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## EDUCATION POLICY | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Heritage language maintenance and education in the Greek sociolinguistic context: Albanian immigrant parents' views

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**Abstract:** This paper presents data from two studies—a nationwide quantitative research and an ethnographic study—on immigrant parents' perspectives about heritage language maintenance and education in Greek state schools. The quantitative data come from a large-scale questionnaire survey, which aimed at the investigation of the needs and requirements for the implementation of a pilot programme teaching immigrant languages in Greek state schools. The findings regarding immigrant parents' perspectives provide an updated, comprehensive view on how they perceive and respond to the issue of the support and teaching of their heritage languages within the Greek context. Complementing and enhancing those findings, the qualitative data from the ethnographic study, through the analysis of immigrant parents' semi-structured interviews, provides important insights into aspects of the parents' complex sociolinguistic reality, thus offering an in-depth understanding and interpretation of their language views.

**Subjects:** Bilingualism/ESL; Education Policy & Politics; Multicultural Education

**Keywords:** heritage language education; immigrant parents; language views

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### PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

This article presents two studies—a nationwide quantitative research and an ethnographic study—on Albanian immigrant parents' perspectives about heritage language maintenance and education in Greek state schools. Language maintenance among immigrant groups is a complex issue affected by many factors. Furthermore, the inclusion of their languages in the official school curriculum is a highly debated matter worldwide with ideological and sociopolitical dimensions. The findings of the two studies provide insights into Albanian immigrant families' perspectives in Greece regarding the way they perceive and respond to the issue of supporting and teaching their heritage languages within the Greek educational context. This paper focuses on their "voices" so as to reveal aspects of their complex sociolinguistic realities and achieve a better and deeper understanding of their views, experiences and practices..



Anastasia Gkaintartzi

## 1. Introduction

In the last decades of the twentieth century, Greece has become a migrant-receiving country, with flows of immigrants coming not only from former socialist countries of central and eastern Europe but also, most recently, from Asia (China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, etc.) and African countries. It is estimated that more than half of the registered immigrant population in Greece come from Albania, who amount to 450,000–550,000 (i.e. 57.5% of the immigrant population) and constitute the largest immigrant community in Greece (Labrianidis & Hatziprokopiou, 2005). However, valid data on the exact number of Albanian immigrants in Greece are not available and such an estimation is difficult to make due to the fact that there is a lot of back-and-forth movement between Greece and Albania (Gogonas & Michail, 2014). Concerning the school student population, according to official figures from the Greek Ministry of Education, in the school years 2011–2012, the percentage of foreign students was 12.27% of the students attending primary school, the majority of whom were of Albanian background (78.5%). In secondary education, immigrant students amounted to 8.74% of the student population, 78.4% of which were of Albanian origin.

It can be safely stated that migration has altered the economic, social and educational landscape of Greece. In fact, within the larger context, migrant movements, globalization and EU policies have also affected the European dimension in language teaching. Officially, the European Commission and the Council of Europe promote diversity and multilingualism. EU recognizes the importance of linguistic diversity and multilingualism and accepts that every citizen should be able to speak two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue (Commission of the European Communities, 2003). According to the European treaties, all immigrant pupils have the right to be taught their languages (Commission of the European Communities, 2003). However, European language policies are criticized for maintaining power relations between “strong”, dominant and “weak” languages, thus reproducing languages hierarchies in language education (Phillipson, 2003).

The official educational policies addressing the issue of multiculturalism in Greek schools, initially applied in the early 1980s, involved Reception and Support (or Tutorial) classes in mainstream schools (Law 1404/1983), in which Greek was taught as a second language. These classes were mainly oriented towards the linguistic assimilation of immigrant background students, focusing on the intensive teaching of the Greek language regardless of their linguistic and cultural background (Damanakis, 1997; Dimakos & Tasiopoulou, 2003). Up to the beginning of the 1990s, the educational policies and practices addressing immigrant pupils in Greece functioned in the context of the “deficit” hypothesis, treating their home languages as a problem, which required immediate “treatment” (Damanakis, 1997). In 1996, Law 2413/96 was issued with the title “Greek Education Abroad, Intercultural Education and Other Provisions”, which regulates matters regarding the provision of Greek language education to the Greek diaspora and intercultural education in Greece. Following the implementation of the law, apart from other measures, a total of 26 “intercultural” schools were established throughout Greece, which have not however succeeded in catering for the linguistic and cultural integration of non-Greek background students (Mitakidou, Tressou, & Daniilidou, 2007).

This legislation, currently in place, has not ensured the kind of policies that would permeate the whole educational system, enhancing pupils’ awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity among them (Damanakis, 1997; Mitakidou & Daniilidou, 2007; Mitakidou et al., 2007). Thus, the Greek educational system has been criticized for promoting ethnocentrism and monolingualism (Frangoudaki & Dragonas, 1997; Katsikas & Politou, 1999). The legislation currently in place (Law 2413/96) has not ensured the kind of policies that would permeate the whole educational system, so as to develop multilingualism and multicultural awareness among all students (Damanakis, 1997; Mitakidou et al., 2007).

In 1999, a new ministerial decision provided for the establishment of classes where immigrant pupils could be taught the language and culture of their country of origin as part of their school curriculum. Unfortunately, however, this measure has hardly been implemented in the state school practice (Kiliari, 2005). So far, the authorities have claimed that the reason for not introducing such a measure is the lack of interest shown by immigrant parents (Mitakidou et al., 2007). On the other

hand, Greece, being a member of the EU, officially recognizes the importance of linguistic diversity and multilingualism, integrating it in current school language curricula. However, the foreign languages offered in general education are only three: English (obligatory), German and French (obligatory by choice), indirectly reproducing the language hierarchies maintained in EU (Dendrinou & Mitsikopoulou, 2004). Migrant languages are still excluded from the state school curriculum. The prevailing perception in the official discourse on the maintenance of migrant languages pertains to a human right which does not concern the Greek school, transferring thus the responsibility of teaching and learning their languages to the immigrant groups themselves (Kiliari, 2005). In fact, immigrant children's bilingualism remains largely "invisible" in education (Gkaintartzi & Tsokalidou, 2011; Tsokalidou, 2005).

Therefore, promoting multilingualism in the Greek state school should be understood as the result of several factors, mainly ideological, which are also defined by the particular Greek socio-economic context as well as by the European context (Kiliari, 2009). This context is highly formed by the humanitarian and economic crisis which Greece is undergoing, as well as the latest refugee crisis. The economic and humanitarian crisis, affecting Greece since 2008, has brought about new transformations, resulting in an expansion of return migration, a new wave of migration by Greek nationals as well as in the continuation of unauthorized flows into the country (Cavounidis, 2013). The integration and promotion of migrant language in the Greek educational system is a crucial issue, which has to be dealt with, since immigrant students still constitute a large percentage of the Greek school population.

### **1.1. Language maintenance among Albanian immigrant families in Greece**

Sociolinguistic research into issues of language maintenance/shift among immigrants in Greece has developed rather recently, focusing mostly on Albanian immigrant families, as they constitute the largest ethnic group. Most of these studies indicate tendencies of language shift among the second generation of Albanians in Greece (Chatzidaki, 2005; Chatzidaki & Xenikaki, 2012; Gogonas, 2009, 2010; Maligkoudi, 2010; Michail 2008a, 2008b, 2010; Tsokalidou, 2005). Research data document higher competence in Greek in comparison to Albanian and a preference for the majority language among second-generation speakers of Albanian origin, especially when communicating among siblings and peers (Gkaintartzi, Chatzidaki, & Tsokalidou, 2014; Kiliari, 2014). Evidence of language shift in language use and competence among young and adult Albanian immigrants is interrelated to their low perceptions of ethnolinguistic vitality and integrative attitude (Gogonas & Michail, 2014), the stigmatization of the Albanian language in the Greek society and the lack of institutional support for the teaching of heritage languages in Greek schools (Gkaintartzi, 2012; Maligkoudi, 2009, 2010). As a result, Albanian immigrants tend to restrict the use of the heritage language in the context of the family.

The inclusion of immigrant students' heritage languages in the Greek school curriculum is a highly debated issue. Although the law provides for the establishment of heritage language classes, it has never been implemented in state schools and it is attributed to immigrant parents' negligence for fear that this may interfere with their children's efforts to acquire Greek (Mitakidou et al., 2007). "Complementary" schools held by Albanian communities are rather few and participation rates in these mother tongue classes are quite low (Gkaintartzi, Chatzidaki, et al., 2014). Regarding family language policies, research data reveal that although Albanian immigrant parents express positive attitudes towards language maintenance and literacy development, they do not engage in specific language management practices, revealing a degree of ambivalence with regard to the further encouragement and support of the heritage language (Chatzidaki & Maligkoudi, 2013). Research data demonstrate their high investment into the Greek language, as a vehicle to the educational, professional and social development of their children, while their anxiety for language maintenance is often articulated through dilemmas, conflicts and controversies (Chatzidaki & Maligkoudi, 2013; Gkaintartzi, 2012).

Moreover, family language ideologies, studied through the interaction between immigrant families and the Greek school context, are found to be shaped under the influence of dominant school language ideologies and practices, which favour monolingualism (Gkaintartzi, Chatzidaki, et al., 2014). It is shown that Greek teachers' language views and attitudes towards bilingualism are driven by monolingual ideologies, which however remain "invisible" to them (Gkaintartzi, Kiliari, & Tsokalidou, 2014; Tsokalidou, 2012). In the context of the interplay of such forces, immigrant parents' language views and practices do not present a uniform picture but reveal differences and discrepancies even among members of same ethnic groups with regard to the degree of their commitment to language maintenance. In order to understand in-depth immigrant parents' language perspectives and practices, we need to combine quantitative and qualitative research methods, since the synthesis of the two sets of data can provide a more comprehensive view of the complex sociolinguistic reality, within which attitudes and practices are formed.

## 2. The study

The present study presents a synthesis of quantitative data, which come from a large-scale questionnaire survey, investigating immigrant parents' views towards the teaching of heritage languages in Greek state schools, with qualitative data on parents' language views. Our main research hypothesis is that in immigrant parents' responses collected from the questionnaire survey underlie language ideologies, which are better enlightened through the parallel study of ethnographic qualitative data. Although the data of the two studies come from different parent informants, the main characteristics of the sample, which are carefully described in their profiles, are the same i.e. all are first-generation Albanian immigrants with children attending the Greek school, mostly labour workers in socio-economic terms, coming from a similar educational background (8 years of obligatory education in majority). Based on the sociolinguistic profile of the informants of the two studies, we can treat the sample as a whole and use the data from the two studies (i.e. quantitative and qualitative) in a complementary way.

### 2.1. The quantitative research

The quantitative research was conducted as part of the programme entitled "Education of Foreign and Repatriate Students", launched by the Greek Ministry of Education. The research aimed at investigating the main question, which was placed by the Ministry, with regard to the needs and conditions for teaching the heritage languages of foreign and repatriate students, who attend Greek state schools in Primary and Secondary Education. Specifically, the needs and wishes of foreign and repatriate students and their families were investigated, concerning the support of their heritage languages through courses in the Greek state school, as well as the views and attitudes of Greek teachers in Primary and Secondary Education. Additionally, the research investigated the parents' perspectives and evaluations on their children's language competence in both languages and on the heritage language skills which need to be further developed.

#### 2.1.1. Methodological issues

The questionnaire survey was nationwide and was conducted in two phases throughout the school years 2010/2011 and 2011/2012. The first phase of data collection was completed in June 2011 (school year 2010/2011) and the second at the beginning of December 2011 (school year 2011/2012). From both phases of the research, 5,373 questionnaires in total were collected, 1,675 of which come from immigrant parents, 2,873 from foreign and repatriate students and 822 from teachers of all levels of education.

The parents' questionnaires were written, besides Greek, in Albanian, Russian and Georgian, which are the languages of the largest immigrant parent groups in Greece (see Appendix 1 for the questionnaire in Albanian). The majority of them were not identified with those of the participant immigrant students, as they were mostly collected from immigrant organizations and communities. Most of the respondent immigrant parents (71.7%) were of Albanian background. Albanian immigrant background parents are the most in number and the most well-organized immigrant group in

Community Organizations in Greece (Maligkoudi, 2010). Most participant parents (85.2%) were 26–45 years old and the majority of them (56.3%) were women.

### 2.1.2. Results and discussion

**2.1.2.1. Instruction of heritage languages in the state school.** The overwhelming majority of parents (88.3%) would like their heritage languages to be taught in the state schools attended by their children, giving a positive reply to the corresponding close-ended question (see Appendix 1 item D.4 in the questionnaire). They seem to believe that in this way the Greek state school would fulfil its responsibility towards them. Besides, in such a case they wouldn't have to cater for home language education only by themselves either in the context of their communities or—as in most cases—within the family unit. The underlying belief could be that the inclusion of their heritage languages in the state school curriculum would also attribute prestige to their languages, a belief that could also be deduced from the qualitative data drawn from the ethnographic study, which will be presented later.

In Table 1, we can observe that among the options given to the question regarding the preferable timetable of the classes, a large number of immigrant parents (43.7%) prefer the integration of heritage language courses into the regular morning school timetable. 38.9% of the parents reported that they prefer heritage language classes to be delivered at weekends, while 39.1% suggested that classes should be held after the daily school schedule or in the afternoon (see item D.5 of the questionnaire in Appendix 1).

It is very interesting to note that although the vast majority of parents want the heritage language to be taught at school (88.3%), the results, concerning the options given in response to the timetable of the classes, appear to have a similar weight. It seems that the parents who prefer heritage language classes within the morning school timetable are only slightly more than those who prefer them after the regular school schedule or at weekends. That is to say that parents appear quite divided concerning the teaching of the heritage language as a school subject integrated in the regular school timetable.

**2.1.2.2. Children's language competence: parents' evaluations.** Concerning the children's language competence, the overwhelming majority of the parents reported that their children do know their heritage languages (item C.10 of the questionnaire in Appendix 1). These data, which concern the children's language proficiency, come from immigrant parents' perceptions and are based on their own subjective evaluative criteria. The children's language competences were not assessed through this questionnaire in any other way apart from what the parents think about them (Table 2).

The majority of the parents reported that their children's oral receptive and productive skills in their heritage language(s) are well developed, whereas their skills in reading comprehension and written production are comparatively poor (item C.11 in questionnaire). A very small proportion of parents stated that their children have not developed any oral skills in the heritage language (i.e. 6%, as in shown in Table 3). A comparatively higher percentage however reported that they have not acquired any written skills.

**Table 1. Heritage language classes? When?**

	Morning school timetable (%)	After school timetable at midday (%)	In the afternoon (%)	On Saturday (%)	On Sunday (%)
Parents	43.7	22.1	17.0	23.2	15.7

**Table 2. Children’s competence in the heritage language**

Competence in the heritage language	Parents (%)
Yes	88.6
No	11.4

**Table 3. Children’s skills in the heritage language: parent’s reports**

	Understand (%)	Speak (%)	Read (%)	Write (%)
Very well	59.2	51.2	33.1	26.9
Well	27.2	29.0	25.1	20.0
Average	8.5	12.0	16.8	15.0
Not at all	3.8	6.0	12.7	18.7

Moreover, parents reported that not all children in their families have developed language skills to the same degree, which is to say that the level of language competence varies among siblings in the same family. The children’s oral skills are acquired and developed mostly through home language use and informal communication in the family, with peers and relatives as well as through exposure to satellite television programmes in the heritage language. Parents themselves and mostly mothers take on the responsibility for literacy development with the use of books and literacy resources at home, brought from their countries of origin. In addition, a considerable amount of parents take their children to community schools (i.e. heritage language classes usually organized by immigrant communities themselves).

*2.1.2.3. Further development of heritage language.* The overwhelming majority of parents expressed their desire for their children to improve their language skills, even those who estimate and report them as already highly developed (item D.1 of the questionnaire). Specifically, 94.7% of the respondents reported that they would like their children to develop their language skills while only 5.3% gave a negative reply. The majority of the parents long for heritage language maintenance and also desire the improvement and further development of both receptive and productive skills, so that their children can attain full language proficiency in order for them to become competent in a variety of language domains as seen in Table 4.

Among the main reasons for the support of heritage languages reported is the symbolic link of the home language(s) to the country of origin, since they consider it as a core value of their identity. Table 5 presents the results in response to the three options, which were given as multiple choices to the question regarding the reason for wanting their children to improve their heritage language skills (item D.7 of the questionnaire).

The need to maintain bonds with the country of origin and their relations with their relatives and friends in the homeland is an important factor too, interrelated with the first reason i.e. the symbolic function of the heritage language as a link to the ethnic identity. It also reveals, however, its instrumental function, since the need to maintain their bonds and social networks in the country of origin through their language is related to the possibility of returning back, which is increased in the case of economic crisis. The usability and value of the heritage language for the future could be related to

**Table 4. Improvement of skills in the heritage language**

Improvement of language skills so that my child can	Understand (%)	Speak (%)	Read (%)	Write (%)
	94.5	93.2	89.4	89.2

**Table 5. Factors for the desire for the further development of the heritage language**

	Factors for the desire for the further development of the heritage language		
	It is the language of our country	It is necessary for communication with relatives and friends	It will be useful in the future
Parents	89.0%	86.1%	86.1%

and influenced by the possibility of repatriation rather than its role as an asset in a multicultural society.

## 2.2. The qualitative study

The qualitative study aimed at investigating immigrant parents' language views and practices regarding bilingualism. It was part of a two-year ethnographic study (2008–2009 and 2009–2010) investigating the language views and practices of 19 preschool and primary school students of Albanian background as well as the views and attitudes of their parents and teachers concerning children's bilingualism (Gkaintartzi, 2012).

### 2.2.1. Methodological issues

Selecting a qualitative interpretive methodology, we used the ethnographic methods of participant observation within the school context, in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the children, their teachers and their parents as well as informal interviews with the participants in the field over the two- school year data collection phase. The research undertook the composite investigation of the three perspectives, by combining three sources of data, with the ultimate focus on the bilingual children's language views and practices, as they are shaped under the influence of the family and school context. The teachers' and parents' perspectives serve as a valuable lens through which the understanding of the children's language views and behaviour patterns can be approached.

The research objectives regarding immigrant parents were the investigation of their views and attitudes towards bilingualism, language maintenance and their children's language development. More specifically, the study aimed at bringing to the surface their language ideologies by investigating their views and practices concerning:

- the value of the two languages and the importance of bilingualism
- heritage language maintenance
- the issue of Albanian language teaching and learning
- the use of the Albanian language in the Greek state school
- their involvement in their children's school education

The study was conducted in two schools, a primary and a kindergarten school, which are located in a coastal and rural region in Thessaly. This region is situated in Central Greece, its schools have a high percentage of Albanian background students and the two schools were selected on the basis that one of the authors–researchers had a very close relationship with the students, other educators and the schools in question, a fact that played an important role in the collection and analysis of the data.

**2.2.1.1. Parents' profile.** The parents' sample consisted of 18 parents, 13 mothers and 5 fathers, all Albanian immigrants. They were all first-generation immigrants and their average residency in the region was 9 years. Their mean age was 33 for the mothers and 36 for the fathers. Regarding their educational level, roughly two thirds of the parents (12 out of 19) had completed 8 years of education in Albania, which, as they stated, was the duration of the

obligatory Albanian education. In terms of their socio-economic status, they could be considered lower working class.

We conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with the parents, eight individual interviews with mothers only, two with fathers, three with both parents and two with a group of 2–4 mothers (see Appendix 1 for the interview core questions). Apart from semi-structured interviews, data were drawn from informal interviews with parents and observation in the school context over the two-year fieldwork. Our method of data analysis was critical discourse analysis in order to study the language ideologies in the participants' discourse on languages (van Dijk, 1998).

### 2.2.2. Results and discussion

Through the analysis of the parents' discourse regarding bilingualism and heritage language maintenance, it is revealed that they express a range of ideological stances. Distinguishing between three types of discourse, we suggest their categorization into three groups, called the "Fighters", the "Pro-bilingualism" and the "Indifferent" parents (Gkaintartzi, Chatzidaki, et al., 2014a). Pseudonyms are used to refer to the parents in the following interview excerpts.

2.2.2.1. *The "Fighters"*. The "Fighters" (5 parents) not only encourage actively their children's bilingualism but also make a conscious claim for heritage language education. They feel that heritage language instruction is also a right, which the Greek state should attend to. In the following excerpt, two mothers, Ina and Drita, express and make a claim for their language rights, suggesting also the forms heritage language classes should take.

#### 2.2.2.2. Excerpt 1.

Researcher: What would you ask from the Greek school?  
Drita: What we would ask? Above all, concerning the Greeks, let us have a proper school.  
Ina: We have been saying that for seven years.  
Drita: What else?  
Ina: We say, Greek and Albanian. The best would be, if they could speak Albanian only for an hour. That would be the best, everything else is perfect.  
Drita: As in other countries abroad, as Greeks in Germany, for example, are treated by the school there, [we would like] the same for our children, nothing more.

2.2.2.3. *The "Pro-bilingualism" parents*. The "Pro-bilingualism" parents (10 parents) support the Albanian language through its use at home but they perceive heritage language maintenance as their own responsibility exclusively. In contrast to the "Fighters", they do not challenge the hegemony of the Greek language in the Greek school and endorse to a certain degree, the dominant discourse on the importance of the majority language. As a result, they reveal dilemmas and conflicts, struggling to balance between their rights and obligations under the pressures they face to make choices between the two languages.

Genti and Miranda, for example, actively support their children's bilingualism enacting various language practices at home. Genti is one of those parents who openly expresses his dynamic voice in favour of heritage language maintenance and their right to education. However, his discourse reveals his ambivalences concerning the responsibility the Greek state has to cater for heritage language classes in state schools.

#### 2.2.2.4. Excerpt 2.

- Genti: At school, when we went, in the beginning, there were wars, they said “We have problems, the children, don’t speak to them Albanian at all at home”.
- Researcher: Is this right, do you think?
- Genti: Listen, to tell you the truth, I don’t want to ... the child, we stay here, we live here, everything is here, the children grow up here, I want to give priority to the school where the child lives. The Albanian school and the Albanian language should not be at first place, it should be second. I will teach the child with a way but without causing problems or annoyance to the teacher at school. At school the children should not speak Albanian while you speak Greek to them [...] not to cause such things, I will teach the child ... not to speak it and cause problems by speaking Albanian but I’d like her to know the language.

The above excerpt reveals the pressures that Genti faces to rank languages and to prioritize them according to the dominant ideology and is indicative of most “Pro-bilingualism” parents’ discourse who appear fragmented between heritage language maintenance and the unequivocal value of the dominant Greek language.

2.2.2.5. *The “Indifferent” parents.* The “Indifferent” parents (3 parents) do not express any conscious interest in the maintenance of their language and approach it as devoid of any symbolic or ideological significance. They occasionally use it at home and employ no conscious language practices towards its support as they are satisfied with their children’s level of oral competence in it. They state that the Greek language is more important due to its academic, social and professional value in the Greek school and society and thus appear reluctant to actively involve themselves in practices towards home language maintenance.

- Researcher: What languages do you speak with each other at home?
- Valbona: Albanian, mostly.
- Translator: Do you speak Albanian because you want to or in order for your children to hear it?
- Valbona: No, I don’t care, because the children know Albanian, one way or another, they have learnt it but it is easier for us? I don’t know.
- Researcher: Is Albanian important to you?
- Valbona: Okay, I can’t say it isn’t.
- Translator: Do you do something at home so as to help the children not to forget the Albanian language?
- Valbona: No.
- Translator: Television in Albanian?
- Valbona: We have but we do not watch it at all, the three of us, my husband watches only.
- Researcher: Books for them to learn Albanian?
- Valbona: No, Ylli wanted to learn a little when he was younger but now ...
- Researcher: Would you like your daughter to learn how to read and write?
- Valbona: I want her to know how to read and write, I don’t say that I don’t.
- Ylli: She has to learn Greek first.
- Valbona: Yes, but after that ...
- Researcher: This is said by many children, why learn Greek first?
- Valbona: They think you go to school here, you learn all things ...
- Ylli: Greek is more useful.

### 3. Conclusions

The synthesis of the findings of both the quantitative and the qualitative data provides an insight into immigrant parents' views, needs and desires concerning heritage language maintenance and teaching in the Greek state school. The parents who already fight for the right for their children's education in their heritage language but also those who are less demanding of the Greek educational system openly support their children's right for bilingual oral and written language skills. Moreover, even parents form the category, which we termed "indifferent", might respond to classes of their heritage language, if they were to be organized in the Greek school. All in all, the quantitative study showed us that the vast majority of immigrant parents have come to realize the benefits of their children's bilingualism, through the development of the children's heritage languages, especially within the premises of the Greek school, something that would strengthen and add more value to the immigrant languages per se. The issue of whether heritage language classes should be within the Greek school or outside for immigrant parents appears to be a matter of ideological conflict, since it reflects their ambivalence as to the extent to which they actively claim for their rights and demand them from then Greek state. Despite their conflicts and ambivalence though concerning the rights and obligations of their own and the Greek state, which have also been documented in other studies (Chatzidaki & Maligkoudi, 2013; Gogonas & Michail, 2014; Griva & Stamou, 2014) they do express the importance of the heritage language and their eagerness not only to maintain it but also to encourage its further development.

Our findings confirm sociolinguistic research data among Albanian families in Greece, which document parents' positive attitudes towards language maintenance (Chatzidaki & Maligkoudi, 2013; Gogonas & Michail, 2014; Maligkoudi, 2010) and further attest to their desire for heritage language education. In the context of the current economic crisis in Greece, which has resulted to a large number of Albanian immigrants being repatriated (Gogonas & Michail, 2014; Maroukis, 2009) knowledge of Albanian is considered necessary, especially for the second generation (Gogonas & Michail, 2014). The impact of this return migration on the languages attitudes of Albanian immigrant parents and children (first and second generation) as well as on identity negotiation is not yet adequately investigated and reported by research data and thus remains to be seen.

The synthesis of our research analyses reveals that immigrant parents are increasing becoming conscious of the need for heritage language maintenance and education and desire a "space" in the Greek state school curriculum, articulating multiple "voices" ranging from resistant, counter hegemonic to in-between and conciliatory. It is thus time for a more active approach towards immigrant children's education. The children's heritage languages appear to have a dynamic, multidimensional, complex role in their sociolinguistic realities, having emotional, symbolic and communicative, instrumental value for them and their families, as demonstrated by Greek research data (Archakis, 2014; Gkaintartzi, 2012; Kiliari, 2014; Papandreou, 2013) and international (Guardado & Becker, 2014; Tannenbaum & Berkovich, 2005). Our study reveals that the overwhelming majority of parents favour heritage language courses to be held in Greek state schools. The lack of space for students' home languages in curricula is a perceptual and ideological problem (Liddicoat & Curnow, 2014), which can be dealt with by "unlearning monolingualism" (Scarino, 2014), that is a conscious challenging of monolingualism in education and societies. Immigrant parents' needs and desires, as well as their children's language profiles, should be taken into account in the design and implementation of heritage language teaching programmes in schools. Parents' voices for the support of heritage language education can contribute to this "unlearning", by calling for more responsive top-down language policies and pedagogical approaches, which integrate and utilize micro language planning policies.

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member of the scientific committee and A. Gkaintartzi was a researcher, member of the data collection team.

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## Appendix 1

### Quantitative study: Parents’ Questionnaire in Albanian



ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΕΙΟ  
ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ  
ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ



ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΙΑΚΟ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ  
ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑ ΒΙΟΥ ΜΑΘΗΣΗ  
επένδυση στην κοινωνία της γνώσης  
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ, ΔΙΑ ΒΙΟΥ ΜΑΘΗΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΜΑΤΩΝ  
ΕΙΔΙΚΗ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΔΙΑΧΕΙΡΙΣΗΣ

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση  
Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης  
ΕΣΠΑ  
2007-2013  
Πρόγραμμα για την ανάπτυξη  
ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΟ ΤΑΜΕΙΟ

**Vepra «Arsimlmi I nxënësve të huaj dhe të rlatdhesuar»**

Përgjegjësja shkencore: Profesoresha Ana Anastasiadi-Symeonidi

**Aktiviteti 5.1: «Zbulimi i nevojave për përforcimin e gjuhës së origjinës së nxënësve të huaj dhe të rlatdhesuar»**

Përgjegjësja shkencore: Profesoresha Agjeliki Kiliari

Forma 2

α/α

### PRINDËR

A.

1. Burrë       grua

2. Moshë: ..... vjeç

3. Kam lindur në ..... (ku?)

4. Jam rritur në ..... (ku?)

5. Në Greqi jetojmë ..... vjet

**6. Niveli arsimor:**

- arsim fillor (4 vjeçar)
- arsim të mesëm të përgjithshëm (Gjimnaz)
- arsim të mesëm teknik/profesional
- arsim të lartë jouniversitar
- arsim universitar

**7. Jam:**  kristian

- mysliman
- pa fe
- tjetër

**8. Në shtëpi punojmë**

- Burripo  jo
- Nëse po, cila është puna e tij? .....
- Gruajapo  jo
- Nëse po, cila është puna e saj? .....

**9. Kam ..... fëmijë (sa?)**

(sa?) ..... vajza (sa?) ..... djem

**10. Fëmijët e mi kanë lindur**

- Të gjithë në Greqi  po  jo
- Të gjithë në Shqipëri  po  jo
- Disa në Greqi, disa në Shqipëri  po  jo
- Diku tjetër  po  jo

**11. Në shtëpinë tonë banojnë:**

Gruaja / burri im dhe fëmijët tanë

Familja ime dhe

- Nëna im  babai im
- Nëna e gruas sime  ose/dhe babai i gruas sime
- Nëna e burrit tim  ose/dhe babai i burrit tim
- Dhe të afërm të tjerë
- Të tjerë  .....

**B.**

1. Në shtëpi flas me gruan /burrin tim:

Në greqisht po  jo

Në shqip po  jo

Disa herë në greqisht dhe disa herë në shqip po  jo

2. Në shtëpi flas me fëmijët e mi:

greqisht po  jo

shqip po  jo

disa herë greqisht dhe disa herë shqip po  jo

3. Në punë punoj me shqiptarë po  jo

Nëse po, me ta flas

greqisht po  jo

shqip po  jo

disa herë greqisht dhe disa herë shqip po  jo

4. Kemi të afërm në Greqi që i takojmë shpesh po  jo

5. Nëse po, me të afërmit e mi flas .....

6. Me shokët/shoqet e mia flas .....

7. Shkojmë për pushime në Shqipëri po  jo

8. Atje flas me të afërmit e mi .....

9. Atje flas me fëmijët e mi .....

10. Atje flas me gruan/burrin tim .....

**C.**

1. Shkoj shpesh në shkollën e fëmijëve që të informohem për ecurinë e fëmijëve të mi po  jo

2. Fëmijët e mi mësojnë anglisht në shkollë po  jo

3. Fëmijët e mi mësojnë anglisht në kurse private po  jo

4. Fëmijët e mi mësojnë një gjuhë tjetër në shkollë po  jo

5. Ajo gjuhë është (cila?) .....

6. Fëmijët e mi e mësojnë atë gjuhë dhe në kurse private po  jo

7. Do të doja që fëmijët e mi të mësojnë dhe gjuhë tjetër po  jo

8. Kjo gjuhë është (cila?) .....

9. Do të doja të mësojnë këtë gjuhë në shkollë po  jo

10. Të gjithë fëmijët e mi e njohin gjuhën shqipe po  jo

11. Nëse po,

	<i>Kur e dëgjojnë e kuptojnë</i>	<i>Mund ta flasin</i>	<i>Kur e lexojnë e kuptojnë</i>	<i>Mund ta shkruajnë</i>
Shumë mirë				
Mirë				
Çka				
Pak				
Fare				

12. Fëmijët e mi e njohin në nivele të ndryshme gjuhën shqipe po  jo

13. Nëse po,

	<i>Shumë mirë</i>	<i>Mirë</i>	<i>Çka</i>	<i>Pak</i>	<i>Fare</i>
Fëmija i parë					
Fëmija i dytë					
Fëmija i tretë					
Fëmija i katërt					

**D.**

1. Do të doja që fëmijët e mi të mësojnë më mirë gjuhën shqipe po  jo

2. Nëse po, do të doja që gjuhën shqipe

	<b>Ta kuptojnë</b>	<b>Ta flasin</b>	<b>Ta lexojnë</b>	<b>Ta shkruajnë</b>
Shumë mirë				
Mirë				
Çka				

3. Jam në dijeni se, nëse ne prindërit e kërkojmë, ka mundësi të bëhen mësimet e gjuhës shqipe në shkollë po  jo

4. Kam dëshirë të bëhen mësimet e gjuhës shqipe në shkollë po  jo

5. Nëse po, do të preferoja

Gjatë orarit shkollor po  jo

Në drekë, pas mësimit po  jo

mbasdite po  jo

të shtunën po  jo

të dielën po  jo

6. Nëse jo, do të doja ta mësonin shqipen diku tjetër po  ku? ..... jo

7. Dua të mësojnë më mirë gjuhën shqipe, sepse

Është gjuha e atdheut tonë po  jo

Është e domosdoshme për të komunikuar me të afërmit dhe miqtë tanë po  jo

Do t'u jetë e nevojshme në të ardhmen po  jo

**E.**

1. Do të doja që fëmijët e mi:

Të mbarojnë shkollën po  jo

Të vazhdojnë një shkollë teknike/profesionale po  jo

Të punojnë menjëherë po  jo

Të vazhdojnë studimet po  jo

2. Nëse po, do të doja të studiojnë

Kudo që ata mendojnë më mirë po  jo

Në Greqi po  jo

Jashtë po  jo

Nëse po, ku? .....

3. Puna që kam dëshirë të bëjnë.....

.....

.....

.....

**Qualitative Study: Main Interview Core Questions**

- (1) What languages do you speak at home? Why?
- (2) Which languages do your children prefer to use? In what circumstances? How do you explain it?
- (3) Do your children speak Albanian less? If so, how do you explain it?
- (4) What can parents do to maintain the language? What do you do?
- (5) How important is the Albanian language for you? For your children? Do you want your children to learn to read and write as well?
- (6) How important is the Greek language for your children? How does the Greek school deal with your children's home language?
- (7) What language/s do your children speak at school? Why? What do you think about that?
- (8) If a teacher told you to stop speaking Albanian to help your child, what would you do?
- (9) What do you think about teaching the Albanian language?
- (10) What do you expect from the Greek school?



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