

## **Shifting discourses of migrant incorporation at a time of crisis: Understanding the articulation of language and labour in the Catalan non-governmental sector**

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In this article, we investigate the discursive transformations occurred at a migrant-support NGO located in the outskirts of Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain) and how they intersect with broader sociopolitical and economic processes. In particular, we focus on the revamping of the key notions of language and labour in the institutional imagination of migrant incorporation processes. Our data was collected over the course of a six-year period (2007-2012), and consists of in-depth interviews with multilingual NGO users and institutional agents, ethnographic narratives and institutional documents. We trace a discursive shift from 'integration-through-labour' during the economic boom to an official 'integration-through-language' to gain access to paid employment in the early years of the recession, and recently, with the worsening of the crisis, a paradigm that focuses on language-cum-affective labour to craft relational and moral selves through voluntary work in local NGOs.

**Keywords:** institutional discourse, nongovernmental and voluntary organisations, migrant incorporation, language ideology, neoliberal subjectivities.

### **1. Introduction**

In the urban centres of Spain, the turn of the century was defined by one of the most radical demographic transformations the country has ever experienced: the arrival and settling in of citizens from around the planet. The Barcelona metropolitan area, in Catalonia, was no exception. Suddenly, new services were required and new social needs became evident. Language training for non-Spanish, non-Catalan speaking foreign populations was one of them. The public sector was either slow or not flexible enough to accommodate to the country's quickly changing social realities. In that context, the non-governmental sector took over; migrant populations started to be assisted by a growing number of associations and solidarity-driven bodies which ended up being funded by the state to carry out their mission. The aim of this paper is to examine the discursive transformations occurred at a migrant-serving non-profit organisation located in the outskirts of Barcelona, from 2007 to 2012. We intend to shed light on how the changing discourses of this institution encapsulate the intersection of multiple socio-economic and political processes of different nature and scope. In particular, we examine the evolution of the key notions of labour and language as linked to the ways in which the institution

and its agents imagine processes of migrant insertion in Catalonia. We claim that, over a period of five years, there was a crucial revamping of the links between these three concepts (language, labour and social incorporation) and investigate their grounding ideologies, legitimating discourses and rationales.

We adopt a historicising perspective that foregrounds the idea of institutions as trajectories (Heller, 2011), that is, as bodies emerging out of particular historical, economic and political conditions which are configured but in turn also help to configure particular articulations of politico-economic, social and cultural processes. These articulations are crucial to come to an understanding of the role of institutions not only as producers and distributors of resources, but also as discursive spaces which construct moral and social selves (Heller, 2007). In that sense, one of our goals in this paper is to understand what institutional subjectivities emerge as desirable and legitimate at particular historical junctures and how they evolve. We claim that it is not possible to do that from a synchronic perspective but rather against the background of particular institutional uptakes, adaptations and/or reactions to discourses and socio-economic processes unfolding over time and space. We argue that that type of analysis requires a close, ethnographic perspective of the *longue-durée* type we present here.

This paper is organised into five sections. In section 2, we outline the evolution of the social field of welfare provision in Spain with a particular focus on migrant-oriented services provided by non-profits. This is followed by section 3, in which we succinctly describe the sociolinguistic situation of Catalonia, outline the foundation and evolution of our focal discursive space, and explain our ethnographic methods of data collection. In section 4, we analyse the three discursive phases identified during our six-year ethnography and the way in which they represent different articulations and definitions of the concepts of language and labour. We link the different discursive shifts to the changing economic circumstances globally and locally. Finally, in section 5, we discuss the various ideological and practical implications of the institutional discursive transformations analysed in section 4.

## **2. The Spanish welfare state, non-profit organisations and migrant reception services in Catalonia: An overview**

The consolidation of Spain as a reception country for so-called ‘economic migrants’ took place in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This corresponded to a period of steep economic

growth founded, mostly, on a booming building sector. Political reactions to the realities of large-scale immigration, with its immanent linguistic, cultural and social heterogeneity, were rather slow. Initially, the response was fairly unstructured and driven by goodwill rather than political planning. Additionally, it happened at a time when public services in Spain were being offloaded or simply contracted out to the third sector, especially for populations in the margins of the Spanish welfare system. This means that the provision of reception services for the increasing numbers of newcomers arriving every year were basically organised and run by non-profits (though partially or totally subsidised by the state).

Since the late 1970, the transformation of the Spanish welfare system has been substantial. Over the last 40 years, it has moved from being a selective, labour contribution-based system to becoming a universalizing, non-contributory system (see Guillén, Álvarez and Adão e Silva, 2002). At the end of the Francoist dictatorship, the Spanish welfare state was underdeveloped, segmented by occupational categories and with broad gaps in the protection net. Spain's familist character, founded on the traditional role of women as caregivers, and the prominent role of the Catholic church *charity* ethos under the authoritarian regime continued to inform the ways in which weak state provisions were supplemented by family structures and religious organizations during the transition period to democracy (in the late 1970s). The change in political regime added to the late industrialization of the country explain why the Spanish welfare system did not develop until the early 1980s. However, the democratic Spanish welfare state did not depart substantially from the model inherited, due to the oil crisis and the economic adjustment measures that Spain was forced to adopt for EU ascension in 1986. One main difference, though, was the process of welfare decentralization to the regions (*comunitats autònomes*). The first one to receive devolution of welfare services was Catalonia.

In the period 1986-1993, the Socialist government in power greatly expanded social expenditure. Among others, healthcare became universal in 1989, noncontributory old age and disability pensions were established in 1991, and unemployment coverage was extended to include family allowances and minimum income transfers. The labour flexibilisation measures of 1993-94 opened an era of deceleration and rationalization of social expenditure owing to the soaring unemployment rates of the mid-1990s. The restrictive reforms of pensions and unemployment benefits further changed the labour market. Under the new conservative government of 1996-2004, the traditional familist ethos resurfaced in the form of new tax reductions for families, maternity compensations

and conciliation measures culminating in the 2006 *Ley de la dependencia*, passed by the then socialist party back in power since 2004, which provides benefits for dependants and their caregivers.

Today, the Spanish welfare state typically illustrates the Mediterranean welfare model, which, in common with Italy, Greece and Portugal, is a mixture of universal healthcare provision, compulsory education and pensions on the one hand (now under attack) and selective social security coverage based on labour contributions on the other (Moreno, 2001). It is, in fact, a model defined by *segmented universalism* (Martín Castro, 2012, p 19), as it provides generous social protection to employees in the regular or primary market, while it only administers meager subsidies to those involved in the irregular or secondary market (very significant in Southern Europe [Ferrera, 1996]).

Services for ‘peripheral’ populations have traditionally been delivered by non-state institutions in Spain. They were initially by the Catholic Church charity exclusively, and later also by non-governmental organisations, many of which were set up in the early 1990s out of faith-based circles. Over time, a *mixed economy of welfare* (Gilbert, 2004), which translates into emerging public responsibility networks for welfare provision comprising public institutions, private companies and non-profit organizations has consolidated. The provisions of the recently-passed Catalan *Llei d’Acollida*, which we will explain in detail in 4.2, exemplify the establishment of such mixed networks of welfare.

NGOs have increasingly specialised on passive populations outside the social security system like undocumented migrants or the homeless. These organisations relied almost entirely on public subsidies and had no or little grass-roots supports (Gómez Gil, 2005). Outsourcing practices by the state were legitimised with discourses of knowledge of and closeness to the populations served, and thus, assumed effectiveness, and the (less frequently avowed) goals of labour flexibility, lower costs and the thinning of the state machinery. In addition, these offloading arrangements allowed the state not to appear to the public opinion as investing welfare resources on newcomers (Agrela and Dietz, 2006). The economic crisis has entailed severe funding cuts for many NGOs. This has forced a revival of grassroots and voluntary initiatives to fill in the gaps of the thinning Spanish welfare state under current international predicaments. Discursively, the older generations describe this as a return to the voluntary and extended family provision of the 1970s and 1980s.

### 3. Sociolinguistic context, institutional site and ethnographic methods

The institutional site that we examine here is, as mentioned earlier, a non-governmental organization, which we shall call MSO (Migrant Support Organisation).<sup>1</sup> MSO is located in Sarrona, a medium-size city on the outskirts of Barcelona, Catalonia. Catalonia is an officially bilingual –though practically multilingual– territory situated in the north-east of Spain. The sociolinguistic situation of Catalonia is rather complex and impossible to explain here in any detail (for an updated overview of key issues and discussions, readers may want to refer to both the introduction of the special issue on Catalan sociolinguistics edited by Woolard and Frekko (2013) and the articles contained in it). For the purposes of this paper, suffice to say that Catalan and Spanish have an uneven distribution across geographical spaces, social fields, age groups and social classes. Traditionally, the Catalan language has been considered an emblem of Catalan ethnic identity although increasingly less so. The language normalisation policies implemented in the early 1980s (after democracy was restored), managed to extend the public and interpersonal uses of Catalan. Catalan is prevalent in the public administration, as a high command of the language is required to access the Catalan civil service, and in the field of education. Catalan is the preferred medium of instruction in public and publicly-subsidised schools. In fact, schools have been key in language revitalisation moves, as they have ensured that children of non-Catalan speaking families acquired Catalan alongside Spanish.

According to official surveys,<sup>2</sup> 95% of the population declares being able to understand Catalan, while 73% states being able to speak it. Only 35% of Catalonia's inhabitants (many of whom were born in other areas of Spain or the world, or are their descendants) claim that Catalan is their habitual language; for 46% of the population, Spanish is. 12% consider both languages to be their habitual languages.

The relationship between Spanish and Catalan is not that of a classic minority-majority language situation. While Spanish is the language of the Spanish state and has global and international currency, Catalan is prestigious within Catalonia, as it the language of education, social access and upward social mobility. It is the 'type of cultural capital that ensures access to powerful networks and prestigious employment' (Pujolar,

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the article, the names of informants, organisations and cities have been changed in order to ensure confidentiality.

<sup>2</sup> Data source: [www.idescat.cat](http://www.idescat.cat). Retrieved 6 May 2014.

2007a, p. 123). Class is, thus, a crucial aspect in understanding language-based social stratification in Catalonia (Codó and Patiño-Santos, 2014).

The organisation that we examine here (MSO) was founded in 1994 by members of the progressive local middle classes (Catalan-speaking). Like the whole of the country, Sarrona has experienced a steep increase in migrant populations over the last decade. Registered foreigners accounted for 1.04% of its population in 2000; in 2010, the figure had reached a peak of 12.94%. During the period 2007-2012, analysed in this paper, owing to changing economic conditions, the increase was less pronounced, from 10.46% in 2006 to 12.68% in 2011. If we compare figures, we actually observe a steady decrease in foreign residents after 2010 (from 12.94% in 2010 to 12.68% in 2011 and 12.19% in 2012).<sup>3</sup> Sarrona is characterized by a vibrant civil society, which comprises ten pro-migrant associations and over fifty ethnolinguistic, regional and national migrant associations. The local economy, once based on textile manufacturing, now rests on retail and wholesale trade and financial institutions.

The goal of MSO was to provide ‘integrated’, that is, holistic services to the growing migrant population in the city. When it was founded, this new institutional structure served to bring together the work of three pre-existing non-profits and the migrant-oriented services of the two major Spanish trade unions. It combined its own full-time personnel (a small team of paid workers and volunteers) with staff members belonging to the founding organizations who worked part time for MSO. One such organisation was *Saume*, which headed a residential scheme created in 2003 that we will examine in this article. The goal of this scheme, which was managed jointly with MSO, was to provide shelter and food for homeless migrants and accompany them in their process of legal, social and labour (re)insertion (Garrido, 2010a) into Catalan society. *Saume* created, ‘defined’ and headed the project, but it was technically assisted in screening applicants and supervising participants by the social worker of one of the trade unions working for MSO. The project was discontinued at the end of 2011 when the municipality stopped funding 80% of the costs.

Among other activities, project participants attended Spanish and/or Catalan language classes, which were held in the premises of MSO. In this paper, we examine the transformation of institutional discourses on language and migration through the prism of the many-fold changes occurring in and around those language classes and their participants. At the time of our study, the majority of project participants were young men

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<sup>3</sup> Data source: [www.idescat.cat](http://www.idescat.cat). Retrieved 6 May 2014.

(aged 20 to 35) who came from the African continent, both from the North of Africa (mostly from Morocco) and from the West (mainly from Ghana, Burkina Fasso, Senegal, Gambia, and Ivory Coast). The project population did not correspond to the demographics of foreigners in Sarrona, where Latin Americans were dominant (around 50%) and Africans were numerically a smaller group (only 25%).<sup>4</sup> The mismatch between project and town demographics can be attributed to the generally weaker support networks of Africans in this city and to the magnet effect that the presence of other participants from the same country/region had.

At present, MSO continues to be one of the agencies involved in settlement in Sarrona (mostly in the area of immigration law advice) but has experienced major cuts (approx. 60,000 € less income in 2010 vs. 2009). The changing contextual conditions have forced MSO to downsize and redefine itself. Two employees (out of five) were made redundant in December 2011. MSO has been trying to get private funds and individual donations, and raise its social and pro-migrant activist profile through the organising of lobbying events and campaigns.

Our contacts with MSO began informally in 2006, when Maria Rosa started to volunteer for the language teaching programme. In January 2007 we formally started our ethnographic observations in the same context that we had first accessed, i.e. the language classes, and gradually, worked our way to other key institutional spaces, such as reception, legal advice and social work encounters. Initially, our focus was on multilingualism as managed in institutional policies and deployed in language practices (Codó and Garrido, 2010).<sup>5</sup> We investigated changing official discourses on language and integration, in particular with regard to the Catalan language, and how they entered into conflict with actors' practices, shaped by pervasive linguistic ideologies of authenticity (Garrido, 2010b) which worked to withhold everyday Catalan from migrants. Our interests gradually shifted to other institutional and discursive aspects, such as neoliberal institutional agendas and changing relationships between civil society organisations and the state –which we investigated through the lens of the evolution of immigration law advice services in Catalonia (Codó, 2013). Another focus of interest was the discursive articulation of transnational NGOs, investigated through a sociolinguistic ethnography of *Saume*, one of MSO's subsidiary organisations (Garrido, forthcoming).

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<sup>4</sup> Data from Idescat.cat. Retrieved 30 April 2014.

<sup>5</sup> This was the focus of funded research project “The management of multilingualism in institutional spaces” (HUM2007-61864/FILO), headed by Dr. Melissa Moyer at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Throughout the period 2007-2012, our participation in MSO included ethnographic observations and recordings of classes and of interactions between NGO employees/volunteers and migrant clients; informal talks and formal interviews with students, teachers, volunteers, legal advisors, social workers and managers; participation in different types of meetings; and analysis of all kinds of textual productions: from yearly activity reports to notice board information sheets. Over the course of those six years, our contact with MSO varied in regularity, intensity and scope, and shifted focus depending on research interests. Yet our engagement with the language courses remained fairly constant due to Maria Rosa's participation in a collaborative teaching material development project for the Catalan language classes (Garrido and Oliva, forthcoming).

In the next section, we shall present the evolution of the ways in which migrants' avenues for social incorporation were imagined institutionally and were represented discursively by the various social actors involved. We shall examine the discursive shifts identified in relation to the political and economic changes mentioned in section 2.

#### **4. Language, labour and migrant integration: Institutional discursive transformations at a time of socio-political and economic change**

Three discursive shifts defined the evolution of the notion of migrant incorporation at MSO and *Saume*. These shifts were reflective of the broader economic circumstances, especially soaring unemployment rates; the ways in which economic hardship impacted the institution more locally; circulating and increasingly hegemonic ideas about language, migration, and social integration in Catalonia; and more recently, neoliberal citizen activation and responsabilisation discourses. The three shifts are presented in what follows.

##### ***4.1. Integration through paid labour***

At the beginning of July 2007, Eva met up with Alex, the social worker at MSO. Eva had volunteered to work as a Spanish language teacher to stand in for José Antonio, the regular language teacher (also a volunteer), who was on vacation. One thing that struck Eva's attention in the interview was that Alex never asked her about her language teaching experience or credentials despite the fact that he did not know her or had heard about her. Clearly, those pieces of information did not seem relevant to him. Alex's only concern appeared to be filling in José Antonio's temporal vacancy, no matter the quality



of the teaching. Eva was not given a syllabus or a textbook to follow; she should decide what to do. By contrast, she was asked to be patient with students' irregular attendance, which was due to their finding occasional work in the informal economy. Working took priority because, according to Alex, '*ells han vingut a treballar, clar!*' (they've come to work, of course!).

This scene illustrates vividly the stance of institutional agents towards migrants' language learning in this early phase of our ethnography. Rita, the residential project manager from *Saume*, described those language lessons as unstructured conversation groups which served as a 'past-time' for participants in between jobs. Classes only ran twice a week. They actually began as an informal initiative on the part of volunteers 'to have participants a little entertained' because they did not know what to do in the month of August, according to Rita.

Language classes were considered to be secondary to labour insertion through temporary manual jobs that, generally, did not require linguistic skills. The economic situation was favourable and newly-arrived migrants were quickly inserted into the job market. In fact, during that period, a high number of the residential project participants managed to become autonomous thanks to a job in the thriving construction sector which most of them accessed through personal networks. As we saw in the case of Eva, teaching volunteers were accepted without any selection, just if the person was 'very motivated' and showed 'willingness' to do the job, according to Katrijn, the manager of MSO. For instance, the Spanish teacher, José Antonio, was an early retiree and a former bank employee and he volunteered in order to have something to do in the mornings. José Antonio was not particularly sensitive to migrant issues and often otherised and openly mistreated students in class. Another motivation for José Antonio to volunteer was to practice his foreign language skills. This actually opened up some space for multilingual practice in the classroom, especially in English and/or French, the foreign languages that José Antonio spoke. Since students' competences in French and English were higher than José Antonio's, he employed these codes as heterofacilitating devices (Nussbaum, 1990) to teach Spanish. He made life easier for himself as a teacher, and at the same time brushed up his English and French. Although the class was not policed as a strictly monolingual space, it was not unproblematically multilingual either. Students' languages other than English or French were forbidden and the students' own use of those two codes was also fairly restricted. The classes were grammar-based and the language presented was extremely decontextualised.

As we mentioned, the goal of these classes was to give project participants something to do in between jobs, and somewhat secondarily, provide them with some linguistic training. Clearly, at that time, working was constructed as the main motivation for migrants' transnational mobilities and the key element for migrants' practical and symbolic social participation and belonging.

A key issue was what language was taught to migrants (Spanish, Catalan or both). Back in 2007, the unquestioned language of instruction was Spanish (see Garrido, 2010b) since institutional agents subscribed to the idea that migrants would assimilate to the Spanish-speaking working classes located in the city's periphery. Imagined as a middle-class language linked to white-collar employment, Catalan was construed as a language not for them. According to José Antonio (interview, June 2007) 'they will not work in a bank; that is clear. They will work in construction where ninety-five of the people speak Spanish'. The other argument that was frequently put forward was that of migrants' geographical mobility across Spain in search of job opportunities, which, according to MSO representatives and teachers, justified the teaching of only Spanish. However, this decision actually denied migrants, many of whom stayed in the Barcelona area, access to Spanish-Catalan bilingualism, a requisite for full-fledged social incorporation in Catalonia. Thus, we can conclude that, in this phase, migrants were primarily imagined as workers, hence the backgrounding of language in general, and the insistence on 'survival' Spanish in particular.

#### ***4.2. Integration through language***

In 2008 personal and family circumstances forced José Antonio to give up his job as the main volunteer language teacher. His replacement marked a turning point in the trajectory of the language classes. Rita, the *Saume* residential project manager, took the opportunity offered by José Antonio's vacancy to encourage a group of recently-retired primary school teachers, mostly women who were active in Progressive Catholic circles, to volunteer. These new language teachers had greater time availability and thus were able to implement a crucial transformation in the language programme, i.e. a more intensive schedule. Far from being a 'past time', as in 2007, the language classes became the main daily activity for the residential project participants. Former project participants were also allowed to attend these lessons. Classes ran every day and attendance was compulsory.

This development was supported by an institutional discursive shift in which priority was given to language learning in the face of increasing competition for jobs in

the dwindling construction sector. As early as February 2008, before José Antonio had actually resigned, Rita expressed her concern that not knowing the language may hinder migrants' job opportunities, and thus, that language learning must come first. Yet, as we see in the extract below, her concerns go beyond work chances.

*Extract 1: 'They find a job early on and they don't learn the language'*

- 1 \*RIT: vull dir el que nosaltres necessitem és un intensiu de català o de castellà # però un  
2 intensiu o sigui # jo m'he arribat a plantejar [>] amb el tema de la llengua.  
%tra: I mean that what we need is an intensive course of Catalan or Castilian # but an  
intensive one that is # I have even thought of with the issue of language.
- 3 \*RES: mmm # sí.  
%tra: mmm yes.
- 4 \*RIT: ja # dic llengua # ni català ni castellà # la que sigui.  
%tra: well # I say language # neither Catalan nor Castilian # whichever it is.
- 5 \*RES: Mmm
- 6 \*RIT: del primer mes dir # no podeu treballar # cada dia [èmfasi] a classe de llengua.  
%tra: from the first month saying # you can't work # every day [emphasised] to language classes.
- 7 \*RES: també.  
%tra: perhaps.
- 8 \*RIT: eh? [buscant aprovació] # perquè # si no sabeu la llengua # no nem bé # perquè hi ha  
9 gent que a lo millor té la sort de trobar treball aviat # i no l'aprèn mai a la vida # i tan  
10 panxos # m'entens?  
%tra: huh? [seeking approval from RES] # because # if you don't know the language #  
we're not on the right path # because there are people who perhaps are lucky to find  
a job early on # and do not learn it [the language] ever # and do not bat an eyelid #  
do you understand me?

It is apparent in lines 8-10 that Rita has embraced the discourse of social integration through language (Cleghorn, 2000). Her '*no nem bé*' (we're not on the right path), which in the same turn she relates to migrants' having had the chance of finding a job soon after arrival, indicates that, contrary to what happened in 2007, Rita views early labour insertion as a drawback; in fact, in her words, working may hinder migrants' local language learning. Interestingly, she does not explicitly explain why; her arguments are presented as commonsensical. What legitimises her stance is the ideology of integration through the local language which she now seems to adhere to. Yet in a bilingual context like Catalonia, this is no trivial matter. In the interview, Rita foregrounds 'language learning' (line 4), 'neither Castilian nor Catalan, whichever it is', implying that language choice is not an issue for her, but showing through her words a clearly monolingual bias ('whichever it is', thus only one). This aligns her with modernist one nation-one language ideologies. In fact, further on in the same interview, her language ideological stance is more clearly revealed.

Extract 2: 'The fact that an immigrant speaks Catalan for me it changes totally'

- 1 \*RIT: però # ara quan vam fer aquest congrés internacional que van fer a: # a Barcelona sobre la  
2 immigració que ho va fer la Generalitat  
%tra: but # now when we attended this international conference that was held i:n # in Barcelona  
about immigration that the Generalitat organised.
- 3 \*RES: mm?
- 4 \*RIT: doncs # hi vem participar-hi # i a les taules rodones que hi havien entitats de: # de  
5 immigrants.  
%tra: well # we participated in it # and in the round tables there were associations made up by : #  
immigrants.
- 6 \*RES: sí.  
yes.
- 7 \*RIT: em va encantar veure # els immigrants com parlaven català # perquè és que a més ho feien  
8 tan bé # que jo quedava al·lucjada total no?  
%tra: I loved to see # how immigrants spoke Catalan # because on top they spoke it so well # that I  
was totally flipping out right?
- 9 \*RES: [riu lleugerament]  
[giggles]
- 10 \*RIT: i vaig pensar ostres # la gent que té tantes reserves pels immigrants que pensen que és una  
11 mala cosa que que s'equivoquen moltíssim però mm vaja que no els hi pots explicar # a  
12 vegades no els hi pots ni # ni intentar explicar no? # el fet de que un immigrant parli català #  
13 per mi canvia # totalment ## perquè hi ha com una voluntat gran d'integració.  
%tra: and I thought gosh! # people who are so prejudiced about immigrants who think that it is a  
bad thing they are so wrong but mm well you can't even # even try to explain huh? # the fact  
that an immigrant speaks Catalan # for me it changes # totally ## because there is like a great  
willingness to integrate.

Despite her earlier liberal position as to what language should be taught to migrants, she now defends that it should be Catalan instead of Spanish. According to her, she came to that conclusion, depicted as a moment of revelation (lines 7-8), after attending an international conference on migration organised by the Catalan Government (lines 1-2). This is significant information as Rita's words have to be understood in the context of changing discourses on language in Catalonia.

Integration-through-Catalan ideas gained momentum socially as they articulated with language endangerment discourses related to the diminishing uses of Catalan (Pujolar, 2007a). The *commonsensical sociolinguistic comportment* (Pujolar, 2007b) of habitual Catalan speakers, who generally use Spanish to address non-speakers and second language speakers of Catalan, has been perceived as reinforcing the everyday dominance of Spanish over Catalan. With the arrival of transnational migrants at the turn of the century, Catalan language endangerment discourses blamed newcomers for the predominance of Spanish in interpersonal communication, especially in urban contexts. In Rita's words above, we see echoes of those endangerment discourses. For example, in

lines 10-13 she draws on migrants' use of Catalan to argue against widespread public ideas of migration as social evil. In her words, a migrant who learns Catalan is a better citizen ('for me it changes [my ideas] totally'), as it indicates his/her 'greater willingness to integrate'. Therefore, the Catalan language symbolically indexes "integration" discourses in public and government-sponsored discourses that NGOs appropriated at this time. Catalan language learning is, thus, employed as a means to evaluate a newcomer's moral worth, both as a well-meaning citizen and as someone who displays personal and linguistic alignment with the Catalan-speaking population.

The new circulating discourses underlined the need for language education in Catalan for the newly-arrived, as well as an increase in the public use of Catalan in interactions involving locals and migrants (through the launching of official campaigns like '*Tu ets mestre*' [You are the teacher]). In the field of migrant services, the need was voiced to institutionalise Catalan as the first language of reception. The conference that Rita alludes to in her speech was one of a series of events that were organised by the Catalan government to gain the support of the many organisations working with migrants on the ground to institutionalise the predominance of Catalan in reception services (note her mention in lines 4-5 of their participation alongside many other organisations in seminars and round-tables at the conference).

Finally, in 2010, the *Llei d'Acollida* was passed (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2010). This was the first legal instrument to define Catalan as the common language (*llengua comuna*), that is to say, everybody's language in the public sphere (Woolard, 2008) in Catalonia, and it stirred a great deal of controversy. Its declared goal was to promote newcomers' autonomy by means of language classes (135 hours) in Catalan and (Catalan-medium) information sessions about the legal framework and the labour market (30 hours). In fact, the law was appealed against in the Spanish Constitutional Court for its backgrounding of Spanish as the language of reception and settlement services. Another of the controversial provisions of the law is that the 'integration report' awarded to newcomers upon the completion of the aforementioned training (in Catalan) has legal force (but is not compulsory) when applying for residence permits and Spanish nationality (Branchadell, forthcoming).

Changing over to teaching Catalan was not an easy move for the organisation, as there was internal opposition to prioritising this language. However, despite initial resistance to Catalan only, this policy was finally implemented in September 2008. The tensions implied constant movements back and forth from Catalan only lessons to

Catalan-and-Spanish and back to Catalan only. Logically, those tensions had to do with the publicly avowed dual objective of the language classes (work and social integration), as some social workers voiced their concern that learning only Catalan would hinder migrants' job opportunities.

A key factor that made this transformation possible was the change of teachers. The retired primary school teachers now in charge of the language programme all belonged to the Catalan-speaking local middle-classes and the coordinator was personally connected to Rita (thus likely to agree with her decision to switch over to Catalan). The professional and personal profile of these new educators also changed the nature of the programme. On the one hand, their teaching background favoured the devising and implementing of a structured syllabus; on the other, their previous experience with primary school children made them especially sensitive to literacy and numeracy difficulties among the student body. However, it is true that most of them had no training or experience with adult education and that this fact was largely overlooked by the programme management. Most of the materials employed in class were meant for children; this had the effect of infantilising a group of adults who had in fact lived through fairly tough life circumstances (Garrido, 2010a).

Apart from becoming more organised and syllabus-based, these language lessons developed into spaces of 'human warmth', where a great deal of what educators did could be defined as *affective work* (Hardt, 1999), that is displaying concern for others and creating feelings of well-being and connectedness among students. This affective engagement can be explained by the fact that the majority of the teachers belonged to progressive Catholic networks<sup>6</sup> in the city and were of the socially-committed type, unlike, for example, José Antonio, the earlier teacher. Progressive Catholics understand showing solidarity for fellow human beings as 'doing religion'. Thus, they conceive of language education programmes for migrants as being about the creation of welcoming, safe environments in which migrants can receive practical and affective support and just about language tuition exclusively.

*Extract 3: 'Classes are a meeting point where students can share their worries'*

Finally we should emphasise that our lessons are not only a tool in learning the languages that are spoken in our town but also a meeting place with the host society, represented by the volunteer teachers who transmit the values of solidarity, respect and empathy in this way. We can't forget that these students have lived and are living difficult personal situations related to their migration processes. In this sense our classes

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<sup>6</sup> During the dictatorship and early democracy, many of these Catholic activists filled the gaps of a weak social state and campaigned for welfare rights in a keynesian-type of state (see Casañas, 1988 for more).

have an added value: they are a meeting point where they can share their worries, which help strengthen their self-confidence; a place of knowledge exchange and mutual enrichment between students and teachers where important friendships are created. (our translation from Catalan)

Despite the fact that students and teachers are presented as equals in the text, and their relationship as one of ‘knowledge exchange’ and ‘mutual enrichment’, in actual facts, the language teachers became models for students. Their role was that of ‘transmitting the values of solidarity, respect and empathy’ to migrant students, as the text also states. There was a socialising agenda for the language classes which went beyond language teaching and was linked to the crafting of particular subjectivities, as we shall see in more detail in the following section. The construal of educators as models was also facilitated by the age difference existing between them (all retirees) and the students (all young people between 20 and 35). Crucially, age articulated with gender (the majority of the teachers were women and all the students were men), in creating a space of (motherly) care for students in the classroom.

The changes in the profiles of the volunteer teacher group translated into a distinct treatment of multilingualism in the classroom. Unlike José Antonio, the reason why these new teachers volunteered was not to practice their foreign language skills (although some of them were competent in French), but to help, (re)socialise, and care for students. More so than before, the lessons become strictly policed monolingual spaces where only Catalan (and to a lesser extent Spanish) was allowed. English and mostly French were only resorted to under exceptional circumstances. The other non-colonial languages spoken by the students, who were now almost entirely originally from various Northern and sub-Saharan African countries, were completely backgrounded in the public space of the classroom. But not only that: they were also ideologically erased from students’ own conceptualisation of ‘legitimate’ linguistic repertoires. Thus, for example, when asked to mention the languages they spoke, students would not list all of them, but only those considered ‘worthy’ of mention, that is, basically only English and/or French -apart from the local languages. Their non-sanctioned linguistic resources would be heard only occasionally and in private, one-to-one, softly spoken conversations among themselves.

In 2009, the programme management initiated a linguistic partenariat (*amics lingüístics*) and social mentoring scheme staffed, again, mostly by senior volunteers. The stated objectives were to improve spoken Catalan and/or Spanish, to promote relationships between migrants and locals (other than the language teachers, that is), and to facilitate the newcomers’ settlement in the town. The objectives of this scheme were in fact very similar to the objectives of the language classes, as we saw in Extract 3.

Having a ‘linguistic friend’ outside the classroom allowed students to practice the language, but above all, it put them in touch with the world and discourses of voluntarism and social solidarity which were starting to become hegemonic.

With the worsening of the economic crisis and the generalised unavailability of jobs, it was becoming impossible for migrants to lead independent lives after they left the residential project (which they could only stay in for three months). Faced with this situation, *Saume* decided in 2009 to pay the rent of two ‘social’ flats to house ten former project members who continued to be unsheltered, undocumented and unemployed.

#### ***4.3. Crafting relational selves: Language, volunteer work and the instilment of a solidarity ethos***

In 2011, major budget cuts from the municipality caused the termination of the residential programme. At the same time, the city hall announced a public tender contest for the provision of services at MSO. Until 2009, MSO’s annual grant had been assigned without any public tender contest, but the political opposition parties questioned the legality of such a procedure. This political fight coincided in time with the implementation of the *Llei d’Acollida*, which requires that a networked *Pla de Recepció i Acollida* (Reception and Settlement Plan) involving public and non-public organisations (and not just one non-state body), be put in place in each municipality.

The new service model which was being endorsed by the municipality was one in which MSO would be exclusively focused on providing free legal advice (a rather ‘technical’ service). It was the senior volunteer teachers from *Saume* who took the most active role in fighting for the continuity of the holistic migrant-support model. They reacted by creating the ‘Civic Platform for the Defence of MSO’ with other civil society organisations and anonymous citizens. The Leftist volunteers wrote letters in the local press, organised demonstrations as well as campaigns, and participated in city hall negotiations. In an open letter mentioned, they presented the ‘human factor’ as the key element distinguishing MSO from other institutions: *‘L’eix central de totes les accions és l’acompanyament de les persones nouvingudes en el seu procés d’inserció en el nou entorn amb un èmfasi especial en el factor humà’* [The central axis for all the actions is the accompaniment of newly-arrived people in their insertion process into the new environment with an emphasis on the human factor] (November 2011). Their self-positioning was inspired by an increasingly prominent solidarity discourse. It became one of the main arguments to ‘sell’ the uniqueness of MSO in Sarrona in the face of the



political and economic circumstances threatening its survival. In January 2012, MSO's steering committee accepted that this organisation be converted into a legal-support body. *Saume* decided to abandon MSO, and so did the volunteer teachers.

One of the effects of this institutional break was the intensification of solidarity discourses in our ethnographic networks. *Saume* is actually the local branch of a Christian-inspired transnational association whose members follow a communitarian lifestyle and work together in a recycling cooperative, whose surplus is dedicated to social projects. *Saume*'s motto is 'serve those who suffer most first' (webpage), which relates to the Catholic idea of 'serving' on the part of volunteers as way of understanding and sharing other people's problems (Muehlebach, 2013). In fact, the participants in the residential project lived in the same house as the *Saume* community members while under the scheme. Despite the termination of this publically-funded project, *Saume* continued to fund the long-term project for a group of previous migrant participants who were homeless and unemployed. Over the years, these people actually became peripheral members of the *Saume* community since they frequently shared meals and work, as well as meetings, with the community residents (see Garrido, forthcoming).

After the institutional break, *Saume* took on board the continuation of the 'holistic' mission which had previously been shared with the umbrella body MSO. As the *Saume*-sponsored language classes disappeared from MSO, voluntary Catalan language provision became more grassroots, deinstitutionalised and fragmented in Sarrona. The *Saume* volunteer teachers started teaching literacy, conversation and Catalan language classes in the neighbourhood community centres without any funding. The idea was to continue *Saume*'s comprehensive social and linguistic welcome in the districts where migrants live. In spite of lack of funding, *Saume* provided legal support for volunteers to book public spaces (only allowed for legal associations, not individuals) and a meeting point for longstanding volunteers who ran language-related programmes all over the city.

As we have mentioned before, a sizable group of African men had been in constant touch with this community of life and work since 2007/08, first as project participants and then as residents of one of the two flats that the association rented. In the second phase, many of them began volunteering for *Saume* and other several non-governmental organisations. The reasons for doing volunteer work could be attributed to the unavailability of jobs, even in the grey market, and thus, finding something to do with one's time. We claim that it is also linked both to migrants' increasing ideological adherence to the *Saume* ethos (see above) and to the generalisation of the solidarity

discourse in Catalonia/Spain due to the aggravation of the crisis and the sharp reduction in welfare provisions.

One such migrant volunteer was Duwa, who started to get involved with the local *Creu Roja* [Red Cross] branch in programmes for the elderly, campaigns for youth health and food banks. All of these programmes require intensive social interaction, and are therefore, essentially linguistic and affective in nature. In extract below, we see how he draws on the discourses of reciprocity (lines 5-7, and 10-11) and of sharing with others (lines 11-12) as a way of explaining his voluntary engagement with the Red Cross. Crucially for our argument, he begins by emphasising the opportunity of ‘meeting other (local) people’ and ‘learning what goes on in Sarrona’, that is, integrating locally, that volunteering offers.

*Extract 4: ‘I meet other people and I learn what goes on in Sarrona’*

- 1       \*RES:       i per què vas decidir ser voluntari a la Creu Roja?  
          %tra:       and why did you decide to volunteer for the Red Cross?
- 2       \*DUW:       perquè volia per a conec la gent i conec lo que passa a Sarrona # perquè a mi  
3       m’agradaria per vius a Sarrona.  
          %tra:       because I wanted to meet people and to learn what goes on in Sarrona [post-  
                  industrial city] # because I like to live in Sarrona.
- 4       \*RES:       molt bé!  
          %tra:       great!
- 5       \*DUW:       i per a conec la gent també # como la gent m’ajuda en otra parte.  
          %tra:       and to get to know people too # as people help me elsewhere [Saume].
- 6       \*RES:       sí?  
          %tra:       huh?
- 7       \*DUW:       jo també ajudar la gent a otra parte.  
          %tra:       I also help people somewhere else.
- 8       \*RES:       clar clar # ja t’entenc.  
          %tra:       right right # I understand.
- 9       \*DUW:       sí.  
          %tra:       yes.
- 10       \*RES:       que el que tu reps també ho vols donar no?  
          %tra:       what you receive you want to give right?
- 11       \*DUW:       sí sí # como # la vida hay que- compartir amb les persones # porque jo no tinc #  
12       jo no tinc diners tinc força.  
          %tra:       yes yes # like # in life you have to- share with people # because I haven’t got # I  
                  haven’t got money I have (work)force/strength.
- 13       \*RES:       aham.
- 14       \*DUW:       i: # tinc ganes para ay- como la gent també m’ajuda jo també volia per ajudar  
15       les ciutadans de Sarrona també!  
          %tra:       a:nd # I feel like help- because people also help me I also wanted to help the  
                  citizens of Sarrona too!

Voluntary work was justified through social insertion objectives, as the volunteers enlarged their social networks, gained social capital and practiced ‘language’ even in manual jobs. In the following excerpt, Abdoulaye foregrounds the social capital which he

acquires through his voluntary manual labour at the Saume second hand shop, described as a ‘meeting point’ (line 18), where ‘talking’ seems to be the central activity (note how he juxtaposes ‘stocking’ and ‘buying’ to ‘talking’ in lines 11 and 20 respectively). Unlike most of his former residential project colleagues, at that time Abdoulaye held a paid job in a nearby city. Nevertheless, he says that he would go to volunteer on Saturday mornings because he missed interaction with buyers (line 9).

*Extract 5: ‘We meet, chat and buy things’*

- 1 \*ABD: abans d’anar a treballar a [name of a Catalan city] feia de voluntari els dissabtes  
2 al matí al rastro de Saume.  
%tra: before going to work in [name of a Catalán city] I was a volunteer on Saturday mornings in the Saume second-hand market.
- 3 \*RES: sí?  
%tra: were you?
- 4 \*ABD: iba dos hores de els deu- no tres hores de les deu a les onze # a ajudar a colocar  
5 doncs no és gaire cosa colocar i: vigilar xx # llavorens quan havia d’anar al  
6 treballar tenia fins al dissabte tenia lo mateix porque allà al rastro també vam  
7 conèixer gent.  
%tra: I went two hours from ten- no three hours from ten to eleven # to help place the stock so it is not a big deal of work to place and: to keep an eye on xx # then when I had to go to work I had Saturday I had the same because there in the second-hand market we also met people.
- 8 \*RES: ahh.
- 9 \*ABD: tro- tro- trobava a faltar aquesta gent que venia a comprar.  
%tra: I I- I- missed these people who came to buy.
- 10 \*RES: ah sí?  
%tra: really?
- 11 \*ABD: cada dissabte iba només una hora o dos a ajudar a colocar parlar amb la gent  
12 abans de venir a fer el dinar.  
%tra: every Saturday I used to go just for an hour or two to help out place stock talk to people before coming to prepare lunch.
- 13 \*RES: i <i quina gent> [>]?  
%tra: and <what people> [>]?
- 14 \*ABD: <seguia fent jo la faena> [<].  
%tra: <I continued to do the work> [<].
- 15 \*RES: i quina gent havies conegut-? clients o-?  
%tra: and what people had you met-? clients or-?
- 16 \*ABD: clients sí: # clients que venien a compra:r # gent del meu país que ve de Àfrica  
17 de Gàmbia del meu país que venien a comprar # llavorens era un: com una # un  
18 punt de: que: xx de trobada.  
%tra: clients yes # clients who came to buy: # people from my country who come from Africa from the Gambia from my country who came to buy # then it was like a: like a # a meeting p- that xx a meeting point.
- 19 \*RES: ahh!
- 20 \*ABD: que ens trobem xerrem comprem coses i tots +...  
%tra: where we meet chat buy things and all that +...

In addition to volunteering for Saume and other non-profits, many ex-participants also form part of grassroots ethnolinguistic and co-development associations like *Associació*

*Africana* where they use *linguae francae* like French and autochthonous African languages in Barcelona (see Garrido and Codó, forthcoming).

As we mentioned earlier, the discourse of the active and socially-committed citizen, coupled with a rise in volunteers, is becoming increasingly widespread in Catalan society. As an example, a cover of the mainstream *El Periódico de Catalunya* (Sust, 2013) featured a four-page newsreport on ‘Voluntaris contra la crisi: 300.000 catalans eviten a peu de carrer la fallida de l’estat del benestar’ [Volunteers against the crisis: 300.000 Catalans prevent the breakdown of the welfare state]. This report features two individuals in times of economic crisis: a middle-class, retired volunteer (like our senior teachers), depicted as ‘a busy and active man’ and a homeless person, the user of volunteer welfare services, of whom ‘an attitude of collaboration is required’ as a means of ‘responsibilising’ himself. Thus, we see the articulation of the solidarity discourse with discourses of activation and responsabilisation (Gilbert, 2004) typical of neoliberally-inspired policies.

In our NGO context, the same people-types are constructed as in the newspaper report and similar discursive articulations are visible; migrant users are responsabilised through their engagement in voluntary labour, which is meant to activate them and make them less dependent. As a case in point, Jasseh, a Gambian man in his early thirties who lives in the association’s flats, has taken up the opportunity to volunteer and get paid 40 euros a week –just like any other Saume community member. When asked why he decided to step forward to become a volunteer, Jasseh says that ‘quería hacer algo para no depender de la persona’ [I wanted to do something not to depend on a person] (interview 22-12-11), so he justifies his decisions with the objective of not being economically dependent on the association, personified in the manager.

Although not as explicitly institutionalised as in other countries (c.f. Allan 2013 on Canada), such volunteer activities are also meant to prepare migrants for labour market incorporation. Despite the circulating integration-through-language discourses, these now fluent speakers of Catalan and Spanish are out of a *paid* job; their investment in language learning has not produced their promised labour incorporation because of the economic context. Migrants refer to their unwaged labour as local work experience for their resúmes and a context to learn new skills that they will be able to capitalise on in the future. In his interview, Duwa, whom we mentioned before, establishes a difference between old-time, manual ‘hard’ skills (strength) and the current need for soft skills, ‘with the head’, which encompass language and literacy in the local languages as well as ICT knowledge. It is

linguistic, relational skills that are required now ‘in a world that has changed a lot’, according to him.

## **5. Discussion and conclusions**

In this paper, we have claimed and hopefully shown that understanding institutional discursive shifts in a migrant-support organisation requires establishing connections beyond the institution (Smith, 2005); it involves bringing into the analysis the material conditions of migrants’ lives, the varying legal and political framework, and the evolving discursive articulations of the key concepts of language, migration and social incorporation. This sociolinguistic ethnography is a unique investigation of the swift evolution of imaginaries of migrant incorporation in Catalonia/Spain. The choice of the NGO context is relevant, because under current conditions of economic crisis, migrants’ circumstances have ceased to be the focus of attention of public discourse. It is only in the fairly weakened non-profit, non-governmental sector that action continues to be taken and discourse on migration to be produced.

Over a period of six years we have observed changing emphases in institutional discourses about migrants’ paths of social incorporation in Catalonia: from an earlier foregrounding of work to a later insistence on developing full Catalan skills (vs. survival Spanish during the economic boom) to a more recent focus on volunteering and interacting with others. Shifting stresses do not entail the erasure of previous discourses on work (paid or unpaid) or language, simply their re-articulation into an evolving imagery of social incorporation grounded on the material circumstances of migrants’ lives and their imagined life chances.

A central element in the later part of our ethnographic engagement has been the identification of the key role of the discourse and practice of voluntarism, both among seniors and migrants, which connects up with progressive Catholic discourses in Catalonia. We have shown that *Saume*’s ethos, with its emphasis on solidarity as reciprocity among equals, is now embedded in the compassionate public sphere in Catalonia. Like in Lombardy (Northern Italy), the Catalan neoliberal reform has instrumentalised the historical centrality of Catholic social provision in Southern Europe (see section 2, Muehlebach 2013). Voluntary labour as selfless, interpersonal giving in Catholicism is now articulated with the crafting of neoliberal selves who are co-responsible for their own and others’ welfare and work activation. The volunteer as the paradigmatic citizen is the nexus of the market and the moral neoliberal in the current

welfare mix (Muehlebach, 2011). As in our ethnography, older volunteers in Italy do not see current voluntarism as a break with the past, but actually, as a recuperation and foregrounding of a deeply rooted culture of leftist solidarity. Despite their critique of neoliberalism, their voluntary work is consonant with it in practice, as they are well aware of, but combined with politicised activism to disrupt and protest neoliberal measures.

Another of the key contributions of this paper is the understanding of the genealogy and importance of the discourses of solidarity and voluntarism not just among seniors but among young migrants, who have now become agents rather than objects of solidarity. Faced with lack of employment but well-equipped with high linguistic competences, volunteering is currently the ideal means by which their skills can be put to 'work' and practically the only way in which their social participation can now be imagined. Volunteer labour has emerged not only as a 'past-time', but as a true regime of citizenship, a neoliberalisation of migrant subjectivities which become at once activated, moralised and relational.

Voluntary labour has created communicative selves of migrants which, interestingly, pair nicely with the new economy of immaterial labour (Hardt and Negri, 2000) and language work of late capitalism (Urcioli and LaDousa, 2013). The young migrant men became volunteers to put language to practice and to develop soft skills for future labour insertion. Yet, these new relational selves are still entangled in modernist webs of language ideologies which foreground local language learning to the detriment of multilingualism. The monolingual sociolinguistic regime imposed on migrant students is consequential, as it either constructs foreign language use as a threat to local language learning or simply ignores their multilingualism. Elsewhere, we have claimed that that this generalised ideological erasure, together with their being imagined by the institution as unskilled workers, prevents the migrants themselves from valuing their non-local language resources as mobilisable capitals for employment purposes locally (Garrido and Codó, forthcoming). We are not trying to claim the inherent goodness of language as commodity (Duchêne and Heller, 2012), but if migrants are to be considered like any other citizen, they must be subject to similar social processes.

Unlike in the Italian context investigated by Muehlebach (2011), in our non-profit site, social activism is bound up with language activism. We have seen how the senior teachers create a space of 'human warmth' in the classroom as they impose a Catalan-only regime. Doing *language voluntarism* in the field of migration enables progressively-minded middle-class seniors to simultaneously achieve two goals: work for social justice

and for the ‘survival’ of Catalan. This may have a generational component, as this ideological coupling was common in the post-Franco years in Catalonia (González-Agàpito, Marquès and Noguer, 2007). By contrast, for the younger generation, language and social activism may not be woven together so tightly. However, it is true that language education programmes for migrants in Catalonia are often in the hands of senior citizens like the ones described here (Pujolar, 2007b), and thus, what happens at MSO is quite representative of what may happen elsewhere. We have seen how, in the *Saume* relational space, the Catalan language is indexically linked to moralised person-types, since through seniors’ volunteer work Catalan is ideologically imbued with the values of solidarity, interpersonal care and human understanding.

This piece of work inspires a number of pressing questions on the role of language, labour, affect and solidarity in migrants’ incorporation discourses. To what extent are these new relational selves with their emphasis on volunteering, networking and interacting here to stay? Are they possibilistic discourses, that is, the only feasible way of currently constructing meaningful avenues for migrants’ social incorporation, which will fade away once jobs become available? When will migrants’ multilingualism get valued as part of their new communicative personas? Under what circumstances? With what consequences? Only more *longue-durée* ethnographies of multilingual institutional spaces and transnational migration will tell.

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## Appendix 1: Transcription conventions

The conversations analysed in this paper have been transcribed following the procedures established in the *LIDES Coding Manual* (LIPPS Group 2000). When the main tier is not in English, a free English translation is provided on a dependent tier (%tra) located just below. Another dependent tier used is %com, which provides the researcher's comments on the main tier. Other conventions employed are presented below:

- +^ quick uptake or latching
- +... trailing off
- xxx unintelligible material
- www untranscribed material because of confidentiality issues or irrelevance
- ## longer pause (shorter than 1 sec)
- #1 length of pause in seconds
- ? intra-turn rising contour
- [=! text] paralinguistics, prosody, background activity
- : lengthened vowel
- [>] overlap follows
- [<] overlap precedes
- <> scope symbols
- [?] best guess