

Youth Identity in "Action":



The symbolisms and uses of English loanwords among Greek-speaking teenagers in Cyprus

Alongside the formal linguistic policy of the school, students develop their own sociolinguistic space, on the basis of which languages and linguistic varieties, genres and styles are considered most prestigious. In Cyprus, Greek-speaking teenagers employ loanwords from the English language, and particularly English slang, in their daily interactions as a symbolic representation of youth identity. The proliferation (and often, prestige) of English loanwords and catchphrases in Cyprus is associated with the ubiquitous presence of English in popular culture. Due to the impact of global cultural flows in texts, images, and other semiotic resources, English has migrated into new social spaces and discourses and has taken up new meanings and functions. This presentation explores the ways in which English is used by this specific peer group as well as the meanings it takes on in the students' daily interactions. The analysis introduces the notions of agency and appropriation in understanding the multiple ways in which the "language of the other" is inserted into existing repertoires.

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