

THE ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE IN MIGRATIONS AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY IN CROATIA

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, language as (undoubtedly) a key component of the identity (or at least as one of the key components) of migrations on the territory of the Republic of Croatia at the turn of the century. Migrations are a common occurrence in a modern society. They can be defined as a change of location of an individual or a group of people. Without going into more detail analysis of the reasons and types of migrations, regardless of what is the incentive to relocate, it is more than clear that changing location includes/implies changing society and changing society means changing the language community. This paper contrasts, generally speaking, two migration periods on Croatian territory, including the EU. The first migrations that are analyzed concern the period during the Homeland War in Croatia and the period right after the War. Migrations and inclusion of migrants during that period are analyzed considering language differences between migrants and the language community they are migrating to. Taking into account, that the territory of the Republic of Croatia is linguistically very diverse, there are three very different dialects or (even) languages in Croatia (Shtokavian, Kajkavian and Chakavian), and positive and/or negative perception and position of migrants coming from the war zones are investigated, regarding the differences and/or similarities between linguistic systems they use to communicate. The Migrant situation in the Homeland War is compared with different perspectives in the migrant crisis in Europe during 2015 (2016 and 2017), i.e. migrations that bring people from geographically, linguistically, and culturally distant parts of the World. In drawing conclusions on the status of migrants during the 1990's and during the migrant crisis discourse analysis of the media and narratives was conducted. Finally, it is shown that the differences/similarities between linguistic systems correspond with negative or positive perceptions of migrants and, consequently, their inclusion in the society.

Keywords: language, migrations, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics.

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