

Bernardino Tavares

Trajectories of education and multilingualism: old and new Cape Verdean immigrants to Luxembourg compared

This paper explores the language life, learning histories and trajectories of Cape Verdean migrants into Luxembourg. Considering the Languages Law of 1984 and the Schengen Agreement (1985), it compares the life of old and new Cape Verdean migrants and how their educational trajectories, “linguistic repertoire” (Busch 2012 and Blommaert and Backus 2013) and language attitudes have affected their lives in the former official bilingual Luxembourg and the present trilingual Luxembourg. As part of a larger project on language and migration at the University of Luxembourg, the paper presents ethnographic vignettes about the life of two Cape Verdean men, Aguinaldo and Helio, an old and a relatively new comer who migrated to Luxembourg in 1970 and 2013 respectively. They have very distinctive migration trajectories and motives but both of them “unexpectedly” moved i.e. they did not aspire to move to Luxembourg in the first place. Both of them have diverse complex repertoires resulted from a combination of informal and formal learnings and aspirations. The use of one case-study approach allows me to explore, in depth, how different causes, actions and migration regimes lead to specific “results”, in specific situations. Thus, comparing these life stories and trajectories will enhance understanding of Cape Verdean migration into Luxembourg in particular and bring new insights to Cape Verdean migration in general.

Bernardino Tavares obtained a B.A. degree in Modern Languages and an M.A. in Anglo-American Studies with a focus on creole linguistics. The greatest share of his career has been dedicated to the teaching of English as a foreign language, especially at high school level (in Cape Verde and Portugal). Before moving to Luxembourg, he worked at the University of Cape Verde (UNICV) as a lecturer in English for specific purposes. As a West African migrant in Europe himself, Bernardino has a strong personal interest in researching sociolinguistic aspects of migration between Africa and Europe.