

Constructing shared thoughts in a small linguistic endangered area – The case of Ladin women in the Dolomites, Italy

Olimpia Rasom

(University of Bolzano/Bozen, Italy, Faculty of Education)

This paper presents some results of a PhD research study on Ladins, a language minority group in South-Tyrol and Trentino, Italy. In particular, the role of Ladin women when hypothesizing a promotion-course on “language and culture” (in the family, at work, at school, in the leisure time, in society etc.) has been investigated. Different methods (interviews, focus-group, biographies) have been used to identify the beliefs of Ladin women. How do Ladin women see Ladin reality? Where and when do they find their identity as being Ladin? What kind of promotion activities would women implement, if they could make decisions on language policies? What future scenarios do they imagine for their small Ladin society? This research study is still in progress, therefore only some initial results will be presented, i.e. the opinions and the different points of view of the women involved. The methods have been used within a pedagogical approach which consists in the researcher and the women involved trying to develop thoughts and beliefs together. These could be used as a framework for implementing a (new) promotion course for the endangered language of the Ladin people.