

## Chapter 2

# Movements and Migratory Processes: Roles and Responsibilities of Education and Learning

Pat Cox

The English philosopher and mathematician Bertrand Russell wrote: ‘No political theory is adequate, unless it is applicable to children, as well as to men and women’ (Russell 1916/1997, p. 100). In this section, research and theorizing about migration, cultures, languages and difference is applied to the situations of children, young people, women and men within and following migratory processes and to the contributions of education and learning. This introduction opens with a brief summary of the contexts of migration and of culture early in the twenty-first century; these are followed by discussion of the contexts of education and of learning; a summary of the subject matter and key points within each chapter, with some closing remarks.

### Contexts of Migration and of Culture

In the twenty-first century, migration is arguably a global phenomenon (Harzig and Hoerder 2009). Migration encompasses large social issues such as justice, equality, human flourishing, human suffering, human endeavour and mutual respect, in addition to questions of politics, economics, culture and education. Migration may be freely chosen or forced; it includes movements of groups, communities or people and of individual women, men, children, young people and families (Castles and Miller 2009; Giugni and Passy 2006).

Despite world-wide economic difficulties and financial crises, capitalism does not falter. As noted by Bauman (2003) when writing about the consequences of modernity, raw materials and goods flow generally without let or hindrance in pursuit of ‘globalization’, but the movements of people, whether groups or individuals, are more circumscribed. Migration is constructed as positive when required by receiving nations for their own purposes; negative when it is not required or when refuge is being sought. Media stories position migrant people themselves as the causes of

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problems; however, the demands of capital lead not only to extremes of poverty and wealth (Bauman 2007, 2009) but also to natural disasters of flood, famine and disease which can be attributed in part to nations of the western world meeting their own needs at the expense of others (de Wet 2006; Ward 2010) and refusing to admit their contribution to some forced migrations: "...only rarely do we see that 'their' problems cannot be disentangled from our conduct." (Smail 1987, p. 35).

Works on migration such as Castles and Miller (2009) and others mentioned in this introduction and section chapters were published before recession in the western world became established. However, decisions concerning migration are influenced by numerous issues (which may or may not include economic factors) and migrant people who have established family and community ties in receiving nations may choose to stay rather than return to countries of origin, despite challenges ahead (Somerville and Sumption 2009). While the rate of migration to a number of current receiving nations has slowed, it is estimated that migration will not completely cease (Papademitriou et al. 2010) and despite cuts to public services, including education, and uncertainties about future demand, educators will continue to need to provide learning opportunities; will need to include migrant children, young people and adults in educational settings and to ensure that education provides learning for people of the receiving nation and migrant people together (Papademitriou et al. 2009).

Culture is an integral aspect of migration; migrant people have their own shared cultural understanding and practices, which are as valuable to them as the cultural understandings and practices are valuable to members of receiving nations. Multi-culturalist endeavours in receiving nations have their supporters and their critics, for example: Modood and Ahmad (2007) and arguments for the need for more critical approaches are mounted (Dhaliwal and Patel 2006; Johnson 2008). Cultural 'differences' and the apparent impossibility of belonging within more than one cultural domain may be used to justify social differences and to exclude (Bekerman and Kopelowitz 2008).

## **Contexts of Education and of Learning**

Arendt (1977) notes that in north America following the war of 1939–1945, school education was being used to inculcate migrant children and children of migrant parents into the cultural practices and prevailing language of the receiving nation. Due to education's accepted place in the structures of many societies, all levels of education systems may be thought able to reinforce cultural ideologies, norms and expectations and address concerns about the education of migrants and the impact of immigration upon education (House of Lords 2008; OECD 2006).

Such educational praxes reflect the assumption of a linear relationship between what migrant people—children, young people and adults—need to learn and how they need to learn it, and the existing education systems of the receiving nation. Expressed simply it is: here is a need and there is a resource; educators are 'specialized

technicians' (Ibsen 1882/1997). However, monolithic educational institutions which have accreted indigenous values, ideologies, norms and cultural reference points and which operate with fixed internal systems are not always best placed to respond to the range of learning and social and psycho-social needs (Rose 2006; Scheifele 2008) which migrant people of all ages may experience at different stages during and following migration processes. When educational provision is unable to respond effectively to such needs, education may or may not lead to learning. Meintjes (1997) observes that education is not neutral, as it leads either to conformity or to transformation. Thus while upholding traditional cultural praxes, education may also incorporate possibilities for personal and societal change.

## Content of This Section

While the relevance of social sciences such as sociology, social policy and politics in analysing and researching migration and migratory experiences are well-established, chapters in this section each provide a timely reminder of the significance of culture, education and learning during and following migratory processes. Relationships between migration, learning, culture and difference are multi-faceted and complex; some of these complexities are addressed in this themed section.

The chapters are informed by theoretical explorations and research studies and analyses and critique of these, establishing a body of understanding and knowledge around multi-faceted and inter-related issues. The authors of each chapter seek critical engagement with the unthinking acceptance of culture as given or fixed, with the varieties of culture's meanings and with its roles. Chapters here range across the life course, from learning issues and education for young children in migrant families to those who have migrated as adults. For example, Gaspar and Lengyel focus on early childhood and families; Geisen, Cox, Apitzsch and Thiesen focus on young people; while Cassar, Markakis, Piñero and Haller, Schely-Newman address issues for adults.

In the opening chapter of this section, Thomas Geisen analyses recent research studies on belonging, respect and recognition, in order to address core concepts of young migrant people's belonging, cultural positioning and social mobility. He emphasizes young people's agency and young migrant people as social actors. Feelings and experiences of young migrant people are located within recent research and theorizing on migration, which moves away from monocausal or binary explanations for migration and centralizes multiples causes and manifestations.

The chapter's core consists of secondary analysis of three qualitative studies—each with slightly different findings and analyses—into young migrant people's feelings of 'lack of belonging' and their relationships with and within the majority society. However, agency and ingenuity result in young people making spaces for themselves, resisting pressures and expectations and creating individual biographies. Secondary analysis of two additional studies concerned with the role of education in facilitating cultural integration and success demonstrates how young people use education to improve their situations in their new national settings.

In the studies' findings, feelings and experiences are expressed and strategies (including education) for managing emotions and experiences and succeeding are discussed; the regular psychological tasks of adolescence also impact upon young migrant people. Thomas Geisen reveals the multiple positionings of migrant adolescents within and between their parents' cultures of origin and the cultures and structures of the receiving nations; he argues both for moving away from 'essentializing' concepts of culture and for addressing culture *and* structure in analyses of migratory experiences.

Pat Cox, author of the second chapter, also focuses on specific issues for young migrant people in receiving nations, including young people who arrive with their families in a planned way or those who are 'forced migrants'. She links the subject of young migrant people's experiences and concerns with exploration and discussion of how educators in higher (university) education who research into and who teach about issues of migration might exercise their roles and responsibilities in influencing social and civic issues (including contributing to public knowledge and debates about migration), which universities once had and which, she argues, they could have again. In her analysis and discussion Pat Cox draws from the theories of Mergner and of Arendt, in order to explore learning processes (including learning limitations); education; ambivalence in human thought and action; the drawbacks of abstract equalizing; identity; cultural patterning and cultural 'othering'; relationships of solidarity with others and thinking for oneself rather than unquestioningly following rules. In particular, she addresses the (frequently unacknowledged) influences of cultural understandings and expectations on learning processes and learning experiences within higher education, for migrant and non-migrant students and for educators. Throughout the chapter there is an emphasis on learning, rather than on knowledge acquisition. In considering the public role and responsibilities of educators in university settings, the author examines an array of recent and current academic writings from within universities and about universities from across mainland Europe, North America and the UK. She concludes by asserting that the public role of universities needs to be resurrected and that alliances within and without universities are required to ensure that knowledge of, and research-informed debates about, young people's migration and migratory experiences reach the widest possible audience.

In her consideration of the inter-connections between migration and learning, Ursula Apitzsch begins by addressing the concept of ethnicity—which is now established as a social construction not a 'natural' one—demonstrating that a social-constructivist analysis of ethnicity is not unproblematic. The emphasis in this chapter is how the dynamics of ethnicity operate within social and cultural life and the identification, analysis and discussion and regular re-examination of the implications of such construction, for both social inclusion and social exclusion. The chapter includes some analysis of Kant's theorizing from the vantage point of current understandings and knowledge of 'race', ethnicity and culture in order to illustrate some of the hidden dangers which can be discerned in unthinking ascriptions. Apitzsch draws from Weber's early understanding and identification of the application of social-constructivism to 'ethnic groups' and from more recent scholarship

such as that by Brubaker and by Hall. In her discussion she includes consideration of collective and gender dynamics, which frequently are overlooked in analyses of ethnicity and her reasoning is illustrated by reference to research about, and first person narratives from, young migrant people. She asserts the necessity for constant interrogation of definitions and ascriptions of ethnicity to assess their intent and their effects. While retaining awareness that for many, ethnic belonging may not be chosen freely, the author argues that there are examples of positive appropriation, perhaps re-appropriation, of ethnicity by some, imbuing ethnicity with their own particular meaning/s as one aspect of each individual's biographical whole, in addition to examples of collective positioning. She demonstrates a critical engagement with the possible multiplicities of ethnic belonging and with the significance of ethnicity and ethnic identification for individuals and collectives in contexts of education and learning.

Athanasios Marvakis examines how the subjectivity of migrant people is being denied in discourses of assimilation and integration, where lack of choice obtains widely. The significance of this is that such denial results in the submission of migrant people to the demands of prevailing cultures and powers. The concept and term 'integration' is, the author argues, far from neutral and he explores critical social science in order to begin developing alternative praxes, which would take account of the subjectivity of all.

Marvakis draws from his own research into migration and provides evidence that integration is a popular term across political divides, across academic disciplines and within the media. He argues that it is incorrect to subtract the subjectivity and agency of social actors from social phenomena and that the ways in which the term and concept 'integration' is applied, focuses understanding and debate in particular directions; the term itself is 'deficient'. He provides a range of examples of how integration is freighted with different meanings in various national and international settings, demonstrating that it is frequently a mechanism used by those with power against those without power.

Using guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*) as a specific example, the author traces the neo-liberal transformation of Germany and the mechanisms by which groups of migrant people have become divided from one another; examples of mechanisms described here also may be occurring among migrant people in other nations. He emphasizes the importance of reflection upon learning and associated praxes of talking and writing and concludes by re-affirming the responsibility of the critical social sciences—and critical social scientists—to develop social self-understanding, political consciousness and recognize and challenge the current conceptualizations of integration, their functions and their myriad effects.

For Esteban Piñeiro and Jane Haller, education is regarded as significant in operationalizing particular constructions of social and cultural differences within the context of recent policy developments in Switzerland in relation to migrant people from other nations. The main focus of the chapter is analysis of the discourse of integration in Switzerland; analysis is undertaken drawing on theories developed by Laclau and Mouffe on hegemony and by Foucault on different forms of power. The starting point for the chapter is close reading by the authors of major law

and policy documents revealing the internal ‘logic’ according to which particular discourse(s) operate and are made intelligible to others. They then establish how the forces of social order are shaped in specific ways through discourse, and how education is similarly (and deliberately) manoeuvred to become an important factor in the achievement of this particular model of integration. Through their detailed analysis and discussion, the authors lay the foundations for, and then build a critique of, this particular form of integration. Their conclusions include analysis of differences encoded within the discourses of integration and education, and analysis of hidden assumptions being made about, certain national groups fitting more closely and appropriately with member of the host nation than other national groups. They present convincing arguments for integration as both concept and as praxis being a ‘hegemonic project’, which has been developed and deployed to manage not only migrant people, but also the Swiss population as a whole. Questions are raised as to the implications of all of the foregoing for what the authors describe as an imaginary community which they name the ‘integration society’.

EU policies on integration emphasize social cohesion and employment and many educational programmes are designed to fit these imperatives, receiving money from EU Social Funds. As noted by Andreas Thiesen, the concept and term ‘diversity’ are used frequently in educational settings, where the effects of migration and integration policies at the macro level are enacted and experienced. The author argues that the different uses to which ‘diversity’ has been put in educational settings require thorough study. Analysis is undertaken using sociologist Albert Scherr’s conceptualizations of diversity as functional understanding; as anti-discrimination discourse and as a critique of power and dominance. Andreas Thiesen argues that adoption of ‘diversity’ for political purposes is about the achievement of normative objectives, not necessarily about valuing and appreciating differences, and not about acknowledging minority people’s particular needs arising from those differences. In addition to including Scherr’s thinking in his analysis, Andreas Thiesen also draws upon Bourdieu’s three forms of cultural capital in discussions of culture and of the complex inter-relationships between culture and diversity, deploying Bhabha’s concept of hybridity to discuss how young migrant people communicate in more than one language and across and between languages, and the intelligence, creativity and skills required to do this. He devises a conceptual framework for diversity-focussed input within locally based education programmes, with categories of Content, Space, Institution, Everyday Culture and Politics/Justice; each of these has a set of sub-categories. He argues that the multi-lingualism and creativity of migrant people should be encouraged and celebrated, instead of their being constrained and constricted by requirements of integration. He also argues for educational institutions to train staff in diversity, rather than insisting that this is unnecessary.

The subject of the following chapter is the analysis, findings and discussion of the implications of, an original research study undertaken by the author, Sofia Gaspar. The research was undertaken with members of an ‘under-examined group’; that is, adults from different EU states who marry one another and have families. Both partners have legal security and future decisions about mobility can be freely made; they are thus members of a ‘privileged migrant group’. Most existing research on

bi-national families has focussed on unions between a member of an EU state and a partner who is from a non-EU state or who is a migrant worker. The research described here explores how values and meanings are expressed in choices and decisions about marriage and the bringing up and education of children within settings which may be familiar to only one parent or to neither parent. The chapter opens with a detailed exposition of the existing research context, following which the author describes, discusses and analyses findings from qualitative research interviews with both parents. Subjects addressed in interviews include the transmission of language/s; school educational systems; selection of school or nursery; reasons for selection and the nature of social and relational ties and networks. Data analysis establishes three main strategies adopted by parents of young children in this situation: family assimilation strategy; bi-national family strategy and peripatetic family strategy and the author provides examples of each strategy, the likelihood of which strategy might be chosen by which family and its impact on the families themselves. The research analysed here expands existing knowledge both of migration and how one particular group of migrants interact with educational institutions; also discussed are the implications more generally of the study's findings for integration.

An adult literacy campaign and programme which was undertaken 40 years ago among migrant women in Israel is the starting point for the next chapter. Esther Schely-Newman connects with the programme's participants, both the migrant women and the young women—former soldiers who became community teachers—who were involved in their literacy education at that time. Using qualitative interviews the author has undertaken research with members of both groups; this research contributes to understanding and knowledge about the development of migration policies and practices and cultural and social integration across time in the national context of Israel. In this chapter research findings are discussed and from the data the author expands upon a range of subjects which are relevant to migration, culture and learning. The first such subject is gender in all its complexity, with accompanying issues of perceived and actual power: the community teachers had power of their role, but the women students—and often their husbands—exercised power within the home. For both groups of women, different cultural traditions and cultural ideologies had to be learned, understood, negotiated and re-negotiated. Esther Schely-Newman deploys the data to make comparisons with present-day political and policy approaches and attitudes to migrant people in Israel, revealing policy changes in relation to migrant people across time (and associated changes of attitude and language use) and differing perceptions about the deployment of education in the integration of migrant people. Through the programme, learning to read and write occurred despite cultural differences and expectations and the author demonstrates how the apparently straightforward task of learning to read and write in a language which is not the language of origin, becomes freighted with meaning and symbolism for learners and educators alike.

The possibility of migration being a learning experience in and of itself, irrespective of prior formal education experiences, is explored by Joanne Cassar. She argues that knowledge of the strengths and resilience within the self engendered by both the planning and the execution of the migratory journey and the engagement with

opportunities in the receiving nations comprise a learning experience. She posits that the other side of learning experiences in relation to migration is that members of the receiving nations need to learn about and value the growth of a more culturally diverse population and its more recently arrived members. The author establishes that the prevailing public discourses in Malta regarding migrant people (especially migrant people who are refugees or asylum-seekers) are frequently hostile, racist and xenophobic, arguing that these discourses serve neither the Maltese people nor asylum-seekers and refugees. Research undertaken by the author and described in this chapter is documentary analysis of two personal narratives of Somali migrants (young men seeking asylum in Malta) whose accounts are already in the public domain (cyberspace). The author writes reflexively about how her approach may compound the meaning of the young men's accounts; there is the original 'filter' of the 'documents' in cyberspace and then her readings of them. Her readings are underpinned by awareness that there is learning to be gained and that there is value, worth and power within subordinated accounts and that while particular, these speak to the general. The author deploys Foucault's work to interrogate the young men's accounts and develop insights into migratory experiences. She analyses the weaknesses and potential strengths of school education and applies Foucauldian theory to envisage a less discriminatory and more culturally aware school education which problematizes hegemonic beliefs and discourses and establishes different forms of social relationships.

Drorit Lengyel gathers together research into and theories of language acquisition in order to explore language acquisition and children's learning in migrant families, and socialization. She analyses existing research and socio-cultural theories to reveal how thinking and practice about language acquisition in early childhood and early childhood education is perfused by the monolingualistic and cultural assumptions and ideologies of members of the receiving nation and by covert prejudices against multi-language learning and use. She makes visible the influence of the nation-state and associated requirement for heterogeneity of speech, and the influence of these two factors on language acquisition and education. She demonstrates the limitations of much research into children's language learning. Drorit Lengyel questions the meaning of being bilingual. She re-configures being bilingual as different *and* unique: bilingual children should not be assessed educationally as not competent in either language, as happens frequently. She argues that bilingual children take holistic approaches to conceptualizing and communicating; their language use is dynamic not static. Bilingualism results in mixing vocabularies, sentence structure and expression; this should be regarded as evidence of creativity and intelligence and such linguistic explorations should be encouraged. She considers how children growing up knowing two languages can be best supported. Using emergent findings from her own ethnographic research, the author demonstrates that existing patterns of language acquisition in education marginalize and exclude migrant children; many educators themselves know and speak only one language. She notes a contradiction between national imperatives for monolingualism and monoculturalism and educational requirements to focus upon children's needs. Having established correlation between language status and social and po-



litical status, especially in relation to migrant people, she argues for a developing a ‘multilingual habitus’ and moving towards more inclusive educational praxes which centralize ‘plurilingualism’.

As Young (2002, p. 75) notes, theory is about connection with others, and the application of theories and research in this section establishes that calls to develop better theoretical understandings of migratory issues (Geisen 2004; Kofman 2010), are being responded to. All chapter authors demonstrate how education and learning might assist in moving from present conditions, understandings and knowledge of migratory experiences and processes and cultural and social differences to other (and better) understandings and knowledge and to action for change where it is required. Commenting upon research in educational contexts more broadly, Bekerman writes that it should:

...allow readers, participants and others to identify the world described as the world they inhabit and experience...presenting a richness of details which otherwise would go unnoticed, and should allow participants to learn what needs to be done next if they want to continue or change their present situation. (Bekerman 2008, p. 160)

Individually and together, the chapters in this section illuminate the situations of migrant people, facilitate readers’ recognition of the complex inter-relationships between migration, culture, difference and learning and indicate directions for actions to be taken.

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