

## *Language, immigration and naturalization: Legal and linguistic issues*

Ariel Loring and Vaidehi Ramanathan (eds.). 2016. Bristol / Buffalo: Multilingual Matters, 213 pp.

### **Reseña de Reseña de Sanja Škifić**

The volume consists of an Introduction written by the editors, Ariel Loring and Vaidehi Ramanathan, eight chapters by different contributors, and an afterword written by Ariel Loring.

In the Introduction to the volume (pp. 1-24), the editors, Ariel Loring and Vaidehi Ramanathan, indicate the purpose of the volume, which enables the reader to learn about the key concepts which are dealt with in the following chapters. Namely, these concepts are the following: language, immigration, citizenship, and naturalization. Merely by analyzing these key concepts it is possible to appreciate the ways in which the contributions to this volume might be of interest not only to linguists (especially sociolinguists), but also to all scholars with even the slightest interest in the ways in which the different analyses of the interplay between these and other, closely related concepts provide an insight into underlying ideological frameworks that may accompany immigration and naturalization processes. This is possibly where the greatest value of this volume lies. By means of using different methodological procedures, the authors of individual chapters reveal just how contemporary, pragmatic, and relevant their findings actually are. Namely, as the concepts of citizenship, nationhood, and a sense of belonging are frequently immersed in different ideological frameworks, insights into immigration and naturalization processes reveal the ways in which these ideological frameworks are reflected in contemporary practices and procedures of gaining citizenship status. Besides the above-mentioned key concepts, the editors identify three basic themes of the volume, and these are: identity, ideologies, and gatekeeping (p. 11). Contributions to this volume provide ample discussion of the key concepts in relation to all three themes. Processes of negotiating and contesting different types of identities, background ideologies, and the naturalization process seen as a means of inclusion or exclusion (frequently in attempts to identify the 'Other') are inevitable areas of concern in any thorough debate regarding the broader social and cultural implications of immigration and processes of gaining citizenship.

This volume can be of interest not only to scholars of different backgrounds, but also to anybody who might be interested in applying for citizenship, as one finds valuable practical information about the naturalization procedure as well, but also about the actual experiences of immigrants. Thus, the volume reveals its twofold focus: on one hand, it presents the actual legal framework of the naturalization process, and, on the other hand, it connects such issues to those related to the construction of different types of identities, nationhood, gatekeeping practices, etc. This twofold focus is further elaborated by the questions that the volume is supposed to explore: “what does the process of becoming a citizen look like; in what ways are people excluded from full participation; how does language position and frame insiders and outsiders?” (p. 2). A thorough insight into all constituent chapters reveals that this is exactly what the volume accomplishes. Depending on the context within which the above-mentioned key concepts are analyzed, different authors have successfully managed to contribute to providing answers to these questions.

Depending on the context within which the authors deal with the key concepts and topics, the eight chapters are grouped into one of the following strands: policies, pedagogies, and discourses.

The ‘Policies’ strand opens with the chapter entitled “The value(s) of US citizenship: An analysis of the English writing test for naturalization applicants” (pp. 27-55), in which Michelle Winn Baptiste provides a thorough insight into the US naturalization procedure. This chapter is especially relevant for a discussion on the types of ideologies that might be identified via the analysis of what being and becoming American actually means. Following a detailed historical presentation of core US citizenship values, the author presents her data composed of a number of naturalization interviews as collected in an INS office. By analyzing access to American citizenship and focusing on the English Writing Test in naturalization interviews, she identifies the differences between US citizenship values and associated ideologies as evident in the English Writing Test before and after the 2008 revision, but also questions the extent to which the immigrants’ stories are included. The contemporary test seems to be based primarily on topics related to historical, patriotic, and civic data, while the previous tests were more personalized and more aligned with the constituents of the prototypical image of what it means to be American and realize the ‘American Dream’.

In “The journey to US citizenship: Interviews with Iraqi refugees” (pp. 56-75), Emily Feuerherm and Russul Roumani outline the complex relationship between the status of refugees and access to citizenship. The chapter is especially relevant for providing a fruitful field for a discussion about the ways in which access to citizenship is specific in

the case of refugees, citizenship applicants whose path to gaining citizenship is frequently accompanied by issues of traumatic experiences, segregation, and alienation. Ideologies are a crucial aspect of this chapter as well, as a detailed insight into interviews with Iraqi refugees seeking US citizenship reveals the ways in which these refugees envisage American identities. Namely, the authors emphasize the fact that previous research revealed that the refugees' primary motivation for arriving to the US was to obtain freedom, as well as some of the many benefits and opportunities that the country has to offer. However, the analysis of the conducted interviews reveals that a frequent motivation for applying for US citizenship among the Iraqi refugees is to gain the American passport, which includes the motivation to gain access to international opportunities.

The 'Pedagogies' strand opens with Karen E. Lillie's chapter entitled "The ELD classes are... too much and we need to take other classes to graduate': Arizona's restrictive language policy and the dis-citizenship of ELs" (pp. 79-100). This chapter presents Arizona's language policy for educating ELs as rather restrictive and creating a divide between EL and non-EL students. The discussion is immersed in a redefinition of the concept of citizenship, the presentation of the English-Only Movement in America, and, most importantly, in the presentation of Arizona's SEI (Structured English Immersion) policy. By analyzing the data collected from the conducted survey and by using the concept of dis-citizenship, the author investigates the students' awareness of the divide between EL and non-EL students and the impact this has on their identity. Namely, the stigmatization of ELs, which the students seem to be aware of, might have an important effect on the EL's identities and future prospects. This chapter is especially relevant for discussions regarding the ways in which the concept of citizenship may be redefined in contemporary literature, but also for discussions on how individuals' identities might be affected in contexts of discourse that categorizes immigrants as different and segregated.

Paul McPherron is the author of the following chapter entitled "Local, foreign and in-between: English teachers and students creating community and becoming global 'citizens' at a Chinese University" (pp. 101-120). His findings are especially relevant for discussions related to the construction of ideologies of national and global citizenship. The chapter offers an analysis of the different aspects of English teaching policies in China with the focus on local and global orientations of those involved in the educational process. The author emphasizes the different tensions that exist between foreign teachers who are seen as those who introduce reforms into English teaching, and local teachers and students who have their own specific expectations in English teaching classrooms. Moreover, the author concludes his discussion by pro-

posing a possible way in which these tensions might be overcome, and that is the creation of alternative spaces besides the traditional classroom where the foreign/local dichotomy might not be at the focus.

“Language and body in concert: A multimodal analysis of teacher feedback in an adult citizenship classroom”(pp. 121-141) is the last chapter in the second strand dealing with pedagogical issues. Olga Griswold analyzes the importance of teacher feedback situated in the context of the adult ESL/citizenship classroom. By investigating extensive videorecorded classroom interaction, she demonstrates the complexity of classroom feedback by identifying positive, negative, and mixed feedback. The author emphasizes both the linguistic and the gestural elements that constitute teacher feedback as having a significant influence on how US citizenship applicants answer questions about the US civics. Although linguistic and gestural types of feedback might be in conflict, it appears that the students do not perceive them as such. Rather, the interplay between the different types of feedback seems to have a pragmatic role as it indicates the ways in which students are to respond within expected frameworks.

The ‘Discourses’ strand opens with the chapter “‘You are part of where you’re from and a part of where you’re born’: Youth’s citizenship and identity in America” (pp. 145-163) by Jasmina Josić. The author focuses on the complexity of citizenship identity among immigrant youth in a highly multicultural context, with special emphasis placed on the concept of social citizenship. Within such an analysis, it is possible to identify a distinction between self-positioning and the positioning that is socially imposed, which the author successfully addresses. In her analysis of the production of citizenship within the relations of space and individuals, she addresses this duality by positioning it in relation to yet another crucial concept, and that is ‘cultural citizenship’. By combining three different methods of data collection, Josić illustrates the different ways in which immigrant youth in America negotiate their citizenship identity, which points to the fact that their identity is constantly being shaped and contested. Thus, this chapter may be said to be especially important for furthering the discussions on ways in which the concept of citizenship can be investigated.

Jennifer Long is the author of the following chapter entitled “Reinforcing belonging and difference through neighbourhood gentrification projects in Rotterdam, the Netherlands” (pp. 164-183). Unlike most other chapters, this one does not deal with the American context nor does it analyze some of the key concepts presented in this volume from the immigrant, but from the host point of view. Nevertheless, it also provides a significant contribution to discussions on different ways the concept of citizenship can be and is negotiated in different contexts.

Firstly, the author provides an overview of the Dutch policy towards immigrants. The methodology of the research includes ethnographic fieldwork with participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The research focuses on the discourse among neighbourhood members during gentrification projects, with an elaboration of the tensions between Dutch natives and Muslim immigrants that become apparent in the analysis of the discourses. Lack of participation in local events on the part of the immigrants is interpreted by the natives as lack of allegiance to the Dutch national and cultural identity.

The last chapter “Ideologies and collocations of ‘citizenship’ in media discourse: A corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis” (pp. 184-206) is authored by Ariel Loring. It opens with a discussion about the importance of media research and the reasons why the media is a productive source of data in research of language, ideologies, and discourses. The research presented in the chapter refers to the analysis of the type of language used to discuss citizenship in print media. The methodology represents a combination of corpus and critical discourse analysis. The analysis of the results reveals a set of different meanings that the concept of citizenship acquires in print media. On one hand, the author notes that the concept of citizenship is frequently presented in the legal framework, but it may also be presented in relation to a specific system of values. This chapter is especially relevant for furthering analyses that deal with the perceived relationship between citizenship and national identity. Moreover, the chapter is significant as it presents yet another excellent illustration of how important it is to use such methodological approaches which include both discourse and media analysis with the aim of gaining substantial insight into the key concepts analyzed in this volume.

Although separated into three strands, all contributions in this volume work very well together to provide the reader with substantial information regarding the investigated topics, as well as a rigorous elaboration of the key concepts that this volume deals with. Many scholars have been interested in discussions about ‘Otherness’ and identifying ‘the Other’ across different disciplines. This is not surprising since questions related to the ‘us’ and ‘them’ dichotomy have a profound impact on individual and group identities and everyday experiences, regardless of whether these are seen from the immigrant or the host viewpoint. This volume represents a significant contribution to rigorous scientific research focusing on both the legal and social implications of the interplay between language, immigration, citizenship, and naturalization.