

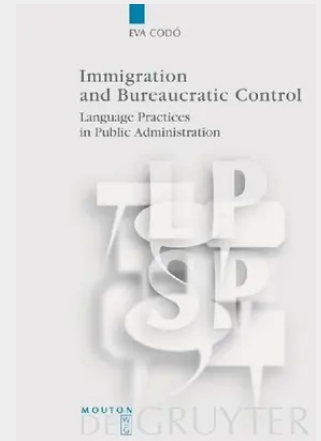
Immigration and Bureaucratic Control

Language Practices in Public Administration

This original study looks at language practices in a government agency responsible for granting or denying legal status to transnational migrants in Spain. Drawing on a unique corpus of naturally-occurring verbal interactions between state officials and migrant petitioners as well as ethnographic materials and interviews, it provides a fascinating insight into the relationship between language, social heterogeneity, and practices of exclusion.

The book investigates how a national agency with homogenizing views of citizenship copes with the fundamental contradiction resulting from the state's commitment to the values of pluralism, justice, and equality, and its function as the regulator of access to socioeconomic resources. By focusing on information provision, the book explores how much room there is for individual agency in institutional contexts; and shows that what happens in front-line talk has very little to do with allowing immigrants access to crucial information but rather revolves around the regimentation of language and behavior, and the enactment of social control. This publication will be welcomed by students and researchers in the fields of sociolinguistics, language and immigration, institutional talk, and multilingualism.

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