
THE IMPACT OF GREEK LANGUAGE LEARNING IN IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES' SOCIAL INCLUSION

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Abstract: It is actually a fact that as a country, Greece shows significant deficits in the legalization process, at the same time it is a phenomenon, because it is the only country where, until recently, unemployment was lower than that of the Greeks. Studies confirm that there is great potential for the social integration of immigrants (Al Masri, & Abu-Ayyash, 2020). Sklavou (2011) on the one hand agrees that the legalization process is absent, as there is no specific and legally protected immigration framework, on the other hand she argues that in Greece the social support of immigrants is insufficient, which often hinders their integration. As the present study is a review of the literature, in order to implement it, research articles that have been published in authoritative scientific journals or conferences, from 2000 onwards, were identified, so as to be part of the contemporary literature and research. The search for these sources has been carried out through Google Scholar, as well as through Web of Knowledge, PubMed, PsycINFO and ScienceDirect. With the identification of the first articles, an independent selection of the articles has been carried out through the examination of their titles and abstracts to exclude those studies that are out of scope. The immigration policies of different countries include different forms of integration, as many as are promoted and/or legitimized by the same society. One of them is integration when there are obstacles to smooth socialization known as insertion which is implemented by the European Union and refers mainly to vulnerable social groups. The majority of the various researches point out that the negative treatment of foreigners by the local community due to stereotypes and prejudices is a serious obstacle to the social integration of the second group (Iosiphedis, 2009). According to the overwhelming majority of the various researches, the immigration policy of the state is responsible for this attitude, which lags behind the effective action to settle the immigration and refugee issue, as the information of the citizens is insufficient, there are no actions aimed at getting to know and interaction of foreigners with the native group of the population (Papadopoulou, 2011). According to Papachristos (2011), it is of great importance to teach and carry out actions related to Human Rights because in this way respect for otherness is strengthened, solidarity is consolidated, empathy is cultivated and phenomena of racism, ethnocentrism, stereotypes and prejudices. The author suggests expanding the relevant courses in the comprehensive school curriculum. The role of the Local Government is highlighted and its cooperation with the school is sought with the aim of harmonious coexistence and interaction between the foreigners and the natives.

Keywords: Greek Language, Refugees, Immigrants, Social Inclusion

1. INTRODUCTION

It is actually a fact that as a country, Greece shows significant deficits in the legalization process, at the same time it is a phenomenon, because it is the only country where, until recently, unemployment was lower than that of the Greeks. Studies confirm that there is great potential for the social integration of immigrants (Al Masri, & Abu-Ayyash, 2020). Sklavou (2011) on the one hand agrees that the legalization process is absent, as there is no specific and legally protected immigration framework, on the other hand she argues that in Greece the social support of immigrants is insufficient, which often hinders their integration.

In relation to learning Greek, as shown by the research on the integration of immigrants conducted from 2004 to 2006 in Mytilini and Athens, there is a significant gap in the political and social integration of the first generation of immigrants in Greece from the Greek state and competent bodies. The learning of the language, for almost all the participants in the research, is informal and is mainly based on the Greek mass media and on systematic individual effort, as immigrants necessarily socialize with natives, emphasizing the communication difficulties they face especially during the first years in Greece.

Some attend Greek language learning seminars (Iosifidis, 2009). Regarding the treatment of immigrants by the local community and in the social relations of the first group with the Greeks, the immigrants state that they maintain some contacts but "*most of the time these are superficial and occasional*" (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019). There is a weakness in establishing relationships, resulting in the reproduction of discrimination in many areas, hindering the smooth social integration of immigrants.

There are many incidents of xenophobia and racism accompanied by verbal attacks, feelings of suspicion, contempt and fear where the immigrant is not treated as an individual but as a member of an ethnic group i.e. stereotypically. According to the same author, the development of meaningful and social relationships in the workplace leads to the

elimination of discrimination based on nationality. The immigrant here is treated "*as a person with specific qualifications and character, and not as a member of an ethnic group*" (p.324).

Also, the development of social relations between the two groups is hampered due to cultural differences, resulting in a lack of mutual understanding. The observation that systematic contact between natives and immigrants reduces discrimination and xenophobic attitudes is noteworthy (Iosifidis, 2009). According to the same author, in order for social integration to be smooth, the existence of the social network is required, that is, discrimination must first be reduced, and the social trust and self-esteem of immigrants must be increased. The specific population characterizes their relations with public bodies and with the authorities as suspicious and also declares insecurity in relation to their legal status.

In Greece, there is an awareness of the role of linguistic and cultural differences and an interest in the language and culture of foreign students, without questioning the monocultural nature of the Greek school and society in general (Crul et al., 2019). According to Papadopoulou (2011), enough time is required for Greek society to mature better, to demolish incorrect stereotypes and sketchy policies, so as to pave the way for the substantial participation of immigrants in Greek society in all of its institutions. The refugee issue is one of the major issues that concern our society today. It entered a critical phase from the beginning of 2015 and peaked in the winter of 2015 until the spring of 2016. Our country, due to its geographical location, it has received a large number of refugees in recent years. In 2018 alone, 29,404 refugees arrived in Greece (Al Masri, & Abu-Ayyash, 2020).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

As the present study is a review of the literature, in order to implement it, research articles that have been published in authoritative scientific journals or conferences, from 2000 onwards, were identified, so as to be part of the contemporary literature and research. The search for these sources has been carried out through Google Scholar, as well as through Web of Knowledge, PubMed, PsycINFO and ScienceDirect. With the identification of the first articles, an independent selection of the articles has been carried out through the examination of their titles and abstracts to exclude those studies that are out of scope.

In order to carry out this work, in addition to the above, articles and bibliographic sources regarding the mental resilience of tennis players at competitive level have also been searched through electronic databases such as Google Scholar, as well as through Web of Knowledge, PubMed, PsycINFO and ScienceDirect. Then, a focus on research articles in Greek and international literature was carried out, where relevant articles were classified and analyzed, while others were excluded based on specific criteria. A systematic review of published studies from the year 2000 to the present is therefore reported.

Inclusion Criteria – Exclusion Criteria

The revised articles resulting from the above search should be published in peer-reviewed international scientific journals or in full text from international scientific conferences and should focus on the purpose and objectives of the present research. Also, the articles have been published within the years from 2000 to 2022. Articles that are not valid, are older than 2020, were excluded from the results of this work. The predefined criteria for the selection of published research relevant to the subject of the review are:

- To collect all the appropriate data and cite the relevant researches, finding the data refers to scientific websites with scientific studies on the topic under consideration and more specifically to the Google Scholar databases, as well as through Web of Knowledge, PubMed, PsycINFO and ScienceDirect as well as in related scientific journals whose excerpts from related articles are published online.
- The writing language of the articles must be written in Greek and English
- The writing date of the articles should extend from 2000 to 2022
- The keywords used. They cover title, abstract and appearance searches in articles and publications from 2000 to 2022.

Exclusion Criteria

- Articles that have been published in the form of diploma and degree theses.
- Articles not translated into English.
- Articles whose topic is not related to the sub-investigation framework of the present study.

3. RESULTS

The objectives of immigrant / refugee education policy are closely related to the expected role of the two groups in the host country: otherwise they are formed when they aim for complete assimilation and otherwise when they "*pursue gradual integration while simultaneously preserving their language and culture*" (). Both argue that these goals are negatively affected when the state seeks to maintain national cohesion and identity, resulting in overt forms of xenophobia. As one of the compensatory measures, they suggest that native students get to know more

about the culture of their different classmates in order to reduce prejudices and discrimination against the latter. "*The diversity of values at the level of the non-speaking family and the dominant social group, as well as the goals of the educational policy in the host country, seem to negatively affect the school performance of non-speaking students*" (Crul et al., 2019).

The immigration policies of different countries include different forms of integration, as many as are promoted and/or legitimized by the same society. One of them is integration when there are obstacles to smooth socialization known as insertion which is implemented by the European Union and refers mainly to vulnerable social groups.

As mentioned above, the goal of the Z.E.P. is the equal inclusion of all students in the education system. According to Palaiologou and Evangelou (2003), the term "equality" in the educational system means that people from different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds should be proportionate in all levels of education as they are in relation to the total population. How can this goal be achieved since "*The lack of teaching of mother tongues..., lack of resources for the production of relevant teaching materials... in the state system of Greece demonstrates the monolingual nature of the educational policy [...] result in non-native speakers students not to have after all same learning opportunities as native students*" (Crul et al., 2019).

They argue that the students in question "*are not treated fairly in the assessment until they master the official language, they have no possibility of using their mother tongue in learning, in relation to the rest of their classmates, they often feel bad about their language and their culture, they have more chances to experience discrimination and racist attitudes...*" (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019). The establishment of these educational structures aims to reduce the early school leaving of students from vulnerable social groups and students with cultural and religious particularities, as well as to improve learning outcomes, mainly in literacy but also in numeracy. According to Papachristos (2011), in order to realize the goals of Intercultural Education regardless of the political choices, the attitudes of the educational staff must change "*both at the level of administration and at the level of teaching and pedagogical practice*" (p.217). This training concerns all students, and not all educational levels.

4. DISCUSSION

The educational structures for foreign students, they present several malfunctions and problems, the most serious of which are late recruitments, the absence of appropriate teacher training and minimal educational material, as the books written for foreign language students need corrections (Paleologu and Evangelou, 2003; Nikolaou, 2000). Although the mentioned issues exist, the teachers consider that the Reception Classes meet their role, while the Greek authorities, due to their more recent nature, have the most pressing need to speed up the above issues, in order to normalize their operation.

The goals of the Education Policy through the educational structures, which are the learning of Greek and social inclusion, despite the difficulties and various shortcomings are being implemented. Of course, their achievement may not be complete. As Nikolaou (2000) emphasizes, the goal is to integrate the students into the regular program, while it has been established that the students of the TY. they "pool" in them, without joining the normal classes. The teachers attribute this phenomenon to the mainly separate teaching of the students, outside of the regular class. In this way, the coexistence and interaction with native students is minimized and the inclusion of the former is nullified. The result is insufficient acquaintance between the two student groups, with the consequence of the prevalence of stereotypes and prejudices against foreign students (Magos, 2013).

The learning of the Greek language is accelerated by the use of the communicative and experiential approach, which teachers consider to be the most effective, because they are directly related to the needs and interests of the students. They activate them, as they are a motivation for learning Greek, since they fulfill the expectations that the students have towards them. Playful manners, experiential games, pantomime etc. are appreciated by the teachers. Audiovisual methods are also considered important, because they can motivate the student's interest, as well as free the teacher from the role of the exclusive "transmitter" of knowledge (Crul et al., 2019). The use of the students' native language and cultural elements has a positive effect on their school performance, as it strengthens their psycho-emotional world positive influence of the student's family and extracurricular activities with the participation of the native population (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019).

The role of the teacher is complex and requires the teacher to have many skills, which we can gather under the term "intercultural competence". The role of the teacher is multiple and multifaceted, because learning the language is one of the most important factors in the integration of foreign students, but it is not the only one. It is considered necessary for the teacher to adopt a multitude of pedagogical and didactic applications, with the aim of intercultural communication (Crul et al., 2019)..

In the education of foreign students and adults, many similarities and common teaching and learning practices are observed, but also the differences, which mostly have to do with the treatment of each student group by the teacher.

The common features are respect for their language and culture, as well as mutual understanding of their particular needs, patience, high expectations and not underestimation. The teaching uses the communicative and experiential approach, placing the student at the center of learning. The main difference is not so much related to the teaching approaches and methods as to the personal treatment of the two groups by the teachers. In particular, adults are more self-aware than children. They are mature, they know why they are learning Greek, they need it immediately, in order to communicate and survive, it becomes clear that the reasons for language learning are practical (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019). However, they have more obligations and concepts, and may have more difficulty due to the already formed cognitive level they possess from their country of origin. (Crul et al., 2019).

For this reason, the teacher must be more of an animator than a teacher and have less demands on the children. Regarding the state's involvement in the field of adult education with an emphasis on Greek, a large gap is observed. The language teaching of this population is based mainly on NGOs and private initiatives (Crul et al., 2019). The changes and interventions that teachers wish to be made are many and concerning the various areas involved in the learning process. In the field of teaching in general classes, the need for the cross-cultural use of textbooks is underlined, i.e. enriching them with issues of immigration and refugees, so that the rest of the student population is sensitized, as well as fostering the empathy of native students towards students with an immigrant background and refugee background (Sklavou, 2011).

The need is expressed for the timely recruitment and training of teachers, the classification of prospective teachers in the separate table of Intercultural Education, the creation of the position of the consultant of Intercultural Education (Papachristos, 2011), the bypassing of the delay in the transition of foreign children, renewal of books for foreign-language students, adaptation to the needs of the students. It seeks to change the negative attitude of a part of Greek society towards immigrants and refugees, which prevents their smooth social integration, as well as expected abandonment of prejudices and stereotypes against the populations in question (Crul et al., 2019).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The majority of the various researches point out that the negative treatment of foreigners by the local community due to stereotypes and prejudices is a serious obstacle to the social integration of the second group (Iosiphedis, 2009). According to the overwhelming majority of the various researches, the immigration policy of the state is responsible for this attitude, which lags behind the effective action to settle the immigration and refugee issue, as the information of the citizens is insufficient, there are no actions aimed at getting to know and interaction of foreigners with the native group of the population (Papadopoulou, 2011).

The majority of the various researches find that the attitudes of several of its colleagues regarding the school performance of foreign students are biased, they do not have high expectations, which has a negative effect on the psychology and learning of the student population in question (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019). They also avoid teaching him, because they feel educationally inadequate and find it difficult to cope in an intercultural classroom (Paleologu & Evangelou, 2003).

The various researches agree that there is no clear educational planning nor its consistent implementation, since there does not even seem to be the political will (Papadopoulou, 2011). They also confirm that the foreigners have a serious motivation to learn Greek, which is their integration into the local society. The Greek language acquires great importance because it is essential for communication. Adults associate it with their personal development and finding a satisfactory job, so that they can cope with their daily obligations. Also, with integration, they have hopes for the positive course of their children, learning Greek from them, their adaptation to school, satisfactory school performance and their good future development. The various researches agree that Greek can be learned by foreigners through the processes, i.e. by going to school and participating in school life, children learn the language and socialize (Papadopoulou, 2011).

The Greek language acquires great importance because it is necessary for communication (Papachristos, 2011). In relation to the methodology of learning Greek, all teachers agree on the use of many ways and means. The material must be long, changing, interesting, not missing images and the teaching must be differentiated according to the student population (Valtiani & Neofytou, 2017). The prevailing teaching style is student-centered, which places the student at the center of instruction, favors their active participation in the learning process, and maximizes learning outcomes (Papachristos, 2011).

The approaches used by the whole sample are communicative and experiential, which serve well the needs and interests of the students and are in line with the perception that language is a basic tool of communication (Crul et al., 2019). Most of the various researches emphasized that teaching should be done in playful and engaging ways in order to maximize the positive attitude of the students and avoid the frustration that can occur due to difficulties. For this, there is no shortage of techniques such as role play, representations from everyday life where students embody

various roles, pantomime and other experiential games that promote collaboration (Papachristos, 2011). The trainer at the NGO emphasizes that even the playful ways and games properly adapted become useful in the education of adults. The majority of the various researches use audiovisual material with songs, dialogues and films. In adult education, excerpts from news and broadcasts are used. Also, forms, accounts, excerpts from magazines are studied. The rest of the sample did not use audiovisual material, not because it was their choice, but because of a lack of the logistical infrastructure.

In addition to digital material, the entire sample also uses traditional material, such as laminated cards. One teacher uses a lot of color to keep the notebook alive, tangible materials, objects of daily use. As regards the utilization of the mother tongue and Fr holism of the students in the learning process, the whole sample responds positively. This attitude is demonstrated by the teachers' effort to learn some words in the students' language, and to discuss their customs, their favorite foods and games, and how they spent their lives in their homeland. In this way, students are cultivated the feeling that their language has value and is not an obstacle to learning Greek, on the contrary it can help the utilization of the students' mother tongue, the teacher of the adults decided, the lessons were held exclusively in the Greek language (Crul et al., 2019).

The whole sample insisted on the development of the oral language by the students, and then proceeded to the writing. The entire sample population agrees that the student's family plays a large role in cultivating his positive attitude towards the educational institution, in his compliance and adaptation to the school environment, as well as in his academic progress. The vast majority of the sample claims that those parents who are interested in the progress of their children, themselves achieve school success in the emotional as well as the learning field. For this reason, teachers wish to communicate with parents, to inform and advise them. As long as the student's family has high expectations, promotes him in extracurricular activities, encourages him to socialize with the natives for reasons of language learning, so the chances of the student having the desired and upward school path increase (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019).

The majority of the sample is in favor of using the student's mother tongue in the family environment for moral, mental health and language development reasons (Crul et al., 2019). Only one teacher suggested the moderation of the students' language of origin, because according to her it slows down the learning of Greek, the student cannot understand the nature of Greek in relation to his mother tongue, it involves the elements of the second in the first. The entire sample agrees that the student's family cannot help him much in school activities, so the role of the teacher in his development is maximized.

As the entire research sample states, the teacher occupies a prominent position in the learning process and their role is complex. In no way is it limited to teaching but can be considered as a second parent who supports the student, guides him, advises him, helps him to join (Magos, 2013). The teacher becomes the animator, who must radiate trust, show mutual understanding, encourage, have patience and respect for each student who is a separate entity, with his own language and special cultural characteristics, i.e. characterize him as intercultural ability. To be able to bring different cultures into interaction and harmonious coexistence (Paleologu & Evangelou, 2003).

Regarding the characteristics of the foreign students, the whole sample agrees that they are dedicated to the lessons, want to learn the Greek language and communicate, so that they can attend lessons in the general classroom. They do not like that they cannot speak and for this reason they are different from the rest of the students, just as they do not want to be stigmatized because of their origin and their different cultural world (Crul et al., 2019). They get excited when the teacher tries to communicate in their language. They have a positive attitude and show interest in Greek customs and holidays. The refugee children, as the teacher, in relation to immigrants present behavioral problems, are disobedient and violently carry bad experiences and experiences due to the acute living conditions. The whole sample converges towards the view that there are many common points in the education of foreign students and adults, such as respect for their particularities, cultivation of the belief that no one wants to abolish their language (Sklavou, 2011).

The trainer at the NGO believes that playful techniques, appropriately adapted games can be exploited by adult trainers as well. The use of the experiential and communicative approach that make the Greek language a communicative tool and are common for the education of the two groups (Sklavou, 2011). According to all participants, the differences include the different needs and interests of the two groups, as well as the different treatment of e.g. reasons from adults. Children learn faster, they don't have as many concepts as adults, they adapt faster to the environment, they are not as conscious about language teaching as adults: "*I go to school because my parents want me to*", they need a lot of patience. Adults should be treated with more tolerance and their teachers should be more cheerleaders than teachers. They have many obligations, they are aware, they want to learn Greek for practical reasons. They are already characterized by a differentiated cognitive level influenced by the educational system of their country, and they have already undergone "a first socialization". Regarding the greater degree of

difficulty in teaching each group, the teachers' opinions are divided. Half consider that teaching adults is more difficult mainly due to the many obligations and the already suppressed cognitive level of the students in question.

Regarding the changes and expectations of the teachers, the participants state that the state should be more actively involved and immediately provide solutions to the issues of the immigration and refugee phenomenon.

The entire sample expresses their wish for a clear, timely planning of the educational policy and its transparent implementation, with timely recruitment, and training at no cost to the teacher (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019). The overwhelming part of the sample is in favor of the classification of prospective teachers in a separate intercultural education table with the required qualifications, such as special training or knowledge of the students' mother tongue. The majority of the sample agrees that the textbooks should be enriched in the contents with topics related to the immigration and refugee issue, in order to sensitize the native students and gain empathy towards the specific populations (Crul et al., 2019). Almost the entire sample agrees that the books written for foreign-language students should be renewed, leave time for consolidation, and above all that their authors take into account that the books will be used by children who do not know Greek at all.

Almost all the participants are in favor of the parallel teaching of foreigners in general classes in the context of coexistence, interaction and inclusion, with the aim of their faster integration into the school environment and the cultivation of the positive attitude of native students towards them (Magos, 2013). One teacher states that in schools where there are Reception Departments, there should be an intercultural education consultant, who would advise and support the teachers (Jung, & Lee, 2020). Half of the teachers are negative regarding the time limitation of foreign children's attendance at schools. Half of the sample seeks to change the attitudes of teachers who are prejudiced against foreign students and underestimate them (Jung, & Lee, 2020). There is no shortage of cases of avoiding employment in the structures that promote their education. The vast majority of the sample wishes to change the negative attitude of a part of Greek society towards immigrants and refugees through visibility, acquaintance and interaction with these vulnerable social groups (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2019). One teacher opposes the above opinions and argues that the local community considers foreigners as members of society, who have the same obligations and rights, they are simply people who came from other countries. The entire sample believes that the mentioned changes are feasible, as long as there is political will and receptivity on the part of Greek society (Crul et al., 2019). The feelings and general comments of the teachers regarding the experience gained in the education of foreigners are positive, they express joy and satisfaction for the children's response to their educational work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the above, Papachristos (2011) proposes a series of "*intercultural measures, policies and interventions*" related to the organization and administration of schools, the school curriculum, teacher training, language teaching, relations between parents and local communities with the aim of shaping the conditions "responsible" for the smooth integration of foreign students. The action of the School Counselor who supervises the Planning and implementation of the educational project, co-organizes the training of teachers, manages the educational policy, carries out the scientific-pedagogical guidance and cooperates with other agencies is considered important.

The education for foreign students cannot be an assimilation or separation education, but a common one that promotes cultural and linguistic diversity, cultivates cultural diversity. Thus, to culturally enrich and modernize the Greek education system which operates monoculturally and monolingually (Papachristos, 2011). The same author seeks to raise awareness and inform teachers in matters concerning the principles of a multicultural society, as well as the theoretical and practical dimensions of the intercultural approach in their educational work. In the context of the above approach, the teacher must have cross-cultural readiness. The need for "specialized professional teachers" (p.17) is emphasized and a model of teacher training with three main points is proposed, the Theoretical Base, the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Base and the Empirical Base.

Evangelou and Palaiologou (2007) in order to create a more effective educational framework suggest the following:

- a) The writing of cross-cultural Analytical Programs (setting high goals for all groups of students) and teaching manuals
- b) The implementation of differentiated teaching
- c) The formation of an appropriate psychosocial climate in the classroom 3) the fairest assessment methods
- d) In-school training and support of teachers
- e) The intercultural oriented school principal
- f) The teachers with different cultural backgrounds
- g) The bilingual education (simultaneous use of the mother tongue and the language of the host country)
- h) The support of students from the family (performances improve when there is support and encouragement from the family)

- i) The development of new teaching approaches (research - experiential - communication)
- j) Improvement of the building and logistical infrastructure of the schools
- k) Utilization of ICT.
- l) The establishment of intercultural education schools
- m) The development of anti-racist policy.

According to Papachristos (2011), it is of great importance to teach and carry out actions related to Human Rights because in this way respect for otherness is strengthened, solidarity is consolidated, empathy is cultivated and phenomena of racism, ethnocentrism, stereotypes and prejudices. The author suggests expanding the relevant courses in the comprehensive school curriculum. The role of the Local Government is highlighted and its cooperation with the school is sought with the aim of harmonious coexistence and interaction between the foreigners and the natives.

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