisms” (Poÿhonën, 2018:491). It is only the Council of Europe, the independent institution with a concern for European cohesion that addresses in its policies minority and migrant languages

(Atabekoba and Shoustikova, 2018; Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016). The set of policies called Language Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM), refers to the needs of adult migrants who already live in European countries and although it is designed to take into account the human rights of migrants, its endeavour is limited to the linguistic integration into the dominant language of the country of residence and it is towards this purpose that aid is provided to governments.

### **National policies**

In national frameworks, such as those of France (Adami, 2015), the UK (Simpson and Whiteside, 2012), Austria, Greece (Wodak & Boukala, 2015), and Germany (Stevenson, 2005), linguistic integration policies have as their purpose the integration of migrants *into* the “host” society which in practise is interpreted as assimilation, since it is not about the “integration of migrants and the indigenous population” (Stevenson, 2005:158), but a cultural movement solely from the side of migrants. Furthermore, it is meant as mainly political and economic integration, strongly related to citizenship processes and employability (Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016).

There are common tendencies in national policies of the European states, that follow the political developments of the last decades. One of them is the degradation of policies that aim to help migrants to socially integrate, such as the amendments that have applied to English for Speakers of Other Languages programme (ESOL) in the UK. Simpson (2012) makes an extended presentation of the policies that influenced ESOL during the last decade, when the ‘New Approach to ESOL’ in 2009 abolished ESOL as a central national policy relegating it to a local policy undertaken by local authorities. Later in 2010 significant funding cuts were decided as part of ‘austerity measures.’ Another kind of degradation is that the migrants’ obligation to learn and speak the national language was previously connected to the migrants’ rights and social participation to prevent their marginalisation, while now it is increasingly linked to national security, the anti-extremist fight and prevention of social disruption. In policy practise this shift was expressed by the introduction of

standardized language tests and the heightening of the speaking capacity required that centralise the role that language can play in social integration. But, as Simpson and Whiteside point out:

...an assumption is easily made that literacy in the standard variety is a pre-requisite for daily life and is the route to a successful future. From here it is but a short step to another easy assumption - one that many make - that once competence in the language has been achieved, all the problems one faces as a migrant will be solved - as if all social groups using the standard variety are natural allies. But this rests on a misunderstanding of competence: language development, like the development of cultural competence, has no 'end state'. There is no one set of linguistic and cultural resources that suffices to meet the complexities of urban life. Moreover, linguistic homogeneity certainly does not correspond with socio-cultural and political alignment. Speaking the same language does not preclude conflict.

(Simpson, J. & Whiteside, A., 2015:4)

Social integration is also viewed by governments as integration into the labour market for those who are economically productive and active in job seeking. Discourses that promote language competence as a prerequisite for employability influence access to and the orientation of language training excluding 'non-productive' populations such as women at home, and people who are either not able to work or not willing to (Simpson, 2015).

Summarizing, the importance of language integration within integration policies is increasingly understood as a means of excluding, rather including migrants into the communities of their countries of residence. Yet not explicitly designed for this purpose, in the end they often function as the policies that are presented in the next section: that is gatekeeping mechanisms.

### 3.3.4 Gatekeeping language policies.

During the last two decades there have been changes in the way migration is facilitated and legitimized. In accordance with restrictive migration policies which have developed during the years of the migration crisis in Europe, language use has been incorporated in gatekeeping practices. The number of

European countries that have added language requirements to citizenship, residence permit and even to entry permit increased sharply. In 2014, Wodak and Boukala (2015) could number 26 for the first case, 23 for the second and 9 for the third, out of 36 participants in their survey. These policies involve written or computerized assessment of the competence in the standard language using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and language identification procedures as a tool in the examination of applications by refugees and asylum seekers.

Kurvers and Spotti (2015) attempted to give the full picture of this shift to language requirements in the Netherlands covering the amendments that have occurred in language policy with respect to migration since 1990's; back when any kind of language-related legislation existed. The policies gradually produce tougher procedures involving civic integration tests with more and more advanced level as thresholds, (including levels of literacy), which at some point extended to include pre-entry computerized tests through a telephone line for people who intend to migrate. Especially this method of language identification through voice is assessed as comprising a deliberate gatekeeping method as it makes it extremely difficult and unfair for non-speakers to pass the test (Kurvers & Spotti, 2015).

A similar method, that has been subject to significant criticism by linguists, (Spotti, 2016; Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016; Eades, D., 2015; Simpson and Whiteside, 2015), is what is known as Language Analysis for Determination of Origin (LADO). Used by many of western governments, including most of the powerful European ones, it is deployed in cases of asylum seekers who lack official documents to prove their origin. The idea is simple: a tape-recorded oral interview is analysed by the asylum services to define the origin of the language which it is assumed to be identical to the national origin of the applicants. Despite asylum-seekers, according to international law, should have personalised assessment as individual cases, the dominance of the monolingual discourse and the isomorph of nation-state-language underpins the use of this method so rising serious concerns about their fairness and justice.

The questions that should be posed relating to all the aforementioned language tests, are according to McNamara and Ryan (2011, in Simpson and Whiteside, 2015): “do they test what they should?” and “should they test what they do?” (Simpson and Whiteside, 2015:10). The first one is to question their fairness; that is whether participants experience a fair process that secures a judgement on their capabilities that is assessed correctly and objectively. The second one is to question their justice: an issue arising repeatedly where competence in the standard language takes the key place in migration control.

### 3.4 Language Education for Adult Migrants (AMLE).

All the language policies that have been described so far have at the core of their planning, or at least take into account, language education to serve their purposes. Adult Migrant Language Education in particular has been influenced with many scholars (Pöyhönen *et al*, 2018, Simpson and Whiteside, 2015; Gardenr-Chloros *et al*, 2016) drawing attention to uneven and contradictory educational policies that are being variously interpreted and applied.

However, two important tendencies appear to be common in the vast majority of national and international policies. First is the insistent denial of recognition for the multilingual reality of modern superdiverse societies and the dedication to the promotion of monolingualism. Second, is the adoption of the neoliberal imperative and knowledge economy’s orientation of purpose in education together with a “surviving” orientation to the curriculum.

The tendency in language education to reject multilingualism, as we have already seen, is aligned with integration and gatekeeping purposes. In terms of educational practise and pedagogy it means that the learners’ first language is not involved in any way that it could facilitate either language learning or multilingual education. Multilingual education, that is the recognition of the migrants’ language as a teaching tool or a learning target, is rarely funded and supported by governments. Apart from its educational effectiveness (Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016) the acknowledgment of the learners’ first language as prior

knowledge that should be exploited in the education process, prevents also the psychological impact of loss of identity that migrants may experience otherwise. Although language education should serve the individuals' social and educational progress (Poÿhonën *et al*, 2018), the simplistic interpretation of it as the learning of the host country language narrows the impact on learners' lives.

The neoliberal orientation of the content and the purposes of language education on the other side has spread the use of terms such as 'skill,' 'language-training,' 'language competence' and 'qualification.' Strictly related to employability and vocational training language is seen as just one more tool among other qualifications that make workers competitive within the labour market. Governments that are very much concerned with the economic integration of migrants provide funding for training classes to help them learn the country's language, focusing on the economically active workers and job-seekers. However, this funding is increasingly being reduced transforming language education into a commercial product that is the responsibility of the migrant to acquire. While promoting a narrow understanding of labour market linguistic needs (Simpson, 2015) this kind of AMLE planning excludes a huge part of the migrant population, such as those who do not have paid work as their first priority (for example, stay-at-home parents), old people, people not able or willing to work.

A notable aspect of AMLE, is the part that is designed for refugees and asylum seekers, especially as response of the European countries to the current crisis. Due to the fact that the future of this population is still undetermined in geographical and political terms, governments are reluctant and unwilling to fund programmes for their education. The main part of this education is run by NGO's and volunteers at the locations that these populations are gathered waiting for their applications to be examined. An expression of educational policy that is proposed by the Council of Europe is the *Toolkit*.

What Simpson and Whiteside (2015) view as opportunity despite the limited interest from governments to invest in migrants' education, is that because of governmental indifference it becomes possible for innovative classroom

practises 'more suited to the realities of migrants' lives in superdiverse, multilingual neighbourhoods and workplaces' (Simpson and Whitedise, 2015:14) to develop. These include translanguaging pedagogy and the enrichment of learners' linguistic repertoires.

Finally, the position of teachers, in the context of AMLE, is shaped by the same forces: cuts in funds lead to the de-professionalization of teaching (Simpson and Whiteside, 2015) whereas the need of linguistically informed and experienced teachers is becoming more essential than ever.

### 3.5 Summary

The literature review supports the view that the dominant language ideology in Europe now is monolingualism; which leads to linguistic nationalisms. This position is at odds with the multilingual reality and increasingly superdiverse experience of western societies. The emergence of nationalist public discourses as a response to the migration crisis conditioned the imposition of analogous language policies. Functioning either as an integration and or gatekeeping mechanism, such policies reflect the general turn of migration politics in Europe to restrictive measures against population inflows and the promotion of a European or national identity that excludes strangers. AMLE in such a context has been influenced, both by governmental indifference, making language education more difficult on the one hand, while the content and the orientation of language learning has come under political pressure. Having developed this overview of AMLE in Europe today, the analysis presented through a case study will focus on the *Toolkit* the Council of Europe launched in April 2018; aiming to help those providing language support to asylum seekers who are contained at entry-points to Europe. Studies such as Gardner-Chloros *et al* (2016) and Atabekova and Shoustikova (2018) came to regard it as working for the Language rights of refugees and therefore the *Toolkit* is welcomed by the linguists' society.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

For the analysis of the Toolkit I applied Critical Discourse Analysis in a simplified version of Fairclough's model (Fairclough, 2001). Critical Discourse Analysis has been developed upon the acceptance that language plays a central role in producing and reproducing power relations in society. With the notion of discourse including a wide spectrum of codified forms of communication, such as written and oral texts, or visualised pictures and messages, critical approach aims to unveil the ideologies that dominate the social space and are embedded into the discourses as common-sense assumptions. The use of such assumptions is being made unconsciously and critical analysis aims to raise awareness of the ideological struggle that hides behind the production of discourse. To do so, critical discourse analysis examines the semiotic choices the producers have made among alternative options, which indicate the lens or frame they use in their approach.

In this analysis the method I followed is critical language analysis, as the discourse of the Toolkit is language in the form of a written text. According to Fairclough (2001), there are three levels in the process of critical language analysis: in the first level, what he terms Description, an attempt is made at a close examination and description of the choices made in the use of language in terms of grammar, structure and vocabulary. For example, identifying the use of a certain mood in the sentences instead of another and the difference it makes in producing meaning. In the second level, which he calls Interpretation, the choices that have been noted and described in the text are examined for their correlations to existing social discourses, so it becomes understandable how the former are being interpreted through the lenses of the assumptions the latter carry. An example of that is the link that connects the term "cultural identity" with ideologies of language or border politics. At the third level, the Explanation, an explanation of why these discourses have been employed in the text is made taking into account the social and political context within which



the text has been produced. In other words, what kind of power struggles are hidden behind the text.

In my analysis I refer to thematic areas I have already sketched out after my initial reading of the Toolkit then proceeding with a detailed analysis of two selected broad themes, that I regard as the most influential in terms of answering the research question. These are “the participants” of the discourse and the position of the Toolkit on “language”. Although the three levels of language analysis that Fairclough proposes are understood as in an order from specific to abstract and represented as distinguishable procedures, I do not refer to them separately in my analysis, nor in a specific order. Commonly, the way I use “description” and “interpretation” is as evidence to ground my arguments while attempting the “explanation”.

Given that this dissertation did not involve any kind of interaction with individuals but was limited to document analysis, there has not been the need for ethical approval. Respecting my positioning as a researcher I conducted the analysis with fairness, transparency and dedication to social justice and equity, without imposing my political views.

## 5. ANALYSIS OF THE TOOLKIT “LANGUAGE SUPPORT FOR ADULT REFUGEES” BY THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

### 5.1 Introduction

The Toolkit ‘Language Support for Adult Refugees’ (Council of Europe, online) was launched in 2018 by the Council of Europe (CofE) and it is accessible online in seven languages: Turkish, Greek, Italian, German, Dutch, French and English. It consists of 57 tools distributed in three sections: ‘Introduction’, ‘Preparation and Planning’, and ‘Activities’, followed by two more sections which provide ‘Resources’ and ‘Information About the Toolkit’ (see Fig.1). As part of the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) programme, it addresses the linguistic needs of refugees at the places and at the time just after their first entry to Europe. It consists of both educational material and guidance on the particular characteristics of refugees’ language education. As an example of good practise that recognizes and respects migrants’ human rights, and which contributes to the fight against negative discourses around migration, the Toolkit was being anticipated with positivity and welcomed by linguists who were aware of the misuse of language in migration politics (Gardner-Chloros *et al*, 2016; Atabekova & Shoustikova, 2018). Indeed, there can be identified throughout the Toolkit discourses connected to learner-centered pedagogies, awareness of working with vulnerable groups, inclusive education as well as cultural diversity and adult learning (tools 3,4,11,12, and 14).

Particularly because the Toolkit reflects the most humanistic approaches of the European policies to language learning it has been selected for the analysis, so the extent of these approaches can be investigated. The analysis will focus mainly on the representation of the participants’ relationships, the identification of the influence of language ideologies and the perception of linguistic integration.

| LANGUAGE SUPPORT FOR ADULT REFUGEES:<br>A COUNCIL OF EUROPE TOOLKIT<br><a href="http://www.coe.int/lang-refugees">www.coe.int/lang-refugees</a>  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>  |  |  |
| The Council of Europe and language policy for migrants/refugees  |  |  |
| Refugees: some essential background ↗  |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The geopolitical context of migration</li> <li>2. The rights and legal status of refugees: some basic facts and terms</li> <li>3. Ethical and intercultural issues to be aware of when working with refugees</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| Cultural and language awareness ↗  |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Responding appropriately to cultural difference and managing intercultural communication</li> <li>5. Arabic: some information</li> <li>6. Kurdish: some information</li> <li>7. Persian: some information</li> <li>8. Somali: some information</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| Language learning ↗  |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Thinking about language learning and providing language support</li> <li>10. What is involved in providing language support for refugees?</li> <li>11. Refugees as language users and learners</li> <li>12. Engaging adult refugees as language learners</li> <li>13. Acquiring a very elementary ability to use a new language</li> </ol>   |  |  |
| <b>PREPARATION &amp; PLANNING</b>  |  |  |
| Some points to think about ↗   |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Diversity in working groups</li> <li>15. Supporting refugees with low literacy</li> <li>16. Plurilingual portrait: a reflective task for volunteers</li> <li>17. Challenges in learning to read and write in a new language</li> <li>18. Preparing an environment for offering language support</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19. Breaking the ice and building group confidence</li> <li>20. Organising writing practice at elementary level</li> <li>21. Selecting and using texts for listening and reading at elementary level</li> <li>22. Selecting pictures and 'realia' for language activities. Some guidelines</li> <li>23. Reflecting on your language support work</li> </ol>   |  |  |
| Needs analysis ↗   |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24. Identifying refugees' most urgent needs</li> <li>25. Finding out what refugees can already do in the target language and what they need to be able to do</li> <li>26. First steps in the host country language</li> <li>27. Refugees' linguistic profiles</li> <li>28. Finding out more about refugee's own linguistic resources and capacities</li> <li>29. What are the most important things to learn? The refugees' point of view</li> <li>30. Observing situations in which refugees need to use the target language</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| Planning content ↗   |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>31. Selecting situations to focus on in language support – a checklist</li> <li>32. Selecting communicative functions that are useful for beginners – a checklist</li> <li>33. A list of expressions for everyday communication</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| <b>ACTIVITIES</b>  |  |  |
| Getting started ↗  |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>34. Handling initial meetings with refugees: some guidelines</li> </ol>   |  |  |
| Learning vocabulary ↗  |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35. Ideas for learning basic vocabulary: everyday life</li> <li>36. Basic vocabulary to express opinions and emotions</li> <li>37. Techniques for learning vocabulary</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| Thinking about language learning ↗   |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>38. Plurilingual portrait: a reflective task for refugees</li> <li>39. Helping refugees to think about their learning</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| Scenarios for language support ↗   |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40. Starting to socialise</li> <li>41. Using a mobile phone</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>42. Using apps like Google Maps</li> <li>43. Finding out about social services</li> <li>44. Using health services</li> <li>45. Shopping: buying clothes</li> <li>46. Shopping: buying credit for a mobile phone</li> <li>47. Food – inviting someone to a meal</li> <li>48. Finding your way in town: the local library</li> <li>49. Looking for training opportunities</li> <li>50. Looking for a job</li> <li>51. Finding accommodation</li> <li>52. Using postal and banking services</li> <li>53. School and college</li> <li>54. Socialising with the local community</li> </ol> |  |  |
| Mapping journeys and interacting with the host community ↗   |  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>55. Mapping refugees' journeys and the local area</li> <li>56. Planning language support activities in the community</li> <li>57. Practising language in the real world</li> </ol>  |  |  |
| <b>RESOURCES</b>   |  |  |
| List of all tools  |  |  |
| Glossary   |  |  |
| Web directories  |  |  |
| Selection of links   |  |  |
| <b>ABOUT THE TOOLKIT</b>   |  |  |
| Piloting   |  |  |
| How the toolkit was developed  |  |  |
| Toolkit contributors   |  |  |

Figure 1

## The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe, founded in 1949, is a European international organisation which has 47 member-states and its main aim is claimed to be the upholding of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe. It also plays an essential role regarding language integration as it is the organ that created the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in language competence assessment, and a spectrum of language policies including LIAM. Despite its being independent from the EU, all the countries of the latter must be members of the CoE first. Its policies are not binding, however, they become so once a member signs them.

## 5.2 The participants of the discourse and their relationship

As the aim of critical discourse analysis is to unveil the power relations that hide under naturalised utterances, it is important to detect the participants of this relationship, as they arise through the discourse. It is already given that the producer of the Toolkit is the Council of Europe, that is real people working on its behalf, some of them mentioned as “contributors” in the last section.

Within the main part of the Toolkit the text is written in second person, addressed to the volunteers, either in indicative: “you do not have to teach grammar” (p.1 of tool 10) or imperative sentences: “do not ask refugees” (p.3 of tool 1). This second person is a part of a broader “we” that is explicitly noted only once throughout the Toolkit in the following context: “In Europe we are used to” (p.3 of tool 4). There is also a very dominant presence of a “they”, used alternately with the term “the refugees”. Even in contexts of specific educational activities, learners are mostly called “refugees”, as in the example of tool 33, where in a text under the title “Communication in English for beginners”, it is used five times versus the term “beginners” which is used only two, to refer to the learners.

Therefore, the whole discourse is built upon a perception of the relation between “us” and “them”, where the former refers to Europeans and the latter to the refugees. In the next paragraphs is attempted a detailed analysis of how each one of the participants is represented.

### 5.2.1 The positive “us”

On the first page of the Toolkit’s leaflet (Leaflet, online), the Council of Europe introduces itself as the organ which “aims to create a common democratic and legal area throughout the continent where respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law are ensured.” According to the information provided in tool 1, Europe is the place the refugees reach in order to escape from a number of terrible things happening back home: “civil wars”, “poverty”, “mandatory military service”, “lack of rule of law”, “terrorists”, “instability”, and “bad conditions in camps” outside Europe (including in Turkey, despite it is a member of the CofE). On the contrary, every policy decided by European institutions and specifically by the EU is presented in a natural form and any kind of critique is absent. For example, in tool 2, the role of Dublin III is presented as for establishing “criteria and mechanisms for determining which Member-state is responsible for examining an application for international protection (within the EU)” (p.2) failing to mention that this Member-state is already determined

by the regulation and it is the first one in which the refugee has been registered. Similarly, with the use of an indicative sentence it is accepted as a norm that “the rights that people have vary significantly according to their legal status” (p.3 of tool 2). So, these who have not yet granted the status of refugee “may be subject to restrictions” including confinement, not being allowed to travel and work (ibid). The mild tone implied using the subjunctive when referring to the negative aspect is followed by the assertion that “however, everybody is entitled to basic rights such as accommodation, food, healthcare and education of children” in an order that places the positive aspect last and therefore emphasising it.

The positive picture that the CofE endeavours to construct for itself and therefore for Europe lies upon the fragile balance of the three main aims that are arrayed in an implied equation: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. However, when the circumstances do not support the equal application of all the three, the decision as to which of them will be promoted, is given by introducing the mechanism of “exception.” So, while the CofE claims to uphold human rights, when it comes to the EU and its migration policies, the violation of human rights becomes simply “exceptions” that may apply. It seems, therefore, that by eliminating the negative aspects of European migration policies and naturalising them as common sense, the CofE functions as an international organisation for the diffusion of the EU’s policies.

### 5.2.2 The uniform culture of “ours”

In tool 3, (see also Fig 2), the bipolar of “European and non-European” cultures is used to indicate the cultural differences that volunteers should have in mind when working with refugees. Some examples of what the European culture is characterised by are topics: “commonly addressed in an open way”, such as “family status”, “sexual orientation”, “discussing illness or handicap” (p.2 of tool 4), less hierarchical family relationships, and a common age up to which one is considered a child (that of 18). The cultural commonalities among European societies refer also to more practical aspects of a culture, such as the

way names are used: “In Europe we are used to one or two given names and one or two surnames, prefaced by Mr, Mrs or Ms in polite forms of address” (p.3 of tool 4). Overall, when comparison is made between the two cultures it is only to indicate differences and never similarities. Given the fact that members of the CofE are countries such as Russia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Albania, together with Belgium, the UK, the Scandinavian countries and more, becomes apparent that the uniformity of the so called “European culture” is arbitrary and that those kind of representations intend to build a constructed homogenous cultural identity which can be used in border politics in contradistinction with several “cultural others.”

### 3 - Ethical and intercultural issues to be aware of when working with refugees

**Aim: To raise volunteers’ awareness of issues relating to refugees’ background and some of the sensitivities that can arise.**

**Introduction**

It is important to avoid raising issues that could distress members of your group or make them feel uncomfortable. If sensitive issues are raised they may give rise to conflicts within the group and cause individuals to withdraw from language support activities (see also Tool 4 *Responding appropriately to cultural difference and managing intercultural communication*).

Some topics that are commonly addressed in an open way in European societies may be considered taboo in non-European cultures. Others may be avoided or at least not discussed in public, including:

- Family status: in some cultures, being an orphan, or a single woman after a certain age, or a widow without family is considered unusual and something to be ashamed of; also, in some contexts polygamous families are accepted but family members may prefer not to talk about their situation.
- Sexual orientation is not something people are expected to talk about.
- Discussing illness or handicap, including mental disabilities, is often sensitive.

European and non-European societies may have different perceptions of gender roles and relationships within the family. For example, where extended families are the norm and there is a recognized head of the family, that person may be considered the highest authority, taking decisions for family members or expecting to be consulted before family members themselves take decisions. Also, the social status of siblings may be determined by their age and gender, and this may be reflected in the order in which they speak in a public setting or are expected to benefit from external support (see also Tool 14 *Diversity in working groups*).

Figure 2

### 5.2.3 The “you” within the “us”

As already mentioned, the second person that is used throughout the Toolkit refers to the volunteers who provide language support to the refugees.

Volunteers are portrayed with two main characteristics. The first one is their position within a strictly hierarchical framework. There are levels of authorities that the Toolkit takes in account. At a first level, which respects the initial need the Toolkit answers to, it is the “member-states in their efforts to respond to the challenges posed by unprecedented migration flows” (p.1 of the leaflet). At a second level, are “the organisations, and especially volunteers” that the Toolkit aims to assist (Homepage). At a third level, is the position of the volunteers within these organisations. The latter becomes apparent by the wide use of imperative forms (“Dos and Don’ts” lists) and specific instructions that are given to them respecting the framework of a camp, or a reception centre beyond the educational settings of language support. For example, on how to find information about the background of the refugees in their group, volunteers should ask “information provided by the staff of the institution or organisation managing the camp/centre/facility or from key stakeholders,” while they should “not ask refugees to provide information about themselves” (p.3 of tool 1). Similarly, they “should not attempt to answer” questions about asylum procedures, instead, they “should direct refugees to authorized institutions” (p.1 of tool 2). Moreover, volunteers, “should alert the law enforcement authorities to any illegal behaviour that threatens the safety or rights of others in the group” (p.2 of tool 3) or “direct refugees to relevant professionals” when asked for legal, medical, financial advice (p. 2 of tool 10). Finally, the word “supervisors” appears once in the text (p.2 of tool 24) confirming explicitly the hierarchical structure.

The second feature of the volunteers refers to their role in language support (tools 9 and 10). This is described in contrast to trained teachers, as the latter are more likely to involve in formal language education while the former in non-formal language support. They are also supposed to cover the very elementary linguistic needs of the refugees since organised courses are not provided by the States at this stage.

Both the characteristics of volunteers either as parts of a hierarchy or as non-trained, non-paid, alternative staff, links to discourses that perceive volunteers as obedient and compliant agents for the purposes the superior

imposes. It is about a quite different approach compared to others one can find in places that receive refugees, such as the Greek islands. The kind of volunteerism met there is much more morally independent and self-organised, involving the everyday life of the locals.

#### 5.2.4 The “other” in need

The “other” in the context of the Toolkit is the refugees. Those who “have always been received” by European countries seeking refuge, “but” their number has been significantly increased in the past few years. It is noted that “17%” of them are women and “25%” children, many of them “lost their lives at sea.” They are victims of extreme conditions in their countries, of exploitation by trafficking and smuggling networks, as well as of bad conditions in camps before their arrival in Europe (p.p. 1-2 of tool 1). They bear obvious and hidden traumas, hence, several references to emotional and other kinds of difficulties they might have draws upon an educational discourse for working with vulnerable adults (tools 1,2,3,10,24). Additionally, as mentioned before, they have limited human rights and they come from different cultural contexts.

There are two points in the body of the Toolkit that address the terms that are used for referring to the other. While in tool 2 (“The Rights and Legal Status of Refugees: Some basic facts and terms”), we are reminded that the CofE:

...in particular with regard to its work to support the linguistic integration of adult migrants (LIAM programme), uses the term ‘migrant’ to refer to all those who have migrated, including asylum seekers, those who have obtained refugees status or a similar type of protection, as well as to so-called ‘economic migrants’.

(p.3 of tool 2)

on the homepage of the Toolkit, it is made clear that, “throughout the toolkit “refugee” is understood in a broad sense and includes asylum seekers as well as refugees”. However, the term “migrant” is never been employed to refer to



the people who receive the language support, who are consistently called “refugees”, even when referring to the learners in plain pedagogical terms.

The volunteering ideal that the Toolkit promotes needs a moral aim to invest in. The use of the internationally accepted term “refugee” for people in forced migration instead of “migrants” according to the CofE own glossary, follows the discursive rationale of the “other in need”, which, despite it being understood as the very opposite of the “other as a threat,” yet implies an unequal relationship. The “others” in need are regarded as not able to take responsibility for themselves any more, hence the positive “us” is legitimised to take agency over them.

Summarizing the first part of the analysis, the participants of the discourse in the Toolkit are the abstract idea of Europe represented by the Council of Europe, the volunteers that receive the instructions of their supervisor institution, and the refugees, who are the target of any action described in the tools. The relationship between them is strictly hierarchical, with the institutional producer of the discourse dominating the volunteers (with whom they share the same culture and values), on how to dominate the in-need refugees, who constitute a cultural “other”.

### 5.3 Language and the Toolkit.

To understand the language policy that underpins the Toolkit, one has to go back to the main portal of the CofE that is dedicated to its language policy (Fig.3) where the Toolkit is first introduced as a part of the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) programme. The contradiction that goes through the paragraph, starting with a learner-centred approach which covers “all languages” “whatever their status” is followed by a logical leap that excludes migrants’ languages from “all” languages by proposing their linguistic integration. Hence, the CofE acts once more within the notion of “exception” in respecting human rights. In the next paragraphs, I focus on how this exception shapes the content of the Toolkit.

Language learners/users lie at the heart of the work of the **Language Policy Programme**. Whatever their status, all languages are covered: foreign languages, major languages of schooling (used for learning/teaching at school), languages spoken in the family and minority or regional languages. A specific programme focuses on the **linguistic integration of migrants** (adults and young people, and also refugees).

Figure: 3

### 5.3.1 Language ideology

Tools 11, 16 and 38 are dedicated to equipping the volunteers with theoretical knowledge on plurilingualism and linguistic repertoire. On the relevant section of the literature review it has been mentioned that plurilingualism is the official language ideology of the CofE. All its basic principles are mentioned in the Toolkit too, such as the perception of languages as distinct entities that one can have many, variously “distributed” and use them by the practise of “code alternation” (Glossary). However, there appear also notions and terms that link to more critical language approaches, those of multilingualism and translanguaging, yet limited to a plurilingual perspective. The way, for example, “linguistic repertoire” (p.1 of tool 11) is understood in the Toolkit, is explained in the glossary as “repertoire of languages” respecting the number of languages one has competence in and which on the linguistic “profile” of the learner can be represented by colouring different parts of a body (Fig.4). This is a narrower understanding of the linguistic repertoire as viewed in relation to translanguaging, where the colours would be overlapped if not mixed.

The concept “**language repertoire**” refers to the fact that all individuals are potentially or actually plurilingual, capable of communicating in more than one language. A language portrait is one way of making a person’s language repertoire visible. The woman who created the example below has used the colours red, orange, purple and blue to show the languages she is able to use.



Figure 4

With similarly narrower perspective is addressed also the importance of the learner's first language. Despite what the Toolkit claims to be the purposes of plurilingual education, which:

...is geared to enhancing individual language repertoires, especially the language(s) already present, in order at least to prevent them from becoming a sign of marginality on the part of the adult migrants themselves.

(Glossary: Language Repertoire)

the valuation of learners' first language does not meet the recognition is meant to (teaching of the first language), but it is limited to just being exploited by "participants who have the same linguistic background to help each other" (p.4 of tool 10).

### 5.3.2 The need for language

The Toolkit claims to support refugees to learn the language they "want", "need" (p.2 tool 10) or "prefer" (p.1 of tool 27). However, the provided options are limited since the language in which the Toolkit is written is implied to be the target language. In tool 33, in all seven translations of the Toolkit there are instructions for language learning for beginners in the language the document is written in. (English could probably be seen as lingua franca, French, German and Dutch as languages of the countries refugees have already been relocated, and Italian, Greek and Turkish as languages of the countries-first entry points in which they are going to stay according to Dublin III). Moreover, throughout the Toolkit a rhetoric on the "need for the language" of the "host" country is unfolding, that aims to lead the refugees' decision.

Language learning may well not be the first priority of refugees, especially when they are in transit and their final destination is in doubt, but sooner or later they will need to learn the language of their host country.

(p.1 of tool 9)

Refugees need elementary knowledge of the languages of their countries they are passing through as well as the countries where they are settling.  
(p.1 of tool 10)

Refugees live in a situation of “forced language use”: they need a degree of linguistic and communicative competence in order to survive in a new country, follow asylum procedures, and find food and accommodation.

(p.3 of tool 11)

Respecting the refugees’ need for language, apart from the fact that it is uncontested (indicative sentences) it is connected to a liberal rhetoric which takes into account the refugees’ rights and well-being in their efforts to survive and overcome difficulties. Nevertheless, in the Glossary and the explanation of the term “linguistic integration”, the need for language and linguistic integration is linked directly to identity, a brief mention of it made as well in tools 32 and 33:

It is very important for refugees/migrants to talk about themselves in order to start constructing their identity in another language.

(p.1, tool 32; p.2 tool 33)

### 5.3.3 Language integration.

An analytical explanation of how the CofE is using the term linguistic integration is attempted in the Glossary under the same title. First of all, migrants’ integration is seen as “into their new society”. For linguistic integration in particular, it is a matter of “building both individual and group cultural identities”. The role language plays in shaping identities is seen as a balance between learning and using “the language of the host society” and the use of “other languages there the migrant already knows but which are unfamiliar to the established population”. For the former are being also used the phrases “the dominant language”, “the dominant/official language”, “the majority/dominant language”, “the majority language”, “the main language of the host country”, while for the latter once: “their previous languages

(including their mother tongue)" and most times "language of origin." The speaking communities are described as "dominant" and "the majority" of the host country in contrast with the "migrants' languages". Respecting the linguistic diversity of the "home territory", is understood as the "traditional linguistic diversity" consisting of "regional and minority languages", which is resisting "a new form of diversity" that migrants' languages bring with them. This view on linguistic diversity is not aligned with the discourse of "superdiversity" (discussed above) according to which this view does not follow the social developments of our era.

Linguistic integration is an "asymmetrical process" between the established population and migrants which has "a price" that "differs according to the viewpoint". For the former "it is their understanding of national identity which is at stake" while for the latter "both their cultural identity and their group allegiances may be called into question". It is also asymmetrical because the "new language does not have direct implications for the established population who are under no obligation to learn" them; but for migrants, who are therefore obliged to, "the issues are immediate and have other implications". Linguistic assimilation is criticised and rejected as "an external interpretation of integration, which relates to the wishes of certain native speakers" and equates "proficiency in language" "with citizenship" ("someone who speaks French (well) is French"). The way intercultural education is supposed to offset "assimilationist" expectations, implies another asymmetry, not explicitly recognised as such, regarding the duties of each side. While for the established population is suggested a set of "positive attitudes" that include "goodwill regarding mistakes" made by migrants, and "acceptance of the use of other languages in public or in the media", for migrants "the role of language training, is to inform them about the consequences" of their choices on learning the new language or not, and "explain that migration necessarily involves an identity adjustment process". The superior position of the established population underpins what the CofE calls integration "from an internal perspective", that is "integration of languages in the repertoire". However, it is the migrants' repertoire that should integrate by developing new languages

of identity. In its most succeeded form this kind of integration is regarded as “analogous to having dual nationality”.

Hence, the equation of language with identity and of integration with nationality unveils a direct correlation between language and nationality. The role territorial belonging plays in identity is connected to language too, as the dominant language is regarded to be the spoken language by the established population within an area called “home territory” and the migrants’ this “of origin” spoken in a “host country”. In conclusion, despite the rejection of the doctrine that “someone who speaks French (well) is French” in terms of citizenship, it seems that it is accepted in terms of nationality and national identity. Ultimately, the linguistic integration of migrants that the CofE proposes is a kind of assimilation imposed by gentle means rather than discourse of hate.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this dissertation has been to investigate how AMLE has been influenced by migration and the policy responses in Europe over the last decades. Although limited in size and making use of a thematic reading, the Toolkit, in my opinion provides a representative picture of this effect. The analysis of the Toolkit aimed to answer the research question to the degree the theoretical tools provided by the literature review could be applied. As a general conclusion, the factors that shape Adult Migrant Language Education in Europe today have strong ideological roots expressed by the policies that national and international institutions impose.

In terms of language ideology, the findings support Gal's remarks about how deceptive the emphasis on linguistic diversity by the European institutions is, including the CofE, as "the linguistic practices listed in such documents conform to Herderian assumptions" (Gal, 2005:16). Languages in the Toolkit are understood as countable, distinct entities with norms of correctness and labels such as "migrants", "of origin", "minority", "of the majority", "of the country", and plurilingual repertoire is ultimately perceived as nothing more than a number of languages one has learnt. Expressed more explicitly in Pöyhönen *et al* (2015), what in practise is understood as plurilingualism is nothing but "parallel monolingualisms" (Pöyhönen *et al*, 2015:471).

If what the CofE is trying to present as plurilingualism turns out to be a disguised form of monolingualism, then the political dimensions of the latter should be identifiable in the discourse. Indeed, the connection that is attempted in the Toolkit between language and identity, despite is not including citizenship, makes a direct link between language of origin and nationality in the same way Spotti has revealed the LADO system in the Netherlands demonstrates (Spotti, 2016). The argument that migrants are supposed to reconstruct their identity in the language of their new society, particularly when this society it is meant to be a European one, understands linguistic integration of migrants as becoming less non-European. We have to bear in mind that the abstract idea of Europe the CofE is working for is broader

than the EU and much less institutionalised. If even the EU does not provide an institutionalised status of citizenship, but only their member-states can, then it is not surprising how easily the CofE can dissociate its discourse from it. Nevertheless, things do not work the same way regarding the European cultural and national identity which are at stake and the main purposes of its statute. The status of being a member of the European cultural identity is a kind of nationality which finds its first and brief introduction in the triptych: human rights - democracy - rule of law. As was shown in the analysis, these three poles participate in a balance such that the proportion of each one is adjusted by the application of the function of "exception." The criteria that decide in what degree human rights and democracy will apply are defined by law which in the case of the CofE are the laws that apply in the European territory, that is the EU's and its member-states' laws with the nationalistic influences they have been subjected to.

I regard as the main axis upon the picture of language education as being built on the hierarchical and highly supervised structure of the educational setting that the Toolkit proposes. The ultimate authority of the ideological perception of a European identity (the CofE) controls the volunteers who engage with the refugees' language learning. But not only the volunteers are being controlled. The spatial context is surveilled, as well as the movements of the refugees in it. The content of learning, although is claimed to be a free choice, is being loaded by the "need" for the language and ends to serve an asymmetrical process that violates the linguistic rights of the refugees.

The strict, inflexible structure of this hierarchy of power can possibly explain the contradiction that so many linguists point out between superdiverse societies and language policies which insist on ignoring the multilinguistic reality. Linguistic superdiversity is the result of extreme disruption of traditional migration and linguistic normalities. Globalised economy, freedom of movement, the refugee crisis together with explosion in communication technology have not only changed the world but introduced fluidity and the unpredictable as the norm. A multilingual world is a phenomenon that such hierarchical constructions as Europe according to its institutions cannot



perceive differently than being abnormal due to being themselves extremely strict and normative.

AMLE as long as it remains under top-down designed policies cannot meet the needs of learners and modern societies. For language education to function positively for migrant learners and support meaningful learning it has first to take in account their views in a political manner, through the redemocratization of language politics.

#### Limitations:

Given the multidimensional nature of the research question the size of this dissertation made it impossible to include an exhaustive review of ideologies and policies relating to language education for adult migrants with those included, presented only briefly in a broad sketching of the field. Moreover, and for the same reason, AMLE was not approached in terms of pedagogies and actualization of language learning, as both the literature review and the analysis have been limited to policy analysis. I believe that further exploration of this aspect would make a significant contribution to the research question. Finally, as the Toolkit has been recently launched, there was not enough, or almost any, relevant literature to consider during the writing of this report, hence my approach bears both the advantages and disadvantages of being an early analysis of the policy.

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