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“What stops me from having a multi-cultural thing within myself?” Languages and perception of self among plurilingual pupils of West African heritage (Ivory Coast)

Abstract

This short study explores the lived experiences of two plurilingual pupils of West African heritage (Ivory Coast), focusing upon the role they perceived languages and cultures have played in shaping aspects of their identities. Two 19 years-old female pupils were interviewed and the data was analysed using qualitative thematic analysis. Adopting a phenomenological perspective, key concepts of the Lifeworld (spatiality, temporality, embodiment and intersubjectivity) were also used as part of the heuristic process. Three overarching themes were identified in the participants' narratives: 'language and empowerment', 'Feeling stigmatised as foreign' and 'Feeling divided, on the wrong side of the fence'. Participants generally expressed a positive attitude towards plurilingualism, a desire to maintain and expand their linguistic skills as a means to increase their life choices. While the impact of European languages acquired through schooling or migration was perceived as overwhelmingly positive and empowering, heritage language seems to have been associated with less successful experiences overall, and impacted negatively on the participants' sense of self. In conclusion, plurilingualism, despite its many advantages, can also have a negative impact on one's sense of self. Some strategies need to be in place in order to overcome problematic situations and potential identity threat arising from being plurilingual.

Background and research question

With the end of the decolonisation and the redefinition of borders within Europe, twenty-first century western societies have become increasingly multicultural, and the proportion of their population that is plurilingual (able to communicate, to varying degrees, in several languages) and pluricultural (has experience of several cultures and is able to take part in intercultural interaction) is on the rise. In this context, the role that languages and cultures play in relation to one's sense of self, appears more complex to grasp than ever. The relationship between language and identity has been the focus of a

large body of research (e.g. Lawson and Sashdev 2004, Jaspal and Coyle 2009, Jaspal and Coyle 2010, Oliveira and Ançã 2009). For example, Jaspal and Coyle (2010) considered how British-Asian students define language and the role it plays in shaping their ethnic identity. The responses of twelve participants who were interviewed on the topics of language and identity were analysed from a phenomenological perspective, using a thematic analysis. Results showed that overall, being self-defined as Asian was perceived as positive and desirable through the maintenance of heritage languages (HL), while not being conversant in HL was perceived as negative. In order to avoid the identity-threatening dilemma caused by not knowing HLs, participants developed coping strategies such as redefining the concept of mother tongue as context-dependant or plural. Such strategies helped the participants to seek positive self-evaluation in relation to their group, in order to protect their social identity, 'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group' (Tajfel, 1978). However, the study also pointed out that a 'mismanagement' of plurilingualism might compromise a sense of self. In a similar vein, but looking at the influence of group and family on ethnic identity, Phimmey et al (2001) found that ethnic language proficiency and in-group peer interaction were indeed linked to ethnic identity while cultural maintenance by parents was associated with ethnic language proficiency among children. However, differences were noted in the factors that influence ethnic identity across the groups, despite common processes. Multilingualism is now a standard response in education for those concerned with improving mobility and communication as well as preserving linguistic and cultural heterogeneity. Oliveira and Ancã (2004) presented the life narratives of two Ukrainian students attending the Portuguese education system. Their aims were to highlight the asset that plurilingual identities constitute for these students, and to discuss the role of language awareness in fostering plurilingual identity through the development of plurilingual competence. The students' perception of their own plurilingual identities as well as plurilingual competences were described, the processes at stake in the development of such identities and competences were reconstructed and the students' perception of the contribution of their plurilingual repertoire in the process of learning Portuguese was analysed. Finally, the space used for raising language awareness – life narratives – was presented. Similarly, Jaspal and Coyle 2010 showed the impact of knowing and practising a heritage language on South Asians' sense of identity, as well as on self-esteem. In this paper, as in Phinney's et al, other influencing factors were

identified. These included the role of family and peer groups in promoting ethnic identity, language proficiency and language maintenance. However, for Phinney and al, the level of influences differed from one ethnic group to the next. Oliveira and Ançã's study provided another perspective, using life narratives to reflect on the importance and value of plurilingual competence. It showed how fostering language competence through language awareness might help boost self-esteem, should this principle be applied to HLs as it is to modern European languages.

The context of this short study is that of the various constructions of identities as described in the articles briefly mentioned above. Critical social psychology provides a useful framework to explore alternative perspectives on the relationship between language and identity. For example, in phenomenological psychology - borrowing its concepts from phenomenological philosophy - the person is seen as an experiencing 'embodied' individual, in relation with others and the world. For the phenomenologist, it is through our bodies that we perceive the world and it is only in connection to others that we exist. This relational perspective finds its origin in the philosophy of Husserl who was concerned with the 'lifeworld', that is the world that we experience through our senses, every day, subjectively. The focus of a phenomenological analysis is therefore a detailed empirical description of social experiences derived from the senses, structured around themes that make up the total human experience of life. These themes are temporality (the experience of time), spatiality (the experience of space), embodiment (the experience of our body) and intersubjectivity (the experience of our relationships with others). Such key concepts of the 'lifeworld' are then explored as part of a heuristic process (Moustakas, 1994), in order to identify overarching themes present in the data. The interpretation of these must remain firmly grounded in the words of the participants, though.

The purpose of the present study is to move away from interpreting – i.e. by applying preconceived ideas to the relation between language and identity – in order to try and concentrate on what it means, on a daily basis, for the individual to be plurilingual and pluricultural. In order to grasp the complexity and the singularity of the concrete, detailed, lived experiences of plurilingual pupils, this study will adopt a phenomenological perspective. The interviews of two participants from West African background (Ivory Coast) will be analysed in order to answer the following question:

How do plurilingual individuals make sense of their personal and social worlds and how does plurilingualism affect their sense of self?

Method

Participants

A sample of four students were selected from a group of 105 students, all studying at a Sixth Form College in Hackney, London, and from whom the researcher had already gained consent to participate in language-related research projects (following their participation in an initial research survey on languages, led by the same researcher). The participants were selected in order to match a new set of criteria relevant to the present study, which included being 18 years old minimum, being from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background, being at least bilingual, with the knowledge of at least one heritage language. Four responded to the invitation and two, 'Pupil A' and 'Pupil N', were finally interviewed. This final round took into account the similarities in the two participants' profiles selected: their families came from the same country of origin; they had two European languages in common, and shared the same heritage language. These criteria were deemed relevant in order to obtain a sample as homogeneous as possible, given its very small size. Both participants in this study were 19 years old female, their respective families were originally from Ivory Coast, they were native or near native speakers of at least two languages (French and English), acquired through schooling and migration, plus one heritage language (*Dioula*).

Ethics

Regarding ethical considerations, the study only generated a low level of risk. As it covered issues related to identity and identifications and/or membership, the data could have mentioned faith, spiritual or religious beliefs, but this was neither emphasised nor encouraged as a topic during the interviews. The four ethical principles of respect, competence, responsibility and integrity, recommended by the British Psychological Society (BPS) Ethical Guidelines were respected throughout. The participants were fully briefed, debriefed and offered the right to withdraw from the research at any time. Their written consent forms were collected at the end of their interviews and they were explained how the data would be stored, used and disposed of.

Procedure

The participants were interviewed separately by the same interviewer, following the same semi-structured interview questionnaire. The interviews took place at their Sixth Form College, in a large but quiet room which pupils used regularly for their studies. The individual interviews were recorded digitally using a smartphone recording device. A second recording device (a mini camcorder pointing at a blank wall, for sound recording only) was also used as a back up system. The final data consisted of two 45 minutes audio recordings and their transcripts, with each line numbered in sequential order from beginning to end. The data was analysed using a phenomenological interpretive approach, focusing on description, applying the principles of *Epoché* (bracketing oneself off to avoid interpreting or applying preconceived ideas to the data) and 'horizontalisation' (giving equal weight and importance to all phenomena reported in the interview) as structuring techniques. The method was selected because it enabled to explore the reality of the participants' lived experiences, with their original viewpoints kept at the heart of the process. Three main themes related to the participants' experience of plurilingualism were identified throughout the transcripts: 'language and empowerment', 'Feeling stigmatised as foreign' and 'a confused and fragmented sense of self'. Each line of the transcripts relating to one of these themes was highlighted in a different colour. This was used to ease the referencing system but it limited the coding to one colour/one theme per quote, a device which sometimes caused debate.

Analysis

This section presents an analysis of the recurrent themes identified throughout the data, describing the participants' lived experiences of plurilingualism, how these affect their personal and social worlds. Three main themes were identified: 'language and empowerment', 'Feeling stigmatised as foreign' and 'a confused and fragmented sense of self'.

Language and empowerment

Both participants acknowledged how being plurilingual made them feel advantaged in a variety of social situations where they became precious intermediaries. For example, they felt that their role as an interpreter, translating not only the language but also various cultural codes between speakers of different language groups, put them in a powerful position, in their capacity to diffuse misunderstanding and prevent miscommunication between languages and cultures.

... When my mum came to this country she didn't speak English so I was the one doing the intermediary for her. (Pupil A)

... there was a day when I went to Paris with my friends, the English, [...] my sister was saying hi to them and she just approached them to give them a kiss [...] they backed up, they were like "what is she doing?" I'm like "she's just saying hi to you" and they were like "oh..." like they don't know that. (Pupil N)

Plurilingual speakers use code-switching. This enable them to use wider repertoires and enjoy more linguistic possibilities. Ideas, concepts and emotions are expressed in a way that could not be fully rendered using one language only. Being plurilingual can make the individual feel part of a privileged group of lucky few, those who have this capacity to understand what others, monolingual, can't.

Something like "Je m'en fous" is much stronger than "I don't care". So, for example, we would say something along the lines of "Je m'en fous, because this is ridiculous" (Student A)

[...] So it is kind of really complicated for someone who doesn't understand all three languages to understand [...] sometimes we start some sentences in a language and end up in another, speaking in another language and we understand perfectly, it's fine. (Student A)

Understanding someone's language when others don't, is an empowering and exhilarating experience. For example, when spotting a French speaker in the streets of an English town, both Pupil A and Pupil N experienced the same amazement and pleasure, comparable to that of a code breaker. It makes them feel like belonging to a restricted 'club of *connoisseurs*'. It is a feeling that can transcend time and space.

I feel "Oh wow, so I'm not the only one" it feels really weird "Oh wow, I can understand that conversation". (Pupil A)

... first it was crazy, it was literally crazy cos um, I have a friend, she's French as well, and like when you could hear people speaking French you're like "oh my God they're speaking French" and stuff (Pupil N)

The anthropologist Anthony P. Cohen (1985) argues that 'community' assumes commonality, things which members of a delimited group have in common. This simultaneously infers that those within a group are in it precisely because they can identify those who are on the outside. One symbolic reference that marks the boundary of similarity and difference is language. Thus, when Pupil N takes a few short steps to make contact in French, she is really reaching across a boundary that is marked in time and space. It is also marked mentally, in the imagination and psychology of individuals themselves rooted in history, locality, kinship ties and nationality.

...and then you, like, want to approach them to speak French to them and show them you speak French as well. Like it's weird, but it's mostly surprising for people, two actual people coming from Paris to London, hearing other people speaking French, it's just like "oh my God", like, "they speak French and stuff." (Pupil N)

Language does not only help communicating across cultures, it also enables the speaker to identify different thinking patterns, embedded in the language, both in vocabulary or structure. Speaking the language empowers the speaker to access its correlated culture, 'from within':

[...] it helps you communicate [...] understand all the cultures and [...] thinking pattern [...], the way people say certain things makes you think about the culture or about the social makeup of a society. (Pupil A)

...in Italian there is no word to express a female politician whereas in English it is just a 'politician'. It's neutral. Whereas in Italian, it is either 'politi' [politics] which is feminine, or there's the 'politician' which is masculine. There is nothing in between... which seems to suggest that a woman will never be a politician. (Pupil A)

Being plurilingual and pluricultural helps acknowledging commonalities between languages and between societies, by reducing the distance between them.

That was my first experience of British culture. [...] I didn't really have such a particular impression. I was thinking "Oh well this is Europe". It wasn't as different as I would imagine France to be or Spain. It kind of seemed pretty normal. (Pupil A)

Mastering languages, particularly the language of the country you live in, contribute to developing good citizenship and a stronger sense of belonging. Throughout her experiences of migration, Pupil A used language as a powerful tool that enabled her to better integrate into a new society. For her, plurilingualism strengthens social cohesion, promotes open-mindedness and helps prevent prejudices:

...understanding a language helps massively in terms of people coming together and speaking and communicating instead of, you know, keeping their distance. [...] ... my parents are the kind of people who integrated into the Italian society, share some Italian values, took the good things of their new culture (Pupil A)

You can come up with a sort of cosmopolitan type of multi-culturalism, where you can take the good things of a new culture and integrate them into your being. That way, you can develop as a human being and develop as a part of the community instead of just being the permanent outsider. (Pupil A)

...languages do show an open-mindedness and something that someone speaking just one language cannot do. (Pupil A)

Plurilingualism is a useful and necessary skill, worth maintaining. It is not a particularly easy skill to acquire, therefore being proficient in more than one language provides a real sense of achievement and pride:

Learning a language is a real effort, to understand another culture and to understand their way of saying things. (Pupil A)

...there's loads of languages I want to learn but it's not that easy but I would still learn it. (Pupil N)

Both students emphasised that plurilingualism constitutes a strength that maximises chances of improving their life conditions, for example, in terms of job opportunities.

I really, really want to learn a new language and it would be better for my future, me...speaking English is ... I have the best future ever'. (Pupil N)

...today I had a job interview, actually in the morning, and I could say "Oh I speak several languages, have done different A-level languages, yeah I like languages, I would like to learn more". It's just an advantage, on the job market, and even as a person. (Pupil A)

‘Empowerment’ in relation to ‘spatiality’ is further illustrated in Pupil N’s vivid recollection of her move from Paris to London. What she describes as a life-changing event opened up a whole new world of opportunities for her.

...when I came here, literally, the door just opened and I had so many opportunities [...] I don’t know what I’d be if I was back in Paris at this age. (Pupil N)

I actually thought it was going to be hell, but when I started school I was like: hell? No, this is heaven-like, literally, and now I thank her every day for bringing me here cos I don’t know what I’d be if I was back in Paris at this age, I don’t know what I would do like, I literally don’t know. (Pupil N)

Temporality is also marked by Pupil N’s move to London. This event definitely determines a ‘before’ and an ‘after’ throughout her interview. Both pupil N’s and Pupil A’s temporality are geared towards the future, a notion that pops up regularly in their narratives.

Yeah, I am going to Uni next year, so ... (Pupil A)

...I think people my age would need to have, like, more than like two languages in the future because the future is getting more strict and stricter so we’ll need it for our future to get jobs and stuff like that. (Pupil N)

Feeling stigmatised as foreign

While French or Italian languages, learnt at school or through migration, contributed positively to the shaping of both participants’ personal and social identities, a perceived imperfect knowledge of *Dioula*, as their heritage language (HL), seems to have had a rather negative impact on their self esteem. *Dioula* triggered more problematic and less enjoyable lived experiences for Pupil N, who hardly mentioned *Dioula* language as part of her linguistic repertoire. Likewise, Pupil A, showed some signs of vulnerability on the subject. Participants seemed to constantly disqualify themselves as competent *Dioula* speakers, doubting their ability to communicate efficiently in this language:

... and um, I don’t speak it, I can speak it a little bit, but it’s Ivorian from my parents. I can... I can understand it. (Pupil N)

...and Dioula I do speak, but over the years I am worried that I forget it so I just ask my parents. [...] I am being sceptical because I kind of have an accent when I speak

Dioula, and it's not, I don't like having an accent because people then go and say: "Oh yeah, you come from abroad" type of thing. (Pupil A)

Feelings of being stigmatised as foreign or different seem to correlate with spatiality. While England - and London particularly, is perceived as a land of great opportunities, Ivory Coast, on the other hand, seems to be associated with experiences of exclusion, doubts and withdrawal, for both Pupil N and Pupil A. Pupil A recalls how she was once stigmatised by members of her Ivorian extended family for speaking *Dioula* to a standard that was perceived as below that of a native speaker, as well as for displaying her different cultural references.

... The last time I went, in 2010, [...] it kind of made me feel like a foreigner, like an outsider. I don't think it was only for the language reason. I think it was also because my, because I wasn't born there, I didn't grow up with them, and somehow they thought "does she speak our language?" Whatever. (Pupil A)

Feelings of exclusion and intersubjectivity also find a correlation in Pupil N's recalling of her stay in Ivory Coast. When it came to communicating in *Dioula*, this confident plurilingual speaker relied on her mum as a go-between.

I went there in December, and she was talking to me and I would be like to my mum "uh, what did she say" or like, cos the way they talk and the way my parents talk is not the same, like they have more of a stronger accent so I would be like "what did she say" or I would just be like "yeah" but I don't know what she said. (Pupil N)

Pupil A's experience of isolation in Ivory Coast is even stronger. Her permeable self, in constant interaction with her surrounding, reacted to her family stigmatising her inadequate accent. As a result, the experience reshaped her individual subjectivity to the point where she no longer felt part of this family and situated herself outside the family circle:

Well, it was the upbringing, everything, kind of made me feel different. It wasn't just the language; it was also how I was brought up. [...]... It just felt like they were people I didn't know and for some strange reason, although we are related, I don't feel any kind of family link at all, if not for maybe some uncles or aunts.... [...] It just felt like I was an outsider and didn't really fit in. (Pupil A)

A confused and fragmented sense of self

Being plurilingual is a powerful position to hold but it is not always a comfortable one. Pupil N describes how, no matter where she is, she always feels as being on the wrong side of the fence:

...when I go to Paris nowadays, people tell me “oh you’re not in London here, stop doing that”, stuff like that. (Pupil N)

...English people still consider me as French, like I’m not English. Like people that I just meet, like new to me, will think that I was like, English. But when I tell them I’m French, that’s when they realise: “oh I see where you’re coming from now”. Yeah... I still have the French in me. (Pupil N)

In one of her childhood memories Pupil A recalls how knowing more than one languages created confusion and misunderstanding. Code switching, which was described as an empowering experience for her as a young adult, is considered here as an impediment by her –probably monolingual - teacher.

... It took me ages to get to speak, because I was learning so many languages, and my mother tells me they took me to the doctor [...] who said “Oh well she will speak”. I would say a few words but I was not really good at communicating because I was hearing too many things. She told me she went to my nursery school teacher and they said “A... can speak but it is really hard to understand sometimes what she is saying”. Then when we got home one day, I just said something: “Oh mum, the soap is broken” but I said it in two different languages and she was just thinking “Oh, OK so now we understand the problem”. (Pupil A)

Language is not the only source of confusion. References to country of origin, country of citizenship, mother tongue and fuzzy boundaries across different categories complicates further the word map of fragmented identities.

...I mean, I was born in Italy. I am originally from Ivory Coast and when people kind of ask me: ‘oh, where do you come from’ and I say: ‘Italy’, like, “Where are you really from?” as if I can identify with Ivory Coast and feel like a citizen of Ivory Coast, which doesn’t really happen for me because I didn’t live there for one day of my life. So it is kind of confused, kind of weird, in my situation, being brought up speaking different languages, having different cultural identities. (Pupil A)

... for me, to say I come from Ivory Coast, when I speak Italian better, and I just feel this sort of long distance relationship. I don’t think so... (Pupil A)

Yeah, but my name is rooted in the Mandé people but that doesn't mean that I say that: "Oh yeah I come from the Mandé land" which doesn't even exist because we are all fragmented anyway (Pupil A)

Having wrestled with these various concepts for a while, and having reacted energetically to one of her friends' (also from West African heritage) position regarding the relationship between language and identity, Pupil A's finally finds a way out of this confusing and uncomfortable maze: She provides her own definition of identity, a definition that transcends both temporality and spatiality:

...I know that this is my surname and I am proud of it but it is just one part of me, it's not my whole being. (Pupil A)

I don't think Dioula is necessarily not my native language but if I had to put down [...] "what is your first language", I always think of Italian, and then I also think of Dioula but at the end of the day I speak Italian much more than I speak Dioula. (Pupil A)

I will conclude this analysis by quoting Pupil A's words on the role she thinks languages play in shaping her own identity as a plurilingual young adult from West African heritage:

I don't think my identity is just one [...] It seems to suggest that you are only entitled one sort of identity, and whatever else there is, is not possible, which I really disagree with, because I might move somewhere else in 10 years, or even 5 years. I might move to Spain, I might move to South America or the United States or Belgium, wherever. But, if the time comes when I have lived the majority of my life and I feel more Belgian than Italian, what stops me from saying "I am Belgian? I have a Belgian passport and I feel a strong affinity with the Belgian culture, I feel a strong affinity with the Italian culture and with the Dioula culture, whatever". What stops me from having a multi-cultural thing within myself? I mean, I don't think it's just a societal thing to be multi-cultural, individuals can be multi-cultural, just as we can be multi-linguists. (Pupil A)

This vision about the self seems in line with the contextual theory about the phenomenological self, as 'being-in-the-world'. It is defined as an active, meaning-making embodied self, produced in the process of continuous situated experiences shared with other people.

Discussion

The analysis of the data, seems to indicate that different languages play different roles in shaping aspects of the personal and social identities of the two participants interviewed for this study. While the impact of European languages acquired through schooling or migration was described as overwhelmingly empowering, *Dioula*, their heritage language, bore a different status, and left a few scars on the participants' phenomenological self. Overall, *Dioula* was more often associated with painful or embarrassing experiences including stigmatisation, feelings of exclusion or confusion about themselves. Participants used various strategies in order to protect their self-esteem, including indifference and denial (*Pupil N*) or social categorisation (*Pupil A*). The solution put forward by one of the participants in order to overcome problematic definition of self and identity threat arising from being a plurilingual and pluricultural migrant was to propose a definition of identity that would transcend both temporality and spatiality. This compares with what was described in Jaspal and Coyle 2010, where participants redefined the concept of the mother tongue as context-dependant or plural. This study's insights tend to support further findings highlighted in the literature review with regards to the role of parents in transmitting heritage languages (Phinney et al 2001), the negative impact of imperfect knowledge of heritage language (Jaspal and Coyle 2010), and the asset that plurilingual and pluricultural competences represent for people (Oliveira and Ançã 2009). A notable difference with Jaspal and Coyle though, is that participants in this study did not make any mention of their religious identity in conjunction with ethnic identity, nor did they establish any connection between their heritage language and any form of religious identity in the way described in Jaspal and Coyle.

Reflexive critique

Reflecting on the role of the researchers and their potential influence on the data, one must acknowledge how easy it can be to get carried away and become too involved as an interviewer, even when the original plan is to let the participants lead the discussion. Having been perhaps too conscious of the potential impact of power relations between the participants – sixth formers – and the interviewer, a university lecturer, I felt bound to send signals, verbal and non verbal, that the interview ought to be rather informal and friendly. Laughs (*Pupil N*), tone of voice, non verbal feedback might have backfired and I found myself, on one or two occasions, speaking more than the interviewee (*Pupil A*)

Sympathising and identifying with the situations described by the participants can also present an issue. As a plurilingual (non-native speaker of English), pluricultural (my family roots and traditions spread over several countries), migrant and parent, my interests in this topic were both personal and professional. For example, Pupil N's recollection of her English friends being greeted by a kiss while in France, prompted some personal recollections about in-laws meeting for the first time. Having been kissed by his French counterpart, the English father-in-law whispered to his son's ear: 'is it legal?'... Likewise, assuming that I matched the stereotypical image of an average French person, I have been questioned countless times by my enquiring students about the taste for frogs and snails. These impressions of *déjà vu* were also triggered from less pleasant recollections. Pupil A's feeling of being an outsider when speaking *Dioula* with her Ivorian cousins reminded me of my own children, who would reluctantly speak French with their French distant relatives for fear of being mocked. Another issue was the length of the questions which were sometimes rather complex, abstract or too wordy. Shorter, simpler, more concrete questions, might have triggered richer descriptions of lived experiences rather than opinions on plurilingualism. I made every effort not to interpret or apply any preconceived ideas to the data. However, finding out how underplayed *Dioula* had been throughout these interviews, I realised that one of my preconceived ideas when planning this study was to – naively – assume that all languages in the participants' repertoires, including heritage language, were of equivalent status and potential impact. However, I quickly realised my mistake. Hadn't I prompted Pupil N about heritage languages, she might not have mentioned *Dioula* at all... Furthermore, the sorting exercise, consisting of identifying the description of lived experiences, as opposed to expressions of opinion, proved more challenging than I anticipated and prompted further thoughts about what constitutes a 'lived experience'? For example, an uninterrupted account of Pupil A's encounter with a British National Party supporter - that provoked an intense intellectual reaction from the interviewee, could have easily been selected as a lived experience, but Pupil A's account of her friend's profile update on Facebook was more problematic to categorise as a 'lived' experience rather than as a personal opinion. Perhaps because Pupil A described her friend's choice of identity and affiliation in opposition to her own, and perhaps because their migration's experiences are so close, it triggered an elaborate reaction of disagreement, which was almost physical and which included irritation, frustration, and almost sarcasms. I therefore decided to highlight it as a 'lived experience' and a

potential reference to embodiment. If I was to repeat the study, I would take into consideration all the points discussed above in order to improve the quality of the outcomes.

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