



Zeitschrift für Diskursforschung

Journal for Discourse Studies

Herausgegeben von Reiner Keller | Werner Schneider | Willy Viehöver

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■ **Yalız Akbaba**

Discourse Ethnography on Migrant Other Teachers: Turn the Stigma into Capital!

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Willy Viehöver / Reiner Keller / Werner Schneider
Editorial 230

Themenbeiträge

Florian Elliker, Rixta Wundrak, Christoph Maeder
Introduction to the thematic issue and programmatic thoughts on the
Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse Ethnography 232

Florian Elliker
A Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse Ethnography 249

Rixta Wundrak
»Welcome to paradise«. Methodological accentuations to the
Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse Ethnography
based on field notes from a refugees' shelter 276

Christoph Maeder
Wissenssoziologische Diskursethnographie (WDE)?
Die Kombination von Diskursanalyse und Ethnographie als
Suchbewegung zwischen Wahrheit und Wirklichkeit 299

Yalız Akbaba
Discourse Ethnography on Migrant Other Teachers:
Turn the Stigma into Capital! 309

Yalız Akbaba

Discourse Ethnography on Migrant Other Teachers: Turn the Stigma into Capital!

Zusammenfassung: Während der Migrationshintergrund im Kontext Schule in der Regel mit Problemen verbunden wird, wendet der Verwertungsdiskurs über migrationsandere *LehrerInnen* diesen in eine zu nutzende Ressource. Die widersprüchlichen Deutungen von Migration gehören zum selben Repräsentationsregime, das über Stereotypisierung die zu ›Anderen‹ gemachten ausschließt. Zwei ethnografische Fallbeispiele werden postkolonialen Perspektiven unterzogen und zeichnen den Ertrag der Diskursethnografie in Form der gewonnenen Theorie des *double-binding ethnicity* nach: LehrerInnen sollen sich aufgrund eines Merkmals als nützlich erweisen, dessen Sichtbarmachung für sie mit Risiken von Marginalisierung und Diskreditierung einhergeht.

Schlagwörter: Migrationsforschung; postkolonial; Migrationshintergrund; Reflexivität; Stigma; Lehrer

Summary: Countering the usual discourse that characterizes migrant other students as a social problem, migrant other *teachers* are imagined as very useful teachers. The discourses are identified as parts of the same symbolic order stereotypically representing those to be excluded. My discourse ethnographic approach combines field participation with discourse analysis. The postcolonial reading of ethnographic data digs deep to see how the discourses double bind the teachers *in situ*, generating the theory of *double-binding ethnicity*: while the teachers are implicitly requested to capitalize their ›foreignness‹, they are called upon to do so within reference frames that (threaten to) marginalize them.

Keywords: qualitative research; participant observation; integration; subjectivity; epistemic reflexivity

1 Introduction

Countering the usual discourse that characterizes migrant other students as a social problem, *teachers* with so-called migrant backgrounds are imagined as particularly useful teachers who could contribute to solving educational inequality. Assuming that discourses and local contexts are linked, it is reasonable to ask how the contradictory meanings of ›migration as a problem‹ and ›migration as enrichment‹ translate into practical situations in schools. The paper draws on empirical material from a recently published study (Akbaba 2017) that approached this question from a discourse ethnographical perspective. In this article I will focus on one of the major theoretical findings that I call *double-binding ethnicity*: while the teachers are implicitly requested to capitalize their ›foreignness‹, they are called on to do so within reference frames of denigration and marginalization.

Section two uncovers the seeming clash of discourses on migration ›as a problem‹ and ›as an enrichment‹ as parts of one and the same representation regime using postcolonial theories (Hall 2004). Section three sets forth Discourse Ethnography as the methodological approach of the study. Its epistemological premise is that discourses are symbolic or-

ders that reflect on practices. These orders can be reconstructed on the basis of participatory field data. In section four and five I offer a postcolonial reading of ethnographic data generated during my fieldwork. The analysis of the first protocol shows how the contradictory discourse double binds a teacher *in situ* on an implicit level: after talking to the pupils about a Muslim holiday the teacher gets attached to the strings of a discourse that threatens to control and marginalize her. The analysis of the second protocol fosters the postcolonial hypothesis of symbolic orders implicitly underpinning situations, as it reconstructs how talking about religious affiliation tips over to explicit marginalization. The second protocol displays the researcher herself as a research instrument conveying field experiences emotionally, evoking the methodological reflection of subjectivity and epistemic power in discourse ethnography. Hence section six reflects the analyses and their results methodologically, illustrating the benefit of combining ethnography and discourse analysis, in the sense that both approaches can draw on well-established instruments that help reflecting subjectivity and the epistemic power of the researcher. In the conclusion I suggest several possible meanings behind ›the stigma‹ that is (to be) turned into ›capital‹.

2 ›Migration as problem‹, ›migrant teachers as enrichment‹: Clashing Discourses?

Following postcolonial approaches within Critical Migration Pedagogy I use the term ›migrant others‹ as a term of second order reflecting that migrants and their descendants are discursively constructed as the ›other‹ (Mecheril 2010, S. 17). The term expresses the awareness of the binary between ›nationals‹ and ›foreigners‹ that underlies categories like ›migrants‹ or ›foreigner‹. This binary is prone to allocating unequal social positions disadvantaging so-called migrants. Migrant others are typically constructed within ›integration discourses‹ that seem to consist of the clash between two discourses about migration. From a postcolonial perspective the integration discourse's characteristic is to address migrant others with two opposing messages (Castro Varela 2008). One message is overt and demands assimilation: migrant others must adapt. The other message covertly demands migrant others to foreground their self-identity, which is regarded as incommensurably different. This demand is covert in the way that it comes with hegemonic instruments such as Othering (Thomas-Olalde/Velho 2011). Migrant others get questioned in detail about their religious practices, their eating habits or their clothing, i.e. issues that might be regarded as private affairs. Those questions constitute a subtle instrument of the integration discourse understood as a regime to discipline and normalize (Castro Varela 2008, S. 79 referring to Foucault). Rather than being matter-of-fact questions, they become embedded in a discourse that decides whether they belong or not. Rather than being questions of interest, they become instruments of observation and control of ›the Others‹ (Thomas-Olalde/Velho 2011, S. 42). The integration discourse passes the burden of proof for integration to the migrants while simultaneously fixing them as ›the others‹. In the case of Muslims the burden of proof of being integrated is everlasting. While some

migrants might pass their ›public integration test‹ by proving modernity in the end, Muslims will remain suspect and considered a social risk (Castro Varela 2008, S. 83).

There is a second line of contradictory messaging within the integration discourse. While migration is demographically and economically regarded as necessary and thus useful and appreciated, it is not pictured as affirmative but as threatening (ibid.). There is at least one exception to this picture, which I will outline now referring to it as the ‘utility discourse’ focused on migrant other teachers.

For around ten years in Germany teachers with a migrant background (which is the term for ascribed foreignness in Germany), are subject to an educational policy discourse, claiming these teachers to be useful for the integration processes of migrant pupils (Akbaba/Bräu/Zimmer 2013). The teachers are imagined to possess special intercultural skills as role models, translators, and bridge-builders, thus contributing to the intercultural reorientation of school as an institution. For the first time in 2003 and increasingly since 2007, federal state parliaments, as well as in some papers at the federal level have demanded an increase in the proportion of ›ethnic minority‹ teachers employed (e.g. Schleswig-Holsteiner Landtag 2003, S. 7094). We analyzed 25 documents from ten federal state parliaments (Akbaba/Bräu/Zimmer 2013, S. 41) and similar arguments were made during all the debates. Petitioners used the metaphor of the »bridge builder« or explicitly claimed that the intercultural skills of »migrant background teachers« will improve the quality of teaching. They are also considered to be role models, embodying successful integration and education, a fact that could influence positively student integration. They are perceived, because of their own ethnic backgrounds, to be seen as confidants for students and parents with an ethnic minority background, thus contributing to an improved appreciation of this group within society.

In this summary of politically stated representations it becomes very obvious why and how the political discourse on migrant other teachers gets criticized. It operates on the basis of a binary between teachers (and students) genuinely belonging to society and teachers (and students) who are foreign. The binary works in favor of those who remain unmarked (apparently non-ethnic teachers) and excludes those who get marked (teachers with an ethnicity). The usefulness of these teachers are ascriptions that build on static understandings of culture and essentialist understandings of foreignness.¹

When contrasting these two discourses the different perception of those addressed as foreigners becomes apparent. While the integration discourse generates marginalizing effects, the utility discourse builds on appreciating foreignness, valuing it as a resource. What seems contradictory at first sight turns out to be consistent when we look at the opposites as parts of one and the same representation regime (Hall 2004, S. 115). A representation regime works with stereotypical representations of those who are to be excluded. The power relation favors those who represent the others and disadvantages those who get represented (Bhabha 1994). Foreigners or migrants are pictured as being needed and threatening at the same time. The utility discourse displays one side of this

1 For critical views on this discourse see Karakaşoğlu (2011, S. 126), Akbaba/Bräu/Zimmer (2013, S. 47), Rotter/Schlickum (2013), Akbaba (2014; 2015; 2017).

stereotype by valuing foreignness as needed in schools. It is interdependently linked with degradation as its counterpart. Hence, the utility discourse becomes a constituent of the integration discourse, entering school and pedagogical interaction. Before I illustrate how the contradictory discourses double bind the teachers *in situ*, I will underpin the methodological assumptions about the reconstruction of discourses on the level of practices.

3 Discourse Ethnography

Questions about combining ethnography and discourse analysis are touched on within the social sciences (Lima 2010; Keller 2008; Hammersley 2005), and elaborated on mainly by educational scientists (Ott/Langer/Rabenstein 2012; Reh/Breuer/Schütz 2011; Wrana 2012), who consider practices and discourses as intrinsically tied to each other. There are very few studies that actually apply the combination empirically.²

The methodological approach underpinning this article combines field observation with discourse analysis. Ethnography in its broader sense is used as a research strategy that locates its research close to those individuals and social arenas of the research, adapting its methods in accordance to the specifics of the data the field provides (e.g. Charmaz/Mitchell 2008, S. 160; Breidenstein et al. 2013, S. 124). For the study »Teachers and the Migrant Background. Resisting a Dispositif« (Akbaba 2017) I accompanied a dozen teachers in three different schools over a two-year-period with intermittent phases in the field and analysis at the desk (Breidenstein et al. 2013; Amann/Hirschauer 1997). The teachers were migrant other teachers, that means, they either considered themselves as a »migrant background« person or they were regarded as such by the schools which meant that I was referred to them. The accounts following the field visits resulted in a data corpus which included descriptions of class interaction, teacher talk in the faculty room, informal interviews of teachers, teaching material, informal situations among pupils and notes of random encounters. These accounts were analyzed from micro-analytical perspectives constantly contrasting them, as is the central intellectual activity of Grounded Theory (Strauss/Corbin 1990, 1996; Strübing 2008). Codes, concepts, and categories were built followed by working hypotheses that were tested and enhanced in several and coiled interpretation runs. Ethnography focuses on social practices as its research object, understood as materialized doings and sayings that implicitly follow a logic that can be reconstructed regarding its routine and unpredictability (Reckwitz 2003, S. 290).

- 2 Langer (2008), Ott (2011), Wundrak (2010; 2013), Elliker (2013), Elliker/Coetzee/Kotze (2013), Macgilchrist/Van Hout (2011), Macgilchrist/Ott/Langer (2014). While empirical studies under the name of discourse ethnography or ethnographical discourse analysis are a young phenomenon, one could argue for a longer tradition of research that approaches sociality under the primacy of practice logics (Hillebrandt 2013, S. 371). Here I would include research and discussions in Cultural Studies (Stuart Hall), Science Studies (Bruno Latour, Karin Knorr-Cetina) and Gender Studies (West/Zimmerman; West/Fenstermaker).

While at the beginning of the analysis I focused on obvious practices of ›doing ethnicity‹, in the course of the study the focus shifted to such processes that hinted at neutralizing the construction of ethnicity. The hypothesis grew stronger to show that the construction processes of ethnicity could underlie social interaction, even if they did not appear on the surface of social interaction (Mecheril 2014, S. 15). The material raised the question as to how we could reconstruct processes of social construction that affected the interaction without becoming explicit. By tying these empirical hints to the theoretical background of symbolic orders (Moebius 2013) and representation regimes (Hall 2004), ethnographic and discourse analytical approaches were combined to benefit from each other: through participant observation I collected data from where social practices were performed within social reality. The ethnographic approach and its close reading of field practices profited from discourse analysis and its sophisticated theories of symbolic orders. According to Sociology of knowledge-oriented concepts, discourses are institutionalized ways of talking; they stabilize symbolic orders and create a binding coherence of meaning (Keller 2011, 2008). Discourse analysis hence intends to reconstruct »processes of social construction, objectivation, communication and legitimization of sense making on institutional and organizational levels (...)« (Keller 2008, S. 319; translation Y.A.), and to analyze the social effects of those processes. Discourse Ethnography is understood in this research as considering neither practices nor discourses as the predominant level determining situations; rather they are on the same level of action only in different statuses of aggregation (Reckwitz 2008).

In combining ethnography and discourse analysis, the research traced the social effects migration discourses (might) have on teachers who are subjectivated as migrant other teachers, as well as how teachers relate to these orders, transforming them with defensive, creative, and resistance strategies. A major research goal of ethnography, which also could apply to Discourse Ethnography, is to generate theories enabling analytical insights. In the study at hand the practical consequences of stereotypical representation of migrant other teachers were theorized: teachers get caught in a double bind when they have to abide by two fundamentally contradicting demands. A demand that consists of two instructions undermining one another is called a double bind (Watzlawick/Beavin/Jackson 2007, S. 171). While teachers are implicitly requested to capitalize their ›foreignness‹, they are called on to do so in reference frames of denigration and marginalization. For the teachers, ethnicity becomes the reference to act powerfully while it impedes agency at the same time, hence *double-binding ethnicity*.

The theory of *double-binding ethnicity* was generated in the course of non-linear analyses going back and forth within the accounts. The following protocol exemplifies the analytical significance of this theory.

4 Double-Binding Ethnicity

The protocol stems from participant observation of Ms. Acivatan, a teacher from a secondary school. At the age of eleven, Ms. Acivatan had emigrated with her parents to Germany from Turkey. Most of the field notes that included practices appreciating ethnic and language diversity were generated in fieldnotes during classroom research. The following account is an example for such a practice:

»Ms. Acivatan and I enter the class. Her pupils know me by now, some of them look at me as though registering me, but most of them ignore me. I sit at the back, the teacher stands in front of the class and wishes her pupils a good morning in her usual way with the pupils replying in a rehearsed manner ›Good Morning Ms. Acivatan‹. She tells them in English that today was a special day and asks what makes this day so special. The pupils are silently looking at their teacher. Some pupils whisper ›Bayram‹, one pupil says ›D-Day‹ laughing, another takes a guess and says ›Your birthday!‹. The teacher solves the question: ›yes, it's bayram‹. She writes ›Happy Eid!‹ on the board and explains, that this was the way to wish a happy holiday in English. She adds that if pupils wanted to wish their Muslim friends from countries like the USA or Australia a happy holiday, that they could do it in this way. Next she gives the instruction to transfer the list of vocabulary from the current Macbeth-reading into the exercise book for new vocabulary. The pupils spend a few minutes on copying the vocabulary, before one of the pupils asks the teacher, why she didn't stay at home. In this moment confusion arises over the question, why some pupils stayed at home yesterday (which was Thursday) and some did today (it's Friday). The teacher explains that there are differences between moon and sun calendars, being used differently by Turks and Arabs. The school management had released the pupils from school for Friday, whereas for Arab countries the holiday had already started on Thursday, which is why some pupils stayed at home by parental excuse on Thursday, and by school release on Friday. More questions arise and the pupils want to know why the holiday takes place on different days and why some celebrate shorter and some longer. Ms. Acivatan replies that she wouldn't know exactly, hence ›it would be best if you asked your religious education teachers, they can surely explain it!‹.«

Diversity Practices: Happy Eid

In the first interpretation run within the study this scene was analyzed as diversity practice. The teacher informs the pupils about a Muslim holiday. She teaches them the right English vocabulary that will enable them to wish a happy Muslim holiday to English speaking Muslims. In Germany school practice is known as Christianity-centered while religions other than Christianity are marginally acknowledged by the system. Hence, bringing up a Muslim religion at the beginning of class can be interpreted as a practice of acknowledging difference. English is assigned a prominent educational value in Germany. It belongs to an unquestioned canon of foreign language skills (Gogolin 2001, S. 2). Therefore linking a Muslim holiday with English raises the value of the holiday, too. And with adding international perspectives to the holiday, it becomes a common and normal-

ized holiday: in Germany as elsewhere there are people worshipping this holiday that day (or the day before). Eid-Holiday is drawn from the margins into the center of awareness and acknowledgement.

From the perspective of the utility discourse on teachers, this scene could probably be regarded as evidence for the usefulness of ›ethnic minority‹ teachers contributing to the intercultural reorientation of school. Ms. Acivatan indeed seems to ›build a bridge‹ between a minority and school as an institution by integrating a Muslim holiday in her lesson, transforming intercultural knowledge into matter-of-fact knowledge. She enables the pupils to talk about the holiday in English. Her act is not only a frame of acknowledgement for Eid as an important part of Muslim religion, integrating it in school. The pupils also learn to address those engaged with the holiday in an appreciating way. However, it is exactly the matter-of-fact treatment of the Muslim holiday that leads to further interpretations of the social structures underlying the scene.

When the diversity practice in this scene was contrasted to the diversity practices in other scenes, the matter-of-fact treatment constituted an important difference. While Ms. Acivatan also expressed acknowledgement for marginalized difference in identifying with the pupils' difficulties learning German as a second language, or in chatting with the pupils in the hallway wishing happy holidays in Turkish, in the Happy-Eid scene at hand the marginalized religion becomes a matter-of-fact subject *only*. That means, the teacher mentions the holiday not in order to wish a happy holiday, but in order to teach how to do the wishing in English. She even holds up the matter-of-fact treatment of the subject when the pupils come up with direct questions about her personal relation to the holiday. Rather than answering why she wouldn't have stayed at home that day, she refers to moon and sun calendar systems, trying to make sense why some pupils stayed at home not only that day but also the day before. At the end Ms. Acivatan cuts the details of the questions short and refers the pupils to their religious education teachers for getting the detailed knowledge they wanted. By delegating the matter-of-fact questions to experts in the field, Ms. Acivatan takes on the role of a teacher, and not of someone with a personal relation to the Muslim holiday. Even though the pupils keep ascribing her to be the expert, she does not take over the position of a Muslim representative.

This objectifying way of dealing with the questions is remarkable, because the same teacher frequently and openly puts forward common religious and language backgrounds when she interacts with pupils in everyday school life. Hence, the scene was included in subsequent interpretation runs, when the hypothesis grew stronger that construction processes of ethnicity could underlie social interactions even if they did not appear on the surface of social interaction. After progressing interpretation loops including the accounts of other accompanied teachers, it was possible to return to the Happy-Eid scene adding the analytical perspective of double-binding ethnicity.

Happy – Yet Binding – Eid

The subject had already moved from Eid-Holiday to the Macbeth-vocabulary, when one of the pupils in class asks about the reason why Ms. Acivatan herself did not stay at home that day. The question implies several things: before being taught that today was Eid, a

Muslim holiday, at least one of the pupils already knew about school management granting Muslims an official release that day. It also implies that at least one of the pupils knows that Ms. Acivatan is Muslim, as the question wouldn't make sense otherwise. Ms. Acivatan had chosen to talk about Eid in a matter-of-fact way. Now she is addressed by some of the pupils as a Muslim. An answer to the question demands some sort of insight into her decision over religious practices. By referring to questions about the religious practices of Ms. Acivatan, a subtle instrument of the integration discourse is activated. The instrument works by making »the other« visible in order to control and marginalize them. The question, even if one of sincere and mere interest, is interdependently linked with the meaning of the question as observing and controlling the other. In this way, instruments of the integration discourse enter the class and double bind the teacher: When Ms. Acivatan teaches pupils how to wish a happy Muslim holiday, she also paves the way for the integration discourse activating its imminent risks to control and marginalize her. The construction processes of ethnicity double bind Ms. Acivatan, because when she integrates her knowledge of foreignness, she will at the same time run the risk of becoming subject to the controlling and marginalizing instruments of the integration discourse. Engaging with knowledge over foreignness attaches her to the strings of discourses marginalizing that foreignness.

If Ms. Acivatan responds to the question that engages with marginalizing her as the other, she will turn herself in to the controlling instruments of the discourse. Her being a Muslim constitutes a stigma that becomes more and more uncovered: it was least visible before she mentioned Eid; it will become most visible when she answers the question on how religious she is or what her religious practices look like. Ms. Acivatan is discreditable, because her stigma is not completely visible, but once it is, she will be discredited. Persons who are discreditable have to control the information that, once it becomes public, turn them into discredited persons (Goffman 2014, S. 56). From this theoretical perspective we can understand why Ms. Acivatan does not answer personal questions. Instead she controls the information about her religious practices during the discussion with the pupils. Sticking to a matter-of-fact treatment of the subject becomes her defense against the mechanisms of the integration discourse. It might be part of Ms. Acivatan's implicit knowledge that the representation of migration as an enrichment is symbolically tied to its representation as a problem. The outcome of constructed foreignness is uncertain, because it is subject to elusive and paradox meanings of ethnicity and foreignness. Bringing up the Muslim holiday she already nourished construction processes that include opportunities to degrade and marginalize her. Getting entangled into the discussion with personal information will increase the risk of realizing the degradation.

This analysis remains highly hypothetical. There is no actual denigration in this scene following the question about Ms. Acivatan's religious practices. Sticking to the analysis that is presented, Ms. Acivatan succeeds in down-regulating the effect of the double bind, because she is not liable to respond to the pupils' questions. This time the school order – with teachers principally holding dominant positions – neutralizes the subjectivating effects of the integration discourse on her. But we might question Postcolonial Studies as a suitable perspective for the scene in the first place, because it makes us assume a symbolic

order that degrades Muslim affiliation, even though we don't recognize any palpable social effects. This criticism is important, because it reminds us that our concepts of the social world have consequences for this world. Hence, we could look at the scene as a successful diversity practice and a vivid exchange over religious knowledge between teacher and pupils. Or else, we might look for other situations supporting the postcolonial hypothesis of symbolic orders underlying social situation implicitly. The analysis of the following protocol illustrates how a matter-of-fact appearing interest in someone's religion overtly tips over to marginalization.

5 Discourse Ethnographic Encounters: Uncovering Symbolic Orders ›en passant‹

Written down at the beginning of the third phase of participant observation in a school different from that of Ms. Acivatan, the protocol describes the moment the researcher meets the head master and her assistant for the first time:

»The head master's office is on our way to the classroom we have to go to next, so Clara Epstein [the teacher I am accompanying] and I agree on stopping there shortly, as I had e-mailed the head master that I would drop by to introduce myself. As we enter the office, three people are in the room. Ms. Schüssler, the head master, Mr. Peters, head master assistant, and another woman. Ms. Epstein has entered ahead of myself and introduces me now to Ms. Schüssler by telling her my name. The head master remembers my e-mail and tells Mr. Peters that I was the woman who accompanied the project ›three times one‹. I immediately realize that there is a mix-up, but I cannot clarify it due to the quick pace of the continuing conversation. I also realize that it does not seem that important. Then Mr. Peters addresses me: ›Akbaba, that's Aramean, isn't it? Aramean or Syrian, right?‹ My reply is ›no‹ and that it was of Turkish origin. Him: ›Oh well, we had a lot of Akbabas here. It's the name of many Christians, are you Muslim?‹ I confirm. Him: ›Well, nothing to worry about.‹ His tone is very friendly and a little exuberant. I do not feel comfortable in the situation, as I am scarcely getting to say anything while our conversation is steered by topics that hit me unexpectedly. I see no other option than to regard my presentation as done with, so I say ›thank you‹ for being a guest in the school and in classes. Ms. Epstein mentions something about my research interest in ›ethnic minority‹ teachers, followed by Ms. Schüssler's comment: ›Yes, we do have quite a few of them here.‹ We have to go to reach English class in fifth grade, so we start heading towards the staircase.«

Methodologically the scene illustrates how in (discourse) ethnography the researcher can be or is even meant to be the research instrument herself. She does not collect data from the outside; instead social processes are verbalized after they are emotionally experienced through the researcher as a person. »The fieldworker's emotional responses to events in the field may mirror those that naturally occur in the setting« (Emerson/Fretz/Shaw 2008, S. 361). The event described is the encounter between the researcher and the

school's representatives. While the study is concerned with teachers and their interactions with others, it might make some wonder how the scene entered the sample of the data in the first place. The subsequent analysis reveals the (auto-) ethnographical protocol and the emotional responses it describes as highly relevant to what was theoretically worked out hitherto.

The encounter between the researcher and the head master starts with a misunderstanding when the researcher is taken to be there for a certain project currently running in the school. The researcher perceives the conversation as too fast as to be able to clear the misunderstanding. To be the project coordinator it turns out is irrelevant anyway. What seems more important is ascribing the guest to a role, which can do without thematic filling as shows the irrelevance of the misunderstanding for the continuing conversation. Meanwhile the ascriptions continue when Mr. Peters tries ›Aramean‹ and ›Syrian‹ as ethnic categories to fit the researcher's name. The researcher contributes to the theme that was set by replying that it was ›Turkish. Mr. Peters' next turn is not related to her answer as he reports that ›they‹ had had »a lot of Akbabas« here. Mr. Peters puts the researcher's name into plural, creating a homogeneous group the researcher is now a member of, however unclear it remains what it is that all of the »Akbabas« have in common other than their name. To speak of the researcher's name in plural has the effect that he keeps speaking about her, as she is named Akbaba, while at the same time the conversation is not about her at all, since she merely functions as a projection surface for Mr. Peters' own associations. This projection process is what Terkessidis coined »Spekularisation« (Terkessidis 2004, S. 198), describing interactions in which not the person is talked to but those who the speaker sees reflected in the person. Analyzing the conversation in this way, it comes unsurprising that Mr. Peters' survey-like questions do not follow logic; having just claimed that »it's the name of many Christians«, he asks next if the researcher was Muslim. He frames her confirmation with »nothing to worry about« as though taking the drama out of an issue that might as well be considered a problem.

In Ms. Acıvatan's case I had analyzed the outcome of constructed foreignness as uncertain. The ambivalent way Mr. Peters frames ›being Muslim‹ reflects this uncertain outcome: If there is »nothing to worry about« being Muslim, why bother mentioning the worry at all? We can interpret this in different ways. Stressing the negation of the need to worry can imply an actual devaluation. Stressing the negation to worry can also imply that one is aware of one's Islam-hostile environment that one decidedly wants to distance himself from. The worry and degradation may be personal or social, both interpretations leading to the analysis that an attribute of the researcher is constructed and tied to its discredibility (Goffman 2014, S. 56).

The symbolic order the scene builds on becomes a relevant point of analysis in discourse ethnography. The opposing sides of the discourse that addresses migrant others as both threatening yet tolerated become manifested here. Mr. Peters' phrase reflects and denies the worry about Muslims in one and the same phrase, representing Muslims stereotypically: they are perfectly harmless and a serious problem. Stuart Hall (2004, S. 144) identifies stereotyping as a central mechanism of representation regimes (or symbolic orders) that create symbolic frontiers between those who belong and those who don't.

Those belonging remain unmarked, in the sense that Mr. Peters is not represented by any difference category. Those excluded get marked, and often in the way of stereotypical representations. Binary constructions serve to stabilize the hegemonic order, here identified as one of the integration discourse. In this order migrant others and even more so Muslim migrant others do not belong necessarily, instead they have to undergo a hearing procedure that examines their affiliations and practices uncovering their inherent properties. The dominating members of this symbolic order, religiously and ethnically unmarked, judge whether to worry or not to worry about those who remain suspect. The construction of difference becomes a symbolic means to mark one's authority within the symbolic order that wants to be maintained. Here the researcher is lucky, being accorded a favor in the sense that she passes as no one to worry about, for the time being.

The focus of the analysis will now shift from the representation regime addressing the researcher to how the researcher perceives the way she is represented. The (auto-) ethnographical protocol allows us to reconstruct the way the subjectivation processes affect the represented. The researcher perceives her participation to the conversation as being externally controlled. She »scarcely gets to say anything« while the topics hit her »unexpectedly«. The conversation »is steered« and she sees »no other option than to regard the presentation as done with«. Although being the focus of the conversation, the researcher rarely speaks. These parts describe her *formal* participation within the conversation, marking it as passive and with little agency. The main themes confronting the researcher are, regarding the *content* of the conversation, that she is taken to be someone else, that she is being fitted into ethnic categories, and that she is being stigmatized on the grounds of being Muslim. Her formal participation and the contents of the conversation lead to the researcher »not feeling comfortable in the situation.« Marking the researcher with ethnic and religious differences strengthens the hegemonic order at the cost of the researcher: she »pays« with unease, discomfort, and feeling deprived of her voice. The uneven power relation reaches its paradoxical height when at the end of the scene the researcher is thankful for what has ended in discrediting, dominating and marginalizing her.

The construction of the researcher as »a Muslim« activates a power relation disadvantaging her position. This power relation is displayed in the course of the conversation more explicitly than it had been in Ms. Acivatan's case. However, in both cases we can reconstruct the underlying symbolic order that is part of the integration discourse on migrant others in general and Muslim others specifically (Castro Varela 2008). In both scenes the orders at work decide over those who belong and those whose belonging is controlled and challenged along the symbols of ethnicity and religion. In the Happy-Eid-scene the subjectivating effects of the discourse are less palpable because the teacher is in a position to steer the dialogue herself. In the second scene they become manifest. While the researcher's role might as well be considered as privileged, in the sense that she represents the university for which she received unquestioned respect each time she introduced herself in the field, in the scene the dominating and dominated roles are switched: it is not the researcher who constructs knowledge from dominant perspectives imposing them on the field. Instead field members themselves make use of knowledge construc-

tions from hegemonic discourses, confronting the researcher with ascriptions that limit her agency.

There is a power relation hiding under Mr. Peters' friendly and matter-of-fact questions. The dialogue displays this power relation and how »the other« is dependent on hegemonic benevolence. In the same way constructing migrant other teachers as specifically useful teachers displays hegemonic benevolence that decides whether the others are a problem (e.g. migrant other pupils in political and pedagogical discourses) and a worry (e.g. Muslim others) or whether they may be tolerated (›nothing to worry about‹) and even a resource (utility discourse on migrant other teachers). The special appreciation for migrant other teachers is interdependently linked with stereotypical representations. The analysis showed the practical consequences that this representation regime implies for the teachers and their job. Discrediting and marginalization of »the other« are built on symbolic orders that are at work in the classroom as well as on the way to what was thought to be the field, prompting the researcher's sensitivity to uncover orders *en passant*. A methodological reflection on the process and result of the analysis follows.

6 Reflexive Subjectivity and Epistemic Reflexivity in Discourse Ethnography

Reflexive Subjectivity

Within constructivist approaches of ethnography and discourse analysis that this research follows, we assume that social reality is produced interactively (Berger/Luckmann 2009). This construction process also applies to research itself (Flick/von Kardoff/Steinke 2009). With the epistemological premise that knowledge can only be obtained from specific perspectives, the presented study took subjectivity to be a method (Hirschauer 2001; Hammersley/Atkinson 2009; Emerson/Fretz/Shaw 2008). If subjectivity is adopted in a disciplined manner, it becomes a strength because it enhances the researcher's receptivity of the research object (Hirschauer 2001, S. 439). In ethnography, the researcher becomes the main research instrument (Hammersley/Atkinson 2009, S. 18), allowing readers to experience the field through the researcher's senses. Fieldnote descriptions even turn out advantageous for the research of selection processes (Hammersley/Atkinson 2009), as we presume that descriptions will include imprints of social orders that are also part of the discourses in which we are interested. We cannot anticipate how and when exactly these imprints can be encountered. The (auto-) ethnographic protocol about the meeting between the researcher and the assistant head master is an example of how subjectivity was turned reflexively, uncovering symbolic orders ›*en passant*‹, when the researcher was on the way to what she would think to be the actual field.

Subjectivity can also be turned into methodical strength when it enables special access to the field. In the presented study the researcher had special access to the field in the sense that plenty of experiences with ascriptions and everyday-discriminations (for which the name ›Yalız Akbaba‹ is a sufficient marker of difference; Terkessidis 2004) worked as an advantageous sensor for perceiving the construction of differences from the

perspective of those affected. In addition, attributions like ›foreigner‹ or ›Turk‹ facilitated my access to the field participants, when for instance pupils regarded the researcher to be ›one of them‹ or when teachers reported frankly from experiences they encounter with discrimination against their ethnic and religious backgrounds. These field privileges also turned out to be ambivalent, for they created opportunities for ascriptions to be projected on the researcher, as the (auto-) discourse ethnographic analysis illustrated.

Participant observation replaces objectivity with reflexivity and traceability of the results. To achieve *analytical* objectivity, the researcher must observe his or her own interference and reconstruct its observation so the reader can monitor it (Hünersdorf/Müller/Maeder 2008, S. 16). This principle would also apply to discourse ethnography.

Epistemic Reflexivity

Reflecting the active role of the researcher in discourse ethnography is closely tied to the researcher as an active producer of knowledge. In discourse ethnography, as in research generally, the research object is not simply picked up from the field but co-constructed by the researcher. If we agree to science as a discursive activity, then we must also acknowledge that our research questions, our theoretical sensitivity, and even the reflection of our research (results) are bound to discourses. For discourse ethnography this means a constant alertness of oneself as a product of discourse.

Being a product of discourse and a producer of knowledge at the same time led ethnography into the »crisis of ethnographic representation« (Berg/Fuchs 1993). What makes most suspicious is that ethnography is often understood to represent members of social groups subject to inequality. But speaking for the voiceless, speechless or under-represented constructs knowledge from dominant perspectives of society, ironically undermining the authority of those the research is supporting and hence fortifying existing power relations (Steyerl 2008, S. 11).

Taking epistemic reflexivity seriously, the research results of this study must be positioned in the face of the paradox of trying to uncover under-representation and dominance while simultaneously fortifying their stabilization. The study intends to describe the perspectives of field participants considered to be the under or misrepresented. Which aspects need to be reflected on concerning the generated theory of *double-binding ethnicity* representing the teachers? A critical examination will point out that the research perspective might be assisting those perspectives on migrant others that stress structures of subjugation, thereby concealing subversive strategies. This way, reflexive critics may find, the analysis constructs teachers as victims of symbolic orders reigning over their agency, as was the case with both Ms. Acivatan whose agency was threatened and with the researcher meeting Mr. Peters. A practical examination will point out that the theory of *double-binding ethnicity* provides us with a deeper comprehension of what previous studies have shown. Interviews with migrant other teachers reveal these teachers to feel uncomfortable with the attributions of being a teacher with ›migrant background‹ (Georgi 2011, S. 270). Having identified the discourses and the way they unfold their impact explicitly as well as implicitly, we can frame this unease with structural knowledge about subjectivation processes and their consequences. However, subjects also actively

interrelate with the structures that bind them. Hence the study also reconstructed how teachers cope with symbolic orders in neutralizing (as does Ms. Acivatan when she protects herself from the subjectivation by talking it away), creative, resistive and transforming ways (Akbaba 2017). For the sake of a methodological focus of the paper these practices of resisting and transforming the orders that subjectivate the teachers were disregarded here.

7 Conclusion: Turning the Stigma into Theoretical and Methodological Capital

On reviewing the research process and its results, I can associate four different meanings with the title ›turn the stigma into capital‹. *Firstly*, the slogan captures in a nutshell what the stereotypical discourse requests from migrant other teachers, pointing at the paradox within the request that causes teachers a fundamental problem. Teachers are discursively called upon to make use of their foreignness. Doing so invites discourse mechanisms working against the teachers' agency by marginalizing and excluding them. Teachers are asked to capitalize on a stigma, while the capitalization threatens to turn the teachers in to subjectivating discourses with marginalizing effects upon them. *Secondly*, the teachers effectively do turn the stigma into capital, when they include knowledge about minority religions in class, or when they value minority languages in and outside of class (Akbaba 2017). The diversity practices that the study reconstructed valorize what is being generally marginalized in schools so far. These diversity practices challenge and extend legitimate spaces of belonging. *Thirdly*, a stigma is turned into capital with regard to methodological issues within qualitative research in general and discourse ethnography in specific. If we consider subjectivity as a scientific stigma, then the above analyses showed how that stigma was turned into methodological capital. The researcher being the one affected by the order, she (hopefully) turns the subjective descriptions reflexively and identifies those subjectivation structures *en passant* that strengthen the hypothesis of symbolic orders that underlie the teacher-pupil interaction even if they don't become manifest. *Fourthly*, the researcher gets stigmatized during her fieldwork, taking it as an (ambivalently worthy) opportunity to reflect on specific field experiences in terms of the theoretical perspectives of the study.

Overall the paper presented some of the results of the discourse ethnography on migrant other teachers. The utility discourse about migrant other teachers fosters the binary between belonging and not belonging teachers. The binary works in favor of those who remain unmarked and who are apparently ›non-ethnic‹ teachers. The research reconstructed the effects of this binary in two ethnographic protocols from my discourse ethnographic study. In the first protocol the analysis remained on a hypothetical level because talking about the Muslim holiday did not lead into the teacher's manifest denigration, while it was still possible to read the data through the postcolonial concept of Othering and its subtle instruments of controlling and marginalizing migrant others. The second protocol strengthens the theory of double-binding ethnicity, because the denigra-

tion of Muslim others occurs more directly. In both cases ›the others‹ become subject to representations that those who remain unmarked rule over. Again in both cases we can strongly assume that none of the actors intend to construct, control, marginalize, or discredit others. The discourse that stereotypically represents migrant other teachers has subjectivating effects that were reconstructed on a combined level of discourses and practices materializing implicit knowledge about symbolic orders that usually are outside of daily awareness. The discourse-ethnographic approach was theoretically and methodologically very productive in analyzing these subtle structures. It seems worthwhile to strengthen this methodological approach also within university teacher training, for the benefiting match between ethnographical observation and discourse analytic skills could enhance teacher reflexivity concerning their specific discursive entanglements within the field.

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