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The future of language education in Europe: case studies of innovative practices

Analytical report



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The future of language education in Europe: case studies of innovative practices

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ABOUT NESET

NESET is an advisory network of experts working on the social dimension of education and training.

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture initiated the establishment of the network as the successor to NESSE (2007-2010), NESET (2011-2014) and NESET II (2015-2018).

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Executive summary

Linguistic diversity is one of the great strengths of the European Union. To foster the potential of linguistic diversity to support multilingual competences of students and help overcome its possible challenges, innovative policies and practices in language teaching must be implemented in European classrooms, schools, regions and countries –taking into account pedagogical shifts and ongoing societal trends such as migration and the increasing mobility of individuals.

To transform language education in Europe, it is necessary to improve the language competences of learners by not only helping them to acquire new languages, but also to maintain and develop their skills in their own languages. It is further necessary to deconstruct the existing hierarchy between languages, and to apply an inclusive perspective towards all languages, both in education and in society. In addition, languages should be used as resources in the classroom, building on students' linguistic repertoires for learning. This includes discontinuing strategies and practices that separate the target language from other languages students know, and encouraging those strategies and practices that allow transition from one language to another, resulting in a positive transfer of skills and concepts and the strengthening of each of the languages.

In this context, the main purpose of this report is to inspire educators and policy makers to innovate and implement forward-looking policies and practices in language education, by exploring novel approaches and strategies for language teaching across in Europe that support learners' plurilingualism.

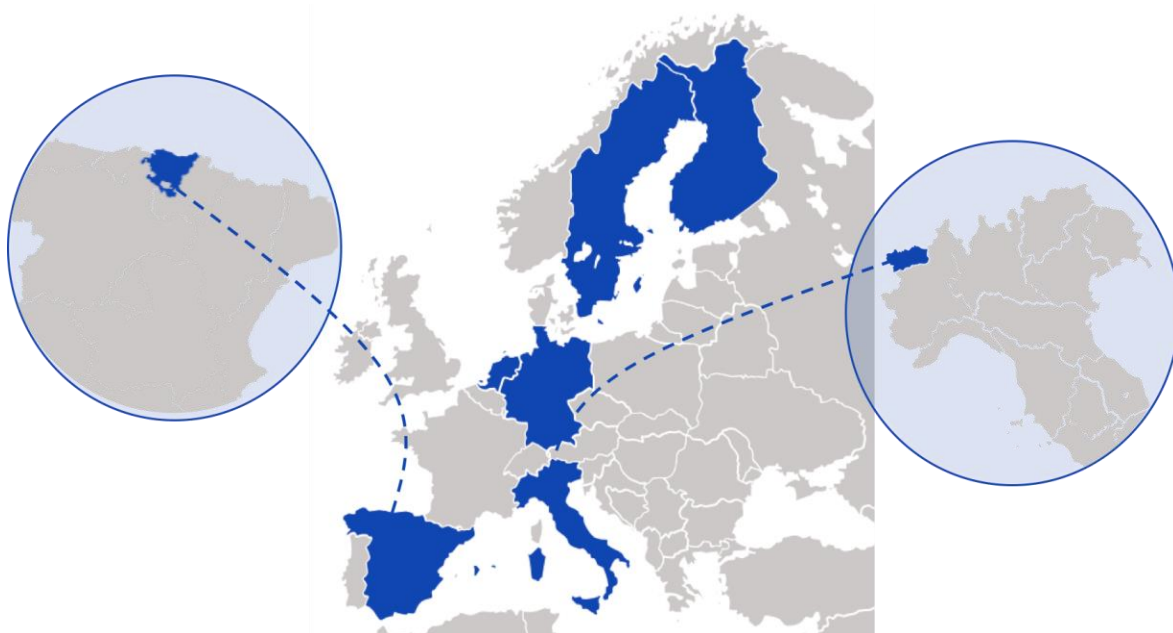
The key questions this report aims to answer are the following:

- What are the new developments in teaching and learning languages in Europe?
- How can we open spaces in pedagogy that support the activation of the languages that students bring with them into the classroom? And how do these innovative language teaching practices promote plurilingualism?
- What are the pros and cons of each of these pedagogies?
- How could these experiences be adapted to other European contexts?
- What are the key drivers, barriers and possible ways forward towards the transformation of language teaching and learning approaches across Europe?

Case studies: innovative language teaching and learning policies and practices

This report showcases a selection of policy developments and practices in language teaching across Europe, placing them into the context of evolving language teaching pedagogies and policies, and highlighting the necessary shift towards a more plurilingual approach. The six case studies illustrate how policy makers and educators have responded to the complexity of the new linguistic landscape – and highlight the need for more efficient language education in specific European contexts.

FIGURE 1 Countries and regions covered by the case studies in this report.



Source: created by the authors.

Multilingual programme Studi/Binogi

The Studi/Binogi digital platform in Sweden provides learning materials (in the form of animated videos) covering curriculum content in all subjects. These are delivered in the language(s) of the school and in several minority languages. This digital learning tool makes it possible for migrant learners to access curriculum content upon arrival in a new country, and thereby promotes the equal value of all languages. Studi/Binogi helps students to create a link between the various languages in their repertoire and enables them to develop their skills in their own language at the same time as learning a new language. In addition, Studi/Binogi creates an inclusive learning environment for all students, including students with diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Accelerative Integrated Method of foreign language teaching

The Accelerative Integrated Method of foreign language teaching (AIM) is a classroom practice for language learning used in the Netherlands. The method provides a playful way of teaching a foreign language through 'scaffolding' techniques. These use storytelling, gestures, active collaboration and repetition in the target language. So far, AIM has been used to teach French, English, Spanish and Mandarin to young beginners from around 7 to 15 years old. This case study represents an example of a language teaching and learning practice that provides equal access to high-quality language education for all students, regardless of their first language.

The bi-/plurilingual education model of the Aosta Valley

The bi-/plurilingual educational model of the Aosta Valley in northern Italy focuses on the development of plurilingualism among students in all areas of the curriculum. The model is based on alternating between languages from one day to the next. This model allows the transfer of skills and competences from one language to the other. One of the model's

main objectives is to preserve the most widely spoken minority language in the region, French.

The education model of the Basque Country

The educational model used in the Basque Country (Spain) has set itself the objective of safeguarding and revitalising the Basque language. The region's education system employs a flexible, context-sensitive model in terms of languages, with immersion in the Basque language being predominant model in the region. Despite a highly successful bilingual education model, the region recognises the challenge of multilingualism that is linked to the Basque Country's changing linguistic landscape. The region is therefore considering the establishment of a more inclusive language management system that promotes and enables the development of all languages.

Language-sensitive curriculum in Finland

Finland's recently introduced language-sensitive curriculum promotes the recognition of all languages and the development of language awareness in the teaching and learning process throughout. This approach aims to ensure equal access to quality education by taking into account students' linguistic repertoires and integrating their various languages into classroom practice. The curriculum recognises the value of all languages and their importance for further learning.

The CertiLingua school network

CertiLingua is a network of schools committed to providing students with high-quality language education. The network issues a quality certificate to schools that advance language education, teaching at least two additional languages using the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method, as well as intercultural skills. The network's 'Label of Excellence' is awarded to students and schools that fulfil the programme's criteria. CertiLingua promotes the development of the skills necessary for social and professional interaction in an international context.

Key findings

The six case studies in this report demonstrate that language teaching strategies are responding, albeit slowly, to the general educational trends of digitalisation and the personalisation of teaching and learning across Europe, with the aim of increasing the overall quality of language education and instilling a culture of plurilingualism. The key innovation inherent to these developments lies in creating a **shift in perception** in relation to languages and their role in the process of learning. This involves the following:

- Students' first languages are not perceived as a problem or deficit, but as an asset for learning and as an enrichment of students' linguistic repertoires.
- Linguistic considerations and language learning are relevant in and for all subjects.
- All languages have equal value.
- Existing competences and talents support the acquisition of competences in other language(s).
- Students' language repertoires can consist of multiple languages, with varying levels of proficiency in each. Competences in these languages are interconnected, and are important for the development of plurilingual competences.

The case studies analysed in this report also reveal that the application of this new plurilingual perspective involves the introduction of the following elements into language education:

- A focus on language awareness within the school's teaching and learning processes.
- The active integration of students' languages into classroom practices.
- Provision of equal access to quality language education, regardless of students' first language.
- Use of the method of alternating languages to enable students to acquire the ability to use several languages in monolingual settings, and to activate both (or all), and even switch between them in plurilingual contexts.

The plurilingual practices reviewed in this report present **great potential for adaptation** to other countries or contexts. The transfer of long-standing, innovative strategies and practices for language learning is possible due to *flexibility* in the way such strategies and practices are applied, as well as the *ready-to-use tools* developed for the purpose of such application. While each of these policies and practices is tailored to its own specific context and its needs, all are transferable, taking into account the relevant context into which they will be embedded.

Key policy implications and recommendations

The shift towards plurilingualism challenges traditional conceptions and practices within language teaching and learning. Although it offers an opportunity to transform language education in Europe and move towards more inclusive and comprehensive language education, the lack of sufficient information about the benefits of emerging or reconsidered strategies and practices can hinder their effective and successful implementation across the EU. This report therefore highlights the implications of the shift towards plurilingualism and provides recommendations to facilitate the implementation of innovative teaching and learning strategies and practices.

Recommendations for policy-makers – system level

- Change is needed in the **attitudes of policy-makers/leaders towards a more positive perception** of the value of inclusive education and plurilingualism. This would create a foundation for inclusive processes at school and classroom level. To achieve such a change will require political priorities, will and vision, as well as long-term strategy and commitment focused on inclusion and equity.
- Policy makers need to **eliminate discrepancies** between the aims and objectives of plurilingual strategies and practices and their practical implementation.
- For the implementation of plurilingual policies and practice to be successful, sufficient **investment in financial and human resources** is necessary. This also involves ensuring education staff enjoy the right working conditions to be able to re-design and modernise their traditional practices.
- **Training on new language teaching pedagogies** should be incorporated more systematically into teacher education programmes and professional development systems. This includes the potential of Information and Communication Technologies, collaboration practices and an inclusive vision of plurilingualism.

Training, particularly high-quality school leadership programmes that focus on innovation and change management, should be available to all school leaders.

- **Monitoring and evaluation systems should be improved** and accompanied by institutional support for teachers and school leaders.
- An increasing emphasis on efficiency and accountability for schools and teachers may discourage them from innovating. It is therefore crucial to **build 'intelligent' systems of accountability** that combine both vertical and horizontal accountability.
- The **autonomy of both schools and teachers** is crucial, especially where no system-level strategy exists for the implementation of plurilingual practices. The lack of such autonomy can hinder innovation in language teaching and learning.
- Overall, education systems and policy makers should be ready to **adapt to pedagogical, societal and technological trends**.

Recommendations for school communities and practitioners – institutional level

- There is a need for change towards **more positive perceptions/attitudes among school leaders and the school community** towards the role of languages within the school, particularly in the vision/strategy of the school.
- There is also a need to foster a **collaborative school culture** and the creation of a plurilingual ethos across the whole school.
- The process of change at school level needs to include the **monitoring of progress** with regard to the role of languages contained in the school's vision. Furthermore, institutions must be ready to adapt on the basis of such monitoring.
- An **inclusive learning environment** is required for the implementation of plurilingual pedagogies such as linguistically sensitive language learning, and to enable educational innovation.
- Institutions should **provide support** in various forms, such as enabling teaching staff to invest time in capacity building and professional development; investing (financially) in the tools and equipment necessary for specific plurilingual practices; and providing teachers with flexibility regarding work organisation, in order to facilitate innovation.
- It is necessary to recognise that **teachers are the key agents of change**. In order to support the shift towards innovative pedagogies, schools should **allow/promote peer-learning opportunities for teachers** as well as providing institutional support for teachers to take initiatives.
- Finally, **connections and cooperation with external actors** such as universities, research institutes or the private sector, can help schools to introduce and develop innovative language learning practices. Such support may come in terms of capacity building, impact assessment, or access to the necessary tools and equipment.

Résumé analytique

La diversité linguistique est l'une des grandes forces de l'Union européenne. Afin de favoriser le potentiel de la diversité linguistique à soutenir les compétences plurilingues et aider à surmonter les éventuels défis qu'elle représente, il faut mettre en œuvre des politiques et des pratiques innovantes pour l'enseignement des langues dans les classes, les écoles, les régions et les pays de l'Europe. Pour ce faire, il convient de tenir compte des évolutions pédagogiques et des tendances sociétales actuelles, telles que la migration et la mobilité croissante des individus.

La transformation de l'enseignement des langues en Europe doit passer par l'amélioration des compétences linguistiques des élèves. Cela implique non seulement de les aider à acquérir de nouvelles langues, mais aussi à maintenir et à développer leurs compétences dans leur propre langue. Il est en outre nécessaire de déconstruire la hiérarchie existante entre les langues et d'appliquer une perspective d'inclusion de toutes les langues, tant dans l'enseignement que dans la société. Par ailleurs, les langues doivent être utilisées comme ressources dans les salles de classe, s'appuyant sur les répertoires linguistiques des élèves pour l'apprentissage. Cela implique aussi de mettre fin aux stratégies et pratiques qui isolent la langue cible des autres langues que les élèves connaissent, et d'encourager les stratégies et pratiques qui permettent la transition d'une langue à l'autre. Ceci se traduit par un transfert positif de compétences et de concepts et par le renforcement de chacune des langues.

Dans ce contexte, l'objectif principal de ce rapport est d'inspirer les éducateurs et les décideurs politiques à innover et à mettre en œuvre des politiques et des pratiques prospectives pour l'enseignement des langues en Europe, en explorant des approches et des stratégies nouvelles qui soutiennent le plurilinguisme des élèves.

Les questions clés auxquelles ce rapport tente de répondre sont les suivantes :

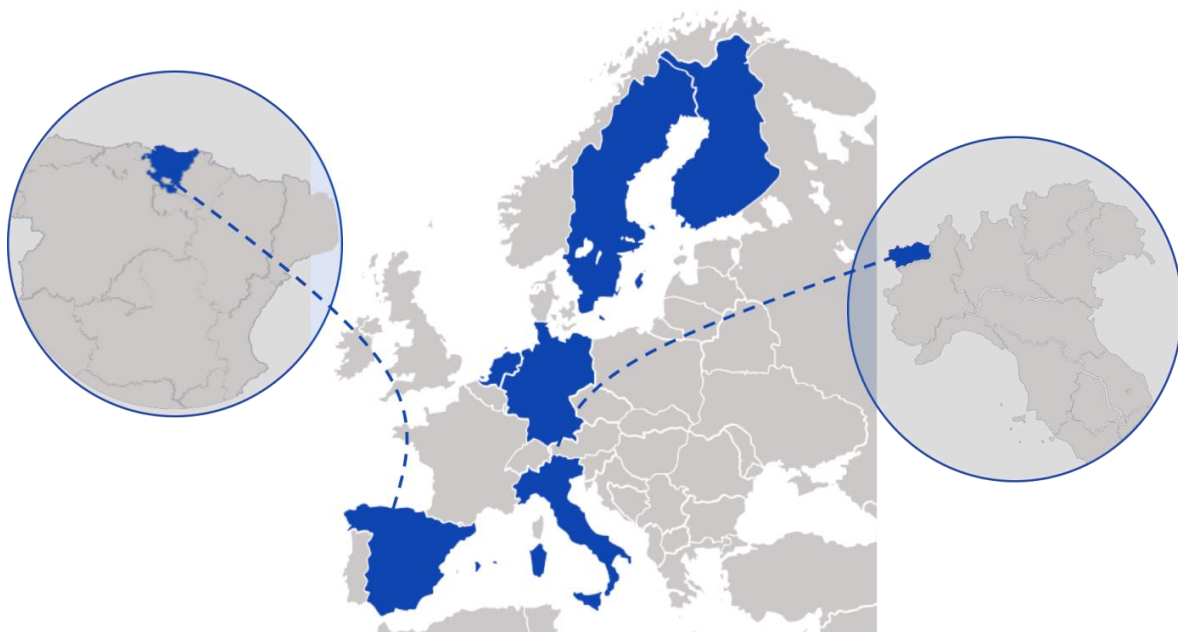
- Quels sont les nouveaux développements dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues en Europe ?
- Comment pouvons-nous ouvrir des espaces pédagogiques qui soutiennent l'activation des langues que les élèves apportent avec eux en classe ? Et comment ces pratiques innovantes d'enseignement des langues favorisent-elles le plurilinguisme ?
- Quels sont les avantages et les inconvénients de chacune de ces pédagogies ?
- Comment ces expériences pourraient-elles être adaptées à d'autres contextes européens ?
- Quels sont les principaux moteurs, obstacles et pistes possibles pour la transformation des approches d'enseignement et d'apprentissage des langues en Europe ?

Études de cas : politiques et pratiques innovantes en matière d'enseignement et d'apprentissage des langues

Ce rapport présente une sélection de développements politiques et de pratiques dans le domaine de l'enseignement des langues en Europe, en les plaçant dans le contexte de l'évolution des pédagogies et des politiques d'enseignement des langues, et en soulignant

la transition nécessaire vers une approche davantage tournée vers le plurilinguisme. Les six études de cas illustrent la manière dont les décideurs politiques et les éducateurs ont fait face à la complexité du nouveau paysage linguistique, et soulignent la nécessité d'un enseignement des langues plus efficace dans des contextes européens spécifiques.

FIGURE 2 Pays et régions couverts par les études de cas de ce rapport.



Source : créée par les auteurs.

Programme multilingue Studi/Binogi

La plate-forme numérique Studi/Binogi en Suède fournit du matériel pédagogique (sous forme de vidéos animées) qui couvre le contenu des programmes dans toutes les matières. Ces vidéos sont diffusées dans la ou les langues de l'école et dans un certain nombre de langues minoritaires. Cet outil d'apprentissage numérique permet aux apprenants nouvellement arrivés d'avoir accès aux programmes scolaires dès leur arrivée dans un nouveau pays, et promeut ainsi la valeur égale de toutes les langues. Studi/Binogi aide les élèves à établir un lien entre les différentes langues de leur répertoire et leur permet de développer leurs compétences dans leur propre langue en même temps qu'ils en apprennent une nouvelle. En outre, Studi/Binogi crée un environnement d'apprentissage inclusif pour tous les élèves, y compris ceux qui présentent des origines linguistiques diverses.

Méthode intégrée accélérée d'enseignement des langues étrangères

La méthode accélérée intégrée d'enseignement des langues étrangères (AIM) est une pratique utilisée dans les salles de classe aux Pays-Bas. Cette méthode offre une manière ludique d'enseigner les langues étrangères par le biais de techniques d'« échafaudage ». Celles-ci font appel à la narration d'histoires, à la gestuelle, à la collaboration active et à la répétition dans la langue cible. Jusqu'à présent, la méthode AIM a été utilisée pour enseigner le français, l'anglais, l'espagnol et le mandarin à des élèves débutants âgés d'environ 7 à 15 ans. Cette étude de cas est un exemple de pratique d'enseignement et

d'apprentissage des langues qui offre un accès égal à une éducation linguistique de qualité pour tous les élèves, quelle que soit leur langue maternelle.

Modèle éducatif bi-/plurilingue de la Vallée d'Aoste

Le modèle éducatif bi-/plurilingue de la Vallée d'Aoste, dans le nord de l'Italie, est axé sur le développement du plurilinguisme chez les élèves dans tous les domaines du programme d'enseignement. Le modèle est basé sur l'alternance entre les langues d'un jour à l'autre. Il permet le transfert d'aptitudes et de compétences d'une langue à l'autre. L'un des principaux objectifs de ce modèle est de préserver la langue minoritaire la plus parlée dans la région, le français.

Modèle éducatif du Pays basque

Le modèle éducatif utilisé au Pays Basque (Espagne) s'est fixé pour objectif de sauvegarder et de revitaliser la langue basque. Le système d'enseignement de la région utilise un modèle linguistique flexible et adapté au contexte, l'immersion dans la langue basque étant le modèle prédominant dans la région. Malgré un modèle d'éducation bilingue très réussi, la région reconnaît que l'évolution du paysage linguistique du Pays Basque représente un défi en matière de multilinguisme. La région envisage donc la mise en place d'un système de gestion des langues plus inclusif qui favorise et permette le développement de toutes les langues.

Programme d'enseignement tenant compte des spécificités linguistiques en Finlande

Le programme d'enseignement récemment introduit en Finlande qui tient compte des spécificités linguistiques encourage la reconnaissance de toutes les langues et le développement de la conscience linguistique dans le processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage. Cette approche vise à garantir l'égalité d'accès à un enseignement de qualité en tenant compte des répertoires linguistiques des élèves et en intégrant leurs différentes langues dans la pratique en classe. Le programme d'enseignement reconnaît la valeur de toutes les langues et leur importance pour la poursuite de l'apprentissage.

Réseau d'écoles CertiLingua

CertiLingua est un réseau d'écoles qui s'engage à fournir aux élèves un enseignement linguistique de haute qualité. Le réseau délivre un certificat de qualité aux écoles qui promeuvent l'enseignement des langues, en enseignant au moins deux langues supplémentaires selon la méthode d'Enseignement d'une Matière Intégrée à une Langue Étrangère (EMILE), ainsi que des compétences interculturelles. Le « Label d'excellence » du réseau est attribué aux élèves et aux écoles qui remplissent les critères du programme. CertiLingua encourage le développement des compétences nécessaires à l'interaction sociale et professionnelle dans un contexte international.

Conclusions Principales

Les six études de cas présentées dans ce rapport montrent que, bien que lentement, les stratégies d'enseignement des langues répondent aux tendances générales de la numérisation et de la individualisation de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage en Europe, l'objectif restant d'accroître la qualité globale de l'enseignement des langues et d'instiller une culture du plurilinguisme. La principale innovation inhérente à ces évolutions réside dans la création d'un **changement de perception** en ce qui concerne les langues et leur rôle dans le processus d'apprentissage. Cela implique ce qui suit :

- Les premières langues des élèves ne sont pas perçues comme un problème ou un déficit, mais comme un atout pour l'apprentissage et un enrichissement de leur répertoire linguistique.
- Les considérations linguistiques et l'apprentissage des langues sont pertinents dans et pour toutes les matières.
- Toutes les langues ont une valeur égale.
- Les compétences et les talents existants favorisent l'acquisition de compétences dans une ou plusieurs autres langues.
- Les répertoires linguistiques des élèves peuvent être constitués de plusieurs langues, avec différents niveaux de compétence dans chacune d'entre elles. Les compétences dans ces langues sont interconnectées et sont importantes pour le développement des compétences plurilingues.

Les études de cas analysées dans ce rapport révèlent également que l'application de cette nouvelle perspective plurilingue implique l'introduction des éléments suivants dans l'enseignement des langues :

- Une attention particulière à la conscience linguistique dans les processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage à l'école.
- L'intégration active des langues des élèves dans les pratiques en classe.
- L'égalité d'accès à un enseignement linguistique de qualité, quelle que soit la première langue des élèves.
- L'utilisation de la méthode d'alternance des langues pour permettre aux élèves d'acquérir la capacité d'utiliser plusieurs langues dans des contextes monolingues, et d'activer les deux (ou toutes), voire de passer de l'une à l'autre dans des contextes plurilingues.

Les pratiques plurilingues examinées dans ce rapport présentent un **grand potentiel d'adaptation** à d'autres pays ou contextes. Le transfert de stratégies et de pratiques innovantes de longue date pour l'apprentissage des langues est possible grâce à la *flexibilité* dans la manière dont ces stratégies et pratiques sont appliquées, ainsi qu'aux *outils prêts à l'emploi* développés à cet effet. Si chacune de ces politiques et pratiques est adaptée à son propre contexte et à ses besoins spécifiques, toutes sont transférables, en tenant compte du contexte particulier dans lequel elles seront intégrées.

Principales implications politiques et recommandations

Le passage au plurilinguisme remet en question les conceptions et pratiques traditionnelles de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage des langues. Bien qu'il offre l'occasion de transformer l'enseignement des langues en Europe et d'évoluer vers une approche plus inclusive et plus complète, le manque d'informations suffisantes sur les avantages des stratégies et pratiques émergentes ou reconsidérées peut entraver leur mise en œuvre efficace et réussie dans toute l'UE. Ce rapport met donc en lumière les implications du passage au plurilinguisme et fournit des recommandations pour faciliter la mise en œuvre de stratégies et de pratiques d'enseignement et d'apprentissage innovantes.

Recommandations à l'intention des décideurs politiques - niveau systémique

- Il est nécessaire de changer l'**attitude des décideurs politiques et des dirigeants afin qu'ils aient une perception plus positive** de la valeur de l'éducation inclusive et du plurilinguisme. Ceci permettra de créer une base pour des processus d'inclusion à l'école et en classe. Pour réaliser un tel changement, il est nécessaire d'établir des priorités, une volonté et une vision politiques, ainsi qu'une stratégie et un engagement à long terme axés sur l'inclusion et l'équité.
- Les décideurs politiques doivent **éliminer les divergences** entre les buts et objectifs des stratégies et pratiques plurilingues et leur mise en œuvre pratique.
- Pour que la mise en œuvre des politiques et pratiques plurilingues réussisse, il est nécessaire **d'investir suffisamment dans les ressources financières et humaines**. Ceci implique également de veiller à ce que le personnel éducatif bénéficie de conditions de travail adéquates pour pouvoir reconcevoir et moderniser ses pratiques.
- **La formation aux nouvelles pédagogies d'enseignement des langues** doit être intégrée plus systématiquement dans les programmes de formation des enseignants et les systèmes de développement professionnel. Ceci inclut le potentiel des technologies de l'information et de la communication, les pratiques de collaboration et une vision inclusive du plurilinguisme. La formation, en particulier les programmes de haute qualité en matière de direction d'école qui mettent l'accent sur l'innovation et la gestion du changement, doit être accessible à tous les chefs d'établissement.
- **Les systèmes de suivi et d'évaluation doivent être améliorés** et accompagnés d'un soutien institutionnel pour les enseignants et les chefs d'établissement.
- L'importance accrue accordée à l'efficacité et à la responsabilité des écoles et des enseignants risque de les décourager d'innover. Il est donc essentiel de **mettre en place des systèmes « intelligents » de responsabilisation** qui combinent à la fois la responsabilisation verticale et horizontale.
- **L'autonomie des écoles et des enseignants** est cruciale, en particulier lorsqu'il n'existe pas de stratégie au niveau du système pour la mise en œuvre de pratiques plurilingues. L'absence d'une telle autonomie peut entraver l'innovation dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues.
- Dans l'ensemble, les systèmes éducatifs et les décideurs politiques doivent être prêts à **s'adapter aux tendances pédagogiques, sociétales et technologiques**.

Recommandations à l'intention des communautés scolaires et des professionnels - niveau institutionnel

- Il est nécessaire d'évoluer vers des **perceptions/attitudes plus positives parmi les chefs d'établissement et la communauté scolaire** à l'égard du rôle des langues au sein de l'école, en particulier dans la vision/stratégie de l'école.
- Il est également nécessaire d'encourager une **culture de collaboration à l'école** et la création d'une éthique plurilingue dans l'ensemble de l'école.

- Le processus de changement au niveau de l'école doit inclure un **suivi des progrès** concernant le rôle des langues dans la vision de l'école. En outre, les établissements doivent être prêts à s'adapter sur la base de ce suivi.
- Il faut créer un **environnement d'apprentissage inclusif** pour la mise en œuvre de pédagogies plurilingues tenant compte des spécificités linguistiques, et pour permettre l'innovation pédagogique.
- Les établissements doivent **apporter un soutien** sous diverses formes : en permettant au personnel enseignant d'investir du temps dans le renforcement de ses capacités et le développement professionnel ; en investissant financièrement dans les outils et les équipements nécessaires à des pratiques plurilingues spécifiques ; en offrant aux enseignants une certaine souplesse en matière d'organisation du travail, afin de faciliter l'innovation.
- Il est nécessaire de reconnaître que les **enseignants sont les principaux agents du changement**. Afin de soutenir l'évolution vers des pédagogies innovantes, les écoles doivent **permettre/promouvoir les possibilités d'apprentissage entre pairs pour les enseignants**, et fournir un soutien institutionnel aux enseignants pour qu'ils puissent prendre des initiatives.
- Enfin, **les connexions et la coopération avec des acteurs externes**, tels que les universités, les instituts de recherche ou le secteur privé, peuvent aider les écoles à introduire et à développer des pratiques innovantes d'apprentissage des langues. Ce soutien peut prendre la forme d'un renforcement des capacités, d'une évaluation d'impact ou d'un accès aux outils et équipements nécessaires.

Kurzfassung

Sprachliche Vielfalt ist eine der großen Stärken der Europäischen Union. Um das Potenzial dieser sprachlichen Vielfalt zu nutzen, Mehrsprachigkeit zu fördern und die damit möglicherweise verbundenen Probleme zu bekämpfen, sollten in den Klassenzimmern, Schulen, Regionen und Ländern Europas innovative Leitlinien und Verfahren des Sprachunterrichts umgesetzt werden. Dabei ist wichtig, dass neue pädagogische Ansätze und aktuelle gesellschaftliche Trends, wie Migration und die zunehmende Mobilität der Bürger, berücksichtigt werden.

Für eine zeitgemäße sprachliche Bildung in Europa muss die Sprachkompetenz von Lernenden nicht nur durch die Vermittlung von Fremdsprachen, sondern auch durch die Pflege und Entwicklung ihrer muttersprachlichen Kompetenzen gefördert werden. Außerdem muss die bestehende Hierarchie zwischen den Sprachen dekonstruiert und sowohl in der Bildung als auch in der Gesellschaft eine integrative Perspektive auf alle Sprachen eingeübt werden. Dementsprechend sollten Sprachen im Klassenzimmer als Ressource verstanden und die linguistische Bandbreite der Schülerinnen und Schüler als Bausteine zum Lernen genutzt werden. Dazu müssen Strategien und Praktiken, mit denen die Zielsprache von den anderen Sprachen, die der Lernende spricht, getrennt werden, durch andere ersetzt werden. Innovative Ansätze zielen darauf ab den Übergang von einer Sprache zur anderen zu erleichtern. Dadurch führen Sie zu einem positiven Transfer von Fähigkeiten und Begriffen und stärken die Kenntnisse in beiden Sprachen.

Vor diesem Hintergrund besteht das wichtigste Ziel dieses Berichts darin, neuartige Ansätze und Strategien für einen Sprachunterricht, der die Mehrsprachigkeit der Lernenden unterstützt, aus ganz Europa zu analysieren und damit Lehrkräfte und politische Entscheidungsträger zu Innovationen und zur Umsetzung zukunftsfähiger Leitlinien und Verfahren in der sprachlichen Bildung zu inspirieren.

Dabei möchte der Bericht die folgenden Fragen beantworten:

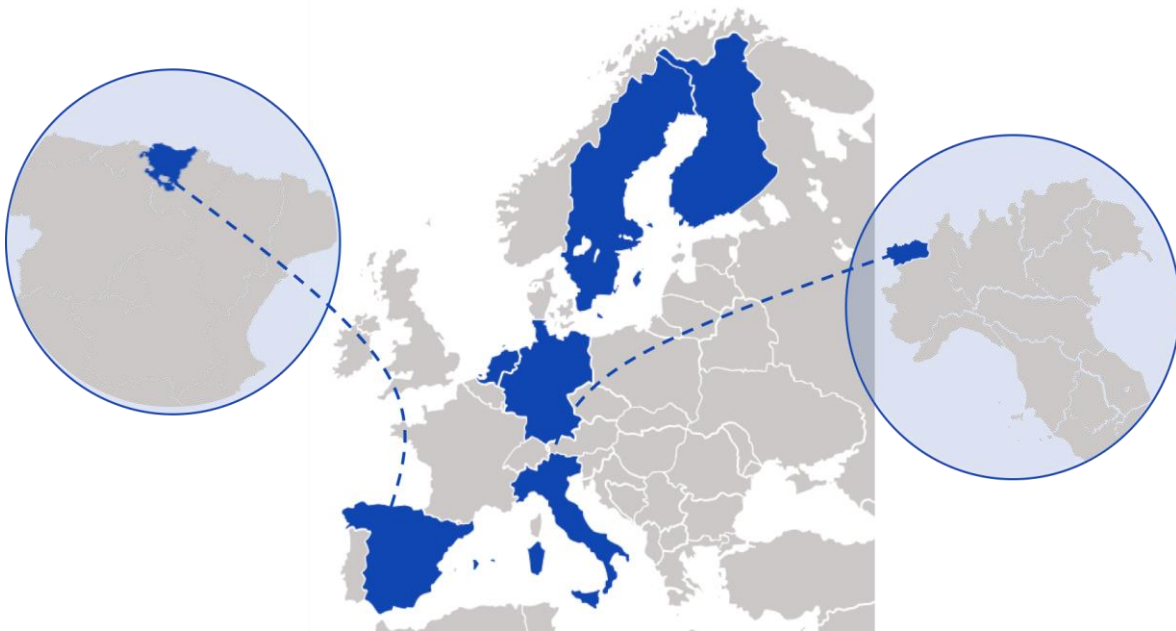
- Welche neuen Entwicklungen beim Unterrichten und Erlernen von Sprachen gibt es in Europa?
- Wie können wir in der Pädagogik die nötigen Räume schaffen, um die Aktivierung der Sprachen zu ermöglichen, die Schülerinnen und Schüler ins Klassenzimmer mitbringen? Und wie fördern diese innovativen Verfahren des Sprachunterrichts die Mehrsprachigkeit?
- Was sind die Vor- und Nachteile der einzelnen pädagogischen Ansätze?
- Wie können die jeweiligen Erfahrungen an die Situation in anderen europäischen Ländern angepasst werden?
- Was sind die wichtigsten Erfolgsfaktoren und Hindernisse bei der Einführung neuer Ansätze für den Sprachunterricht und Spracherwerb in Europa und wie lässt sich diese Transformation erreichen?

Fallstudien: Innovative Leitlinien und Praktiken zum Lehren und Lernen von Sprachen

Dieser Bericht präsentiert eine Auswahl politischer Initiativen und Verfahren für den Sprachunterricht aus ganz Europa und ordnet sie in den größeren Zusammenhang der

aktuellen pädagogischen und politischen Entwicklungen in diesem Bereich ein. Dabei wird insbesondere die Bedeutung des Übergangs zu einem auf Mehrsprachigkeit basierendem Ansatz deutlich. Die sechs Fallstudien zeigen, wie Politik und Bildungswesen auf die neue Komplexität der linguistischen Landschaft reagiert haben - und betonen, wie wichtig im heutigen europäischen Kontext eine effizientere Form der sprachlichen Bildung ist.

Abb. 3 Die Länder, aus denen die in diesem Bericht präsentierten Fallstudien stammen.



Quelle: eigene Grafik der Autoren.

Das mehrsprachige Programm Studi/Binogi

Die digitale Plattform Studi/Binogi aus Schweden enthält Lernmaterialien in Form von animierten Videos für sämtliche Unterrichtsfächer. Diese Videos werden in der Sprache bzw. den Sprachen der Schule und mehreren Minderheitensprachen angeboten. Das digitale Lerntool ermöglicht Lernenden mit Migrationshintergrund nach der Ankunft im neuen Land einen schnellen Zugang zum Unterrichtsstoff und fördert dadurch die Gleichwertigkeit aller Sprachen. Studi/Binogi hilft den Schülerinnen und Schülern dabei, Verknüpfungen zwischen den verschiedenen Sprachen herzustellen, die sie sprechen, und dadurch gleichzeitig die Beherrschung ihrer eigenen Sprache zu verbessern und eine neue Sprache zu lernen. Außerdem bildet Studi/Binogi eine integrative Lernumgebung für alle Schülerinnen und Schüler, d. h. auch für diejenigen mit einem anderen sprachlichen Hintergrund.

AIM im Fremdsprachenunterricht

AIM (kurz für Accelerative Integrated Method) im Fremdsprachenunterricht ist ein Unterrichtsverfahren, das in den Niederlanden eingesetzt wird. Diese Methode vermittelt Fremdsprachen mit Hilfe von spielerischen Praktiken und sprachlichen Gerüsten („Scaffolding“). Dazu gehören Geschichten, Gesten, aktive Kooperation und Wiederholung in der Zielsprache. Bisher wird AIM eingesetzt, um jungen Anfängern zwischen 7 und 15 Jahren Französisch, Englisch, Spanisch und Mandarin beizubringen. Die Fallstudie zeigt beispielhaft eine Praxis des Sprachunterrichts und Spracherwerbs, die allen Lernenden, unabhängig von ihrer Muttersprache, den gleichen hochwertigen Sprachunterricht bietet.

Das zwei- bzw. mehrsprachige Bildungsmodell im Aostatal

Das zwei- bzw. mehrsprachige Bildungsmodell im norditalienischen Aostatal konzentriert sich darauf, bei den Schülerinnen und Schülern in allen Fächern die Mehrsprachigkeit zu fördern. Im Rahmen des Modells wird jeden Tag in einer anderen Sprache unterrichtet. Dadurch können Fähigkeiten und Kompetenzen von einer Sprache auf die andere übertragen werden. Zu den wichtigsten Zielen des Modells gehört der Erhalt der in der Region am weitesten verbreiteten Minderheitensprache, des Französischen.

Das Bildungsmodell des Baskenlands

Das Bildungsmodell im Baskenland (Spanien) verfolgt vor allem das Ziel, die baskische Sprache zu schützen und wiederzubeleben. Das Bildungssystem der Region setzt bei der Wahl der Unterrichtssprache auf ein flexibles, kontextsensitives Modell, wobei inzwischen am häufigsten das Modell gewählt wird, bei dem die Lernenden in der Schule vor allem mit der baskischen Sprache in Kontakt kommen. Obwohl dies ein äußerst erfolgreiches zweisprachiges Bildungsmodell darstellt, ist sich die Region der Hindernisse für echte Mehrsprachigkeit bewusst, die mit der sich verändernden linguistischen Landschaft des Baskenlandes verbunden sind. Daher erwägt die Region die Einführung eines stärker auf Inklusion ausgerichteten Systems der sprachlichen Bildung, das die Entwicklung aller Sprachen ermöglicht und fördert.

Sprachsensibler Lehrplan in Finnland

Der sprachensible Lehrplan, der in Finnland vor Kurzem eingeführt wurde, strebt die Anerkennung aller Sprachen an und soll ein Bewusstsein für die Bedeutung von Sprache im gesamten Unterrichts- und Lernprozess fördern. Mit diesem Ansatz soll jedem Lernenden der Zugang zu einer hochwertigen Bildung ermöglicht werden, die seine linguistischen Voraussetzungen berücksichtigt und die von den Schülerinnen und Schülern gesprochenen Sprachen in die Unterrichtspraxis integriert. Der Lehrplan erkennt den Wert aller Sprachen und deren Bedeutung für den weiteren Lernerfolg an.

Das Schulnetzwerk CertiLingua

CertiLingua ist ein Netzwerk von Schulen, die sich dazu verpflichtet haben, ihren Schülerinnen und Schülern eine hochwertige sprachliche Bildung zu vermitteln. Das Netzwerk stellt Schulen, in denen die sprachliche Bildung im Vordergrund steht und die mit Hilfe der CLIL-Methode (Content Language Integrated Learning) mindestens zwei zusätzliche Sprachen unterrichten sowie interkulturelle Kompetenzen fördern, ein Gütesiegel aus. Dieses „Label of Excellence“ des Netzwerks wird an Lernende und Schulen vergeben, die die Kriterien des Programms erfüllen. CertiLingua fördert die Entwicklung der Fähigkeiten, die Lernende für die soziale und berufliche Interaktion in einem internationalen Kontext brauchen.

Wichtige Ergebnisse

Die sechs in dem Bericht vorgestellten Fallstudien zeigen, dass sich die Strategien in der sprachlichen Bildung - wenn auch langsam - an den allgemeinen Bildungstrend der Digitalisierung und Personalisierung von Unterricht und Lernprozessen in Europa anpassen und dabei versuchen, die Qualität der sprachlichen Bildung insgesamt zu erhöhen und eine Kultur der Mehrsprachigkeit zu fördern. Die wichtigste Innovation, die hinter diesen Entwicklungen steckt, ist der Versuch, in Bezug auf Sprachen und ihre Rolle im Lernprozess **eine neue Wahrnehmung** einzuführen. Dazu gehören die folgenden Aspekte:

- Die Muttersprache der Lernenden gilt nicht mehr als Problem oder Defizit, sondern als Aktivposten im Lernprozess und Bereicherung für das sprachliche Repertoire der Lernenden.
- Sprachliche Aspekte und Spracherwerb sind in allen Fächern und für alle Fächer relevant.
- Alle Sprachen haben den gleichen Wert.
- Vorhandene Fähigkeiten und Talente erleichtern den Erwerb von Kompetenzen in anderen Sprachen.
- Das Sprachenrepertoire des Lernenden kann aus vielen Sprachen bestehen, die dieser in unterschiedlichem Maße beherrscht. Die Kompetenzen in diesen Sprachen sind miteinander verknüpft und wichtig für die Entwicklung sprachübergreifender Kompetenzen.

Wie die für diesen Bericht analysierten Fallstudien ebenfalls zeigen, setzt diese neue mehrsprachige Perspektive voraus, dass die folgenden Elemente in die sprachliche Bildung eingeführt werden:

- Starke Betonung und Berücksichtigung der Sprache in den Unterrichts- und Lernprozessen der Schule.
- Aktive Integration der Sprachen der Schülerinnen und Schüler in die Unterrichtspraxis.
- Gleicher Zugang zu hochwertiger sprachlicher Bildung, unabhängig von der Muttersprache des Lernenden.
- Abwechselnde Nutzung unterschiedlicher Sprachen, um den Lernenden die Fähigkeit zu vermitteln, in einer einsprachigen Umgebung mehrere Sprachen zu nutzen, beide (bzw. alle) Sprachen zu aktivieren und in einem mehrsprachigen Kontext zwischen den Sprachen zu wechseln.

Die in diesem Bericht untersuchten mehrsprachigen Praktiken verfügen über **großes Potenzial zur Anpassung** an andere Länder oder Situationen. Diese seit langem bewährten oder innovativen Strategien und Verfahren des Sprachunterrichts lassen sich übertragen, weil sie bei der Anwendung eine hohe *Flexibilität* aufweisen und es bereits viele *gebrauchsfertige Instrumente* gibt. Zwar wurden die beschriebenen politischen Initiativen und Verfahren für einen konkreten Kontext und spezielle Bedürfnisse entwickelt, jedoch lassen sie sich übertragen, wenn man dabei den jeweiligen Kontext berücksichtigt, in dem sie genutzt werden sollen.

Wichtige politische Folgerungen und Empfehlungen

Die zunehmende Wertschätzung von Mehrsprachigkeit stellt herkömmliche Ideen und Verfahren zum Lehren und Lernen von Sprache in Frage. Dieser Prozess bietet einerseits die Chance, die sprachliche Bildung in Europa zu revolutionieren und sie integrativer und ganzheitlicher zu machen. Andererseits liegen noch kaum Daten über den Nutzen dieser neu eingeführten oder geplanten Strategien und Verfahren vor, was ihrer effizienten und erfolgreichen Umsetzung in ganz Europa im Wege steht. Daher betont dieser Bericht vor allem, was dieser Wechsel hin zur Mehrsprachigkeit bedeutet, und stellt Empfehlungen

bereit, die die Umsetzung innovativer Strategien und Praktiken für Sprachunterricht und -erwerb erleichtern.

Empfehlungen für politische Entscheidungsträger - Systemebene

- **Politiker und Entscheidungsträger müssen ihre Einstellung überdenken** und den Wert einer auf Chancengleichheit ausgerichteten Bildung und der Mehrsprachigkeit anerkennen. Dies ist das notwendige Fundament für integrative Prozesse in der Schule und im Klassenzimmer. Eine Voraussetzung für diesen Wandel sind politische Prioritäten, Wille und Visionen sowie eine langfristige Strategie und ein besonderes Engagement für Inklusion und Chancengleichheit.
- Die Politik muss **Diskrepanzen** zwischen den Zielen der Strategien und Verfahren zur Förderung von Mehrsprachigkeit und deren praktischen Umsetzung **beseitigen**.
- Mehrsprachige Initiativen und Praktiken können nur erfolgreich sein, wenn ausreichend **finanzielle und personelle Mittel** zur Verfügung gestellt werden. Dazu gehört auch, dass die Lehrkräfte Arbeitsbedingungen vorfinden, die es ihnen erlauben, ihre bisherigen Methoden zu überdenken und zu modernisieren.
- **Neue pädagogische Ansätze für den Sprachunterricht** sollten in der Lehrerbildung und auch bei der beruflichen Weiterbildung von Lehrern systematischer berücksichtigt werden. Dazu gehören das Potenzial der Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie, kooperative Methoden und eine integrative Sicht auf Mehrsprachigkeit. Allen Schulleitern sollten hochwertige Programme zur Weiterbildung offenstehen, die sich auf Innovation und Veränderungsmanagement konzentrieren.
- **Die Systeme zur Kontrolle und Bewertung von Schulen sollten verbessert** und durch eine institutionelle Unterstützung von Lehrkräften und Schulleitern ergänzt werden.
- Wenn Schulen und Lehrer vermehrt nach Effizienz bewertet und einer Rechenschaftspflicht unterworfen werden, kann sie dies von der Erprobung innovativer Verfahren abschrecken. Daher müssen unbedingt **„intelligente“ Systeme der Rechenschaftspflicht entwickelt werden**, die eine vertikale und eine horizontale Rechenschaftspflicht kombinieren.
- Die **Autonomie von Schulen und Lehrkräften** ist entscheidend, besonders in Fällen, in denen eine systemweite Strategie für die Umsetzung mehrsprachiger Methoden fehlt. Ohne diese Autonomie sind Innovationen im Sprachunterricht und im Sprachlernprozess nur schwer umzusetzen.
- Grundsätzlich sollten Bildungssysteme und Politik bereit sein, auf neue **pädagogische, gesellschaftliche und technologische Entwicklungen zu reagieren**.

Empfehlungen für Schulen und Fachkräfte im Bildungsbereich - Schulebene

- **Schulleiter und die gesamte Schulgemeinschaft müssen eine positivere Einstellung** zur Rolle von Sprachen innerhalb der Schule entwickeln, insbesondere in ihrer Vision bzw. Strategie für die Schule.

- Außerdem ist es notwendig, eine **kooperative Schulkultur** zu fördern und in der gesamten Schule eine Ethik der Mehrsprachigkeit zu schaffen.
- Dieser Veränderungsprozess auf Schulebene muss auch ein Element der **Erfolgskontrolle** enthalten, das sich auf die Rolle von Sprache in der Vision der Schule bezieht. Außerdem müssen die Schulen bereit sein, ihre Verfahren auf der Basis der Kontrollergebnisse neu auszurichten.
- Die Umsetzung von mehrsprachigen pädagogischen Ansätzen, wie sprachsensibler Sprachunterricht, und jede Innovation im Bildungsbereich erfordert eine **integrative Lernumgebung**.
- Schulen sollten ihre Lehrkräfte in unterschiedlicher Form **unterstützen**, zum Beispiel indem sie ihnen Zeit für den Erwerb neuer Kompetenzen und die berufliche Weiterbildung zur Verfügung stellen, in die für mehrsprachige Verfahren notwendigen Werkzeuge und Geräte investieren oder den Lehrkräften den organisatorischen Freiraum bieten, den diese zur Erprobung innovativer Ideen brauchen.
- Es ist wichtig zu verstehen, dass die **Lehrerinnen und Lehrer die wichtigsten Faktoren für Veränderungen** darstellen. Um den Übergang zu innovativen pädagogischen Methoden zu unterstützen, sollten Schulen **ihren Lehrkräften Gelegenheit zum Peer-Learning bieten** und sie bei ihren Initiativen unterstützen.
- Schließlich kann die Vernetzung und Kooperation mit externen Akteuren, wie Universitäten, Forschungsinstituten oder Unternehmen Schulen dabei helfen, innovative Verfahren im Sprachunterricht einzuführen und zu verbessern. Diese Akteure können die Schule beispielsweise bei Kapazitätsaufbau oder Folgenabschätzung unterstützen oder die nötigen Werkzeuge und Geräte zur Verfügung stellen.

Foreword: an example of innovative instructional approaches to language-sensitive teaching

Nowadays, students in compulsory education (K-12) across Europe have competences in a wide range of languages due to the growing diversity of school populations, increased mobility both within and outside the European Union, and the exposure of children and youth to multiple languages beyond the school walls. In this context, education systems need to consider the challenges and opportunities presented by plurilingualism in order to create a system that maintains and develops all students' language skills. This transformation requires a new mindset and a new understanding of the complexity of language landscape across Europe, and calls for the implementation of innovative practices at classroom and school, as well as regional or national, levels.

Scoil Bhríde Cailíní in Ireland is an example of a school where a positive long-term vision on languages and diversity has profoundly impacted the plurilingualism of its students, their school achievements and the social cohesion of the school community.

"In a school such as mine, where almost 80 per cent of the pupils are non-native speakers of English, we cannot formally teach all their home languages, of which there are more than 40. What we can do is encourage their parents to maintain and develop their home language while we incorporate it in our approach to teaching and learning in school."

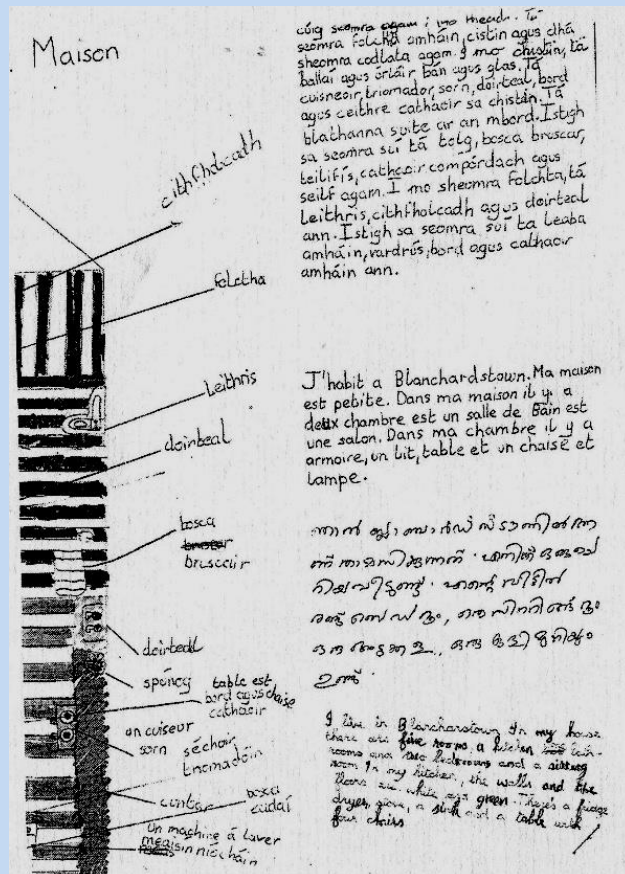
Dr Déirdre Kirwan, the former principal of Scoil Bhríde Cailíní, letter printed in 'The Irish Times' in 2015.

The challenges and opportunities presented by plurilingualism, summarised by the principal of Scoil Bhríde Cailíní, are discussed below.

Principle 1: Acknowledging the richness of students' linguistic repertoires

The first essential ingredient proposed by the school is to begin by acknowledging the richness of the linguistic repertoires that students bring with them when they arrive at the school. At a policy level, this acknowledgement translates into officially welcoming all languages, and confirming the role and responsibility of parents and families regarding the maintenance and development of their home languages. This encouragement to parents goes hand in hand with the development of a plurilingual pedagogy, reflected in all activities of the school. These activities provide students with opportunities to interact with each other in meaningful ways, in positively responsive contexts, while explicit attention is given to the different languages used (see **FIGURE 4** as an example). This practice allows students to share their knowledge, questions, norms, habits and representations while facilitating their access to content knowledge. The essence of this school policy is that languages are not primarily conceptualised as subjects to be learned, but as

FIGURE 4 Welcoming languages in Scoil Bhríde



Source: Little and Kirwan, 2019a

Note: At Scoil Bhríde Cailíní, English and Irish are taught in parallel. French is introduced to everyone in the 5th grade as a "foreign language". The picture shows a simple multilingual activity in which a 5th-grade pupil presents their environment in four languages of their repertoire, including Irish, English, French and their mother tongue, in this case, Malayalam.

instruments towards an increased access to learning, to a sense of belonging and ultimately, as tools to live within the society in question.

Principle 2: Language as a resource

The second essential ingredient proposed by the school is the development of a “plurilingual milieu”.

“By valuing every language in the classroom, we cultivate a plurilingual milieu where children are encouraged to use all the languages within their repertoire. The cognitive benefits of such an approach are well documented. The skills learned are transferable and so inform all areas of learning. Appreciating that their knowledge is valued allows children to take pride in their ability, making them confident and motivated to learn more.” (Kirwan, 2015)

In this context, the school principal talks about *pride* and *value* allowing cognitive benefits to occur. By feeling accepted as they are, complete with their language and cultural background, students develop a sense of belonging and feel included. She notes an increase in metalinguistic awareness as well as intercultural awareness in all children, both plurilingual and monolingual. This translates into curiosity, a broadening of their perspectives and critical thinking. The principal adds:

“There are huge benefits for monolingual children in such a learning environment, too. From a very early age, they begin to realise that there are different ways to say the same thing, other ways to view the world.” (Kirwan, 2015)

One of the important outcomes of the school’s language policy for plurilingualism is the eventual de-hierarchisation of languages. It has been always accepted that in education, some languages have to be learned by all students collectively first, and then students may choose to learn one or two extra languages from a list of languages offered by their school. This system implies an implicit hierarchy within languages, with some considered more important than others. From this perspective, language hierarchy is an unavoidable consequence, inherent to our educational systems and societies. However, sometimes, and in contradiction with the curriculum, learners develop their own hierarchy of languages, triggered by their own social realities. For instance, many minority languages may nowadays fall into relative unpopularity among youth, which results in a decrease of interest in these languages. By including students’ own languages within school, the principal of Scoil Bhríde Cailíní notes that it avoids the insinuation of this hierarchy. She found that this new policy supported the renewed popularity of minority languages among students. In her school, for example, this approach fostered an increased willingness to use the Irish language:

“There are many obvious educational benefits, one of which is an increase in status for the Irish language. Children see Irish as a means of communication, just like any other language, so it is learned and used with enthusiasm. This leads to an exploration of additional languages to which they are attracted. In a large intercultural milieu, where all languages are valued, they have a wide variety of languages to choose from and friends to help them learn, thus contributing to social cohesion.” (Kirwan, 2015)

Multiple examples in Europe nowadays may reflect a pedagogy that can mobilise the richness of the linguistic repertoires students bring to school (e.g. Van Avermaet et al, 2018; Carbonara and Scibette, 2020; or DeFazio, 1997; see Cummins, 2017 and 2019 for North American examples). In sum, as a follow up to other initiatives since the 1980s, the principal of Scoil Bhríde Cailíní demonstrated the necessity to bridge school experiences and the curriculum, capitalising on each student’s skills and thereby supporting, maintaining and developing the language repertoire of its student population.

“With the introduction of a modern language in fifth and sixth classes, children begin to develop the ability to express themselves in three, four and more languages. Far from this being a deficit model of education, every child in this country should have the benefits and enrichment of growing and learning in such a socially cohesive, diverse, plurilingual milieu.” (Kirwan, 2015)

Since the implementation of this pedagogy, the overall academic results of Scoil Bhríde Cailíní have aligned with or even surpassed the average results for the country (Little and Kirwan, 2019b)¹.

¹ Please find more information about the stages of implementation and the tangible results of this pedagogy in Little and Kirwan (2019b).

Chapter 1: The changing linguistic landscape in Europe

Historically, the objectives of schools across the world have been to form homogeneous groups of people, bringing them closer to a national language standard. One of the consequences of such objectives is that minority-language students have been discouraged from using their mother tongue, or even from learning new languages. At the same time, the limited selection of foreign languages offered by schools, taught in isolation from other disciplines, has prevented most students from developing effective plurilingualism. Today, it is no longer possible to justify such an approach.

Movements of populations across the world place specific demands on schools and teachers. In the light of these ongoing changes, new language teaching and learning pedagogies have been and are still being developed, to better serve the academic needs of an increasingly heterogeneous and multilingual population of students and increase value for society. The goals of such pedagogies are to maintain, support, develop and enrich the plurilingualism of all students, while avoiding boredom, frustration or demotivation, which can occur when pupils have to learn, as a foreign language, a language that they already know, or are taught in a language that they do not understand. Furthermore, when students enter the classroom with a high degree of fluency in these languages (or conversely, no knowledge at all of the language in which they are taught), this situation can represent a challenge for teachers, who must address the needs of these students, without having full command of the languages of the learners themselves (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017).

A high degree of linguistic and cultural diversity is one of the strengths of the European Union. To foster its potential, individuals within the European Union need to interact effectively in social, learning and professional situations. Europe has a long tradition of learning so-called “foreign” languages at school. However, learning a language does not necessarily imply mastery of that language (Herreras, 2001). To be able to communicate effectively in these languages, individuals need to develop a plurilingual competence, defined as the “ability to call flexibly upon an inter-related, uneven, plurilinguistic repertoire” (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 28). Among other things, this mediates between individuals with no common language, as well as bringing the whole of an individual’s linguistic equipment into play. The fundamental point is that plurilingual individuals have a *single*, inter-related, repertoire that they combine with their general competences and various strategies in order to accomplish tasks (Gumperz, 1977).

Even though the concept of plurilingualism was introduced in the 1990s, developed “as a form of dynamic, creative process of ‘linguaging’ across the boundaries of language varieties” (Piccardo, 2019, p. 185), it is only recently that school stakeholders have begun to understand the importance of languages and their intertwined nature.

Whichever languages are concerned, the parallel development of languages, including a mother tongue, plays an essential role in the acquisition and rate of development of a second language. For instance, research in Canada shows that when pupils from minority groups were enrolled in immersion programmes, their results were on average higher than those of their peers, especially when they had a solid foundation in their mother tongue (Lazaruk, 2007). In fact, a host of studies indicate that the dated approach under which students must first master the language and environment of the school before they can engage in plurilingual education, is not supported by scientific evidence. According to the theory of developmental interdependence (Cummins 1991, 2000), the development of pupils’ additional language skills depends in part on the level of proficiency achieved in the languages they already know: transition from one language to another allows the positive transfer of skills and concepts, and the strengthening of each of the languages. To explain the development of languages among so-called “bilingual” individuals, Grosjean used the metaphor of hurdle jumpers:

“A high hurdler is an integrated whole, a unique and specific athlete, who can attain the highest levels of world competition in the same way that the sprinter and the high jumper can. In many ways, the bilingual is like the high hurdler: an integrated whole, a unique and specific speaker-hearer, and not the sum of two complete or incomplete monolinguals.”
Grosjean, p. 24²

In other words, the author argues, it is time to abandon the idea of learning objectives that are governed by monolingual norms. It is necessary to make maximal use of all the languages present in the classroom to facilitate the maintenance of knowledge, while stimulating the cognitive development of all students (see also Cummins, 2014).

Improving the plurilingual competences of young people across the EU requires some reflection on the ways in which language teaching and learning can be reconsidered within all areas of compulsory education. When moving to a new school (language) environment, plurilingual learners require support to maintain and develop their own repertoire of languages, but also to successfully transfer their existing knowledge from one language to another. They also require support in learning how to communicate – both actively and passively – and in developing their cognitive competences in different subjects through new languages. This requires articulated language teaching and learning approaches that are adapted to each individual’s level in the target language.

The EU Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages³ (adopted in May 2019) encourages education stakeholders to support students in acquiring two languages in addition to the language of school instruction, by the end of upper-secondary education – a high proficiency in social, learning and professional contexts of at least one of the official 24 European languages , and another language to at least a level of fluency in social interactions. Building on decades of research, the above Council Recommendation concluded that the challenge for language learning in Europe is the implementation of the principles stated in the Recommendation.

A reconsideration language teaching approaches to support plurilingualism is underpinned by the following needs:

- To promote language awareness in all schools.
- To adjust language teaching to the needs of each individual learner.
- To ensure linguistically sensitive teaching and to integrate the diverse linguistic repertoires of individual learners within the classroom.
- To stimulate the learner’s own agency in learning, in order to help students become agents of their own learning.
- To cater for linguistic and cultural diversity in schools.

This report aims to zoom in on existing approaches, innovative strategies and practices that promote plurilingualism and contribute to the implementation of the Council Recommendation mentioned above.

The study begins with a brief recap on the evolution of language teaching approaches and the necessary shift towards a more plurilingual approach (Chapter 2). This also provides the context for the analysis of the case studies that follows. This report focuses on case studies from Sweden, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Finland and Germany, illustrating how policy makers and educators have responded to the challenges of linguistic diversity and language education in specific European contexts (Chapter 3). These case studies provide examples of innovative policy developments or innovative language teaching and learning

² Grosjean, F. (1985), Multilingualism and Language Norming, See:
https://www.francoisgrosjean.ch/bilin_bicult/1%20Grosjean.pdf

³https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/council-recommendation-improving-teaching-and-learning-languages_en

approaches in Europe, within the broad area of language education. The report concludes with an analysis of the key success factors and lessons learnt from the case studies (Chapter 4), along with specific recommendations for policy makers on ways in which language teaching and learning across Europe can be improved (Chapter 5).

1.1. Aims of the report and research questions

The main purpose of this study is to explore innovative practices and strategies for language teaching in Europe that support learners' plurilingualism. By highlighting the innovative nature of these strategies and practices, this study aims to inspire educators and policy-makers to innovate and implement forward-looking policies and practices in language education. The report aims to answer the following main questions:

- What are the new developments in teaching and learning languages in Europe?
- How can we open spaces in pedagogy that support the activation of the languages that students bring with them into the classroom? How do these innovative language teaching practices promote plurilingualism?
- What are the pros and cons of each of these pedagogies?
- How could these experiences be adapted to other European contexts?
- What are the key drivers, barriers and possible ways forward towards transforming language teaching and learning approaches across Europe?

1.2. Key concepts

This section discusses some of the essential (and sometimes controversial) terms used throughout the report, in order to delineate our understanding of these terms for the purposes of this study.

Dominant/non-dominant languages: In accordance with the NESET report on multilingual education (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017), in this report we use the dichotomy of dominant versus non-dominant languages to underscore the differential power relations between languages present in different contexts. Dominant languages generally refer to those languages with higher prestige, wider use within education systems and a higher number of speakers compared with non-dominant languages. In contrast, non-dominant languages are considered less prestigious and are less frequently used (if at all) in official situations.

Linguistic minority/minority language: The term "minority" and its derivatives can refer to: (1) historical or traditional minorities such as populations living in the Basque country (Case Study 4) or in the Aosta Valley (Case Study 3); or (2) new language minorities such as in the Studi/Binogi case study (Case Study 1)⁴. In the first case, different multilingual models have often been implemented in order to increase recognition of the population's languages and cultures, and to create more opportunities for learners to reach higher levels of academic achievement. These models have been highly successful in revitalising the languages in question, empowering their communities and raising the level of academic achievement among their learners. However, these same models may now be challenged by the arrival of new minorities. In the case of new or non-officially recognised minorities, the promotion and support of their own plurilingual development in education faces many challenges. Many of these are linked to power relationships between dominant and non-dominant communities, but also to the institutional changes they require in order

⁴ This is in line with the Council of Europe's definition (1992, p. 1-2) – although in contrast to this definition, which excludes the languages of immigrant communities, we include immigrant languages in our understanding of linguistic minorities/minority languages.

to take effect. Examples of the latter include the adaptation of the curriculum, as well as adjustments to pedagogical strategies involving language input, output and support.

Plurilingual teaching and learning approaches: The authors of this report choose to employ the concept of 'plurilingual approaches' over that of 'bilingual education'. This choice is based on a pedagogical shift that has taken place over the last 20 years, which has included various plurilingual approaches gaining prominence and prestige among both policy makers and practitioners. Such approaches include both long-standing and recently introduced policies and practices such as language awareness or language-sensitive pedagogies, language comparisons, receptive multilingualism, Content Language and Integrated Learning (CLIL), immersion, translanguaging practices or multilingual co-teaching strategies⁵ (see Auger, 2014; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017; Duarte, 2018). If 'bilingual education' simply refers to education through two (or more) languages – it doesn't intrinsically imply a 'two solitudes' approach⁶. However, in contrast to the way bilingual education is currently implemented in many contexts, most plurilingual approaches encompass the inclusion of a flexible use of languages in education, and target the development of the individual's own language needs (Cummins, 2017).

Plurilingual or multilingual? Some of the academic literature distinguishes between these terms first and foremost on the basis of agency. 'Multilingual' refers to societal situations (e.g. to describe the linguistic characteristic of a certain situation, space or environment), while 'plurilingual' is used with regard to individuals' language competences (Marshall and Moore, 2016), as well as the interconnectedness of languages within individuals' repertoires (Council of Europe, 2018). The binary of social and individual is not static, as an individual's language repertoires and plurilingual competences are activated through societal interactions; however, focusing on the individual, and on their competences in a social setting, provides a forward-looking perspective from which to approach language teaching policies and practices.

Despite this distinction, the European Commission uses 'multilingual' as an umbrella term to refer both to an individual's language competences and to societal situations. This decision is partly due to translation difficulties in languages other than English and French. The Commission considers multilingual competence to be one of the eight key competences, defining it as follows:

"the ability to use different languages appropriately and effectively for communication. [...] Language competences integrate a historical dimension and intercultural competences. It relies on the ability to mediate between different languages and media, as outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference. As appropriate, it can include maintaining and further developing mother tongue competences, as well as the acquisition of a country's official language(s)." (Council of the European Union, 2018).

Traditional bilingual models of education are nowadays increasingly challenged by the diversity of learners' repertoires, which require that pedagogies are adapted to students' language needs. The increasing prominence of the term 'plurilingual' in the field of education, as well as the emphasis on learner-centred teaching and learning, underline this ongoing pedagogical shift and draw attention to its implications for both policy and practice. Thus, for the purposes of this report, 'plurilingualism' is preferred where the communicative goal is to emphasise specifically the dynamic and integrated relationships among languages within the individual. However, in line with Cummins (2017), rather than trying to impose a conception and definition of bi-, multi- and plurilingualism that does not reflect the way applied linguists (and policy makers) currently use these terms, we choose to incorporate the plurality of terms used in the case studies, which capture various nuances of the same reality in a fluid and dynamic way.

⁵ See Case Study 1, Studi/Binogi, in which lessons of the curriculum are offered in different languages.

⁶ The term "parallel monolingualism" was first coined by Heller (1999). Cummins (2005) adopted this approach by referring to the "two solitudes" as monolingual pedagogical approaches.

1.3. Methods and scope

This report examines pedagogies and practices involved in language teaching within compulsory education in Europe. The practices and examples presented offer a glimpse of various approaches and initiatives that support plurilingualism at different levels – in the classroom, within a single country (at regional or national level), as well as across borders (e.g. via networks of schools).

The main sources of information for this report are both primary and secondary data. The language teaching pedagogies and practices selected are embedded within the general context of the evolution of language teaching and learning in Europe explored through the literature review. This report builds on the NESET analytical report on Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learnt (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017), and zooms in on specific examples of language teaching practices that aim or have the potential to foster plurilingual competences in Europe. The case studies are based on both primary and secondary data – exploring through interviews, literature review and documentary analysis a number of experiences from different countries of language teaching that supports plurilingualism.

Chapter 2: Language education in Europe: looking back and looking forward

2.1. Inclusive multilingual ethos: a vision for the future

All language teachers have the same goals: they want learners to achieve spontaneous communication, fluency and, ideally, to become readers and writers in the target language. However, a high level of heterogeneity in the language repertoires of the learners means that some students will learn more easily than others, depending on their previous experience with languages. Consequently, one of the pedagogical implications of the diversification of students' language profiles is that learning goals will not necessarily be the same for all students in the same classroom. Goals, plans, monitoring and the evaluation of learning gains must be differentiated at the individual student level in order to ensure optimal learning. In itself, this is not a novel circumstance in education; however, its extent is unprecedented. At present, linguistic diversity within classrooms is at a much higher level than in previous times, due to increased migration and mobility among individuals. The resulting changes in the student population have led progressively to a shift in emphasis in language learning (within the context of the classroom) from the class as a whole, to the individual learner's autonomy.

This shift is accompanied by the large discrepancy between learners in terms of literacy in the school language. The 2018 PISA results (OECD, 2019a) show that the difference in reading competences between high achievers (the top 5% of students) and low achievers (the bottom 5% of students) is 327 points on average across OECD countries. Moreover, students with immigrant backgrounds scored an average of 42 points lower than non-immigrant students (OECD, 2019b). The results also reveal that first-generation immigrants scored 25 points lower on average than second-generation immigrant students.⁷ In terms of gender, girls continue to perform better than boys – by nearly 30 points in 2018 (OECD, 2019b). These results indicate that students' competences in reading in the language of school instruction vary significantly. Therefore, difficulties in the language of school instruction for all students – including those students whose first language⁸ is the language of instruction – create variation in starting points, and increase the need for flexible and diversified language teaching approaches (including the use of other languages). Furthermore, research continues to show that a combination of the minority language and the dominant language is an asset for education, compared with the exclusion of one or other of them in education (see, for instance, Collier and Thomas, 2017; Agirdag and Vanlaar, 2016; Dijkstra et al., 2016). Not long ago, people thought the best way to learn a language was to be exclusively exposed to the target language, while ensuring a strict separation between the target language and other languages already spoken (see, among others, Pulinx, Van Avermaet and Agirdag, 2017; Vetter, 2013; Cummins, 2007; Heller, 1999). Language teaching focused almost exclusively on the linguistic system of the language to be learned, thereby mostly ignoring potential connections between the student's existing language(s) and the target language. However, more recent research has shown that the borders between languages are "crossable and permeable" (Singleton, 2016, p. 503), and languages can be taught in relation to one another (Palmer et al., 2014). Moreover, the development of additional language skills by the pupils depends in part on the level of proficiency they have achieved in the languages they already know: transition from one language to another allows a positive transfer of skills and concepts and the strengthening of each of the languages (Cummins 1991, 2000).

⁷ The PISA 2018 results also show that on average across OECD countries, nearly two-thirds of first-generation, and more than 40% of second generation immigrant students do not speak the language of instruction at home (OECD, 2019b, p.184).

⁸ The term 'first language' refers to a person's native language or mother tongue.

With this approach, benefits appear to be more visible: students understand better, learn better, are more invested in learning, and feel more included in the classroom.

According to the Council of Europe (2001, p. 134), a number of reasons were given for promoting the experience of plurilingualism:

- The experience “exploits pre-existing sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences which in turn develops [it] further”.
- It “leads to a better perception of what is general and what is specific concerning the linguistic organisation of different languages (form of metalinguistic, interlinguistic or so to speak ‘hyperlinguistic’ awareness)”.
- Experience of plurilingualism “by its nature refines [a student’s] knowledge of how to learn and the capacity to enter into relations with others and new situations. It may, therefore, to some degree accelerate subsequent learning in the linguistic and cultural areas”.

What are the implications of these developments in terms of pedagogy? Plurilingual pedagogies involve a flexible use of language teaching practices, ranging from more traditional linguistic approaches such as comparisons between typologically similar languages that share grammars, through receptive multilingualism, to the co-construction of content, as well as content and language-integrated learning methods. Language comparisons occur spontaneously as well as bring planned, building on the students’ existing knowledge of languages. As languages and knowledge become intertwined, students become more responsive to these new plurilingual practices. The languages they learn and speak are also the main tools for transmitting knowledge, cultural habits and historical facts, as well as exchanging different views about the world depending on their individual origins. As the principal of Silver Creek school in Canada, one of the [Language Friendly Schools](#)⁹, points out: the integration of students’ languages into teaching and learning not only enriches programmes, facilitates access to understanding, and gives students the opportunity to invest in learning, but also creates greater cohesion by including the students’ linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

2.2. Reconsidering language teaching approaches to support plurilingualism

A number of the EC documents call for the reconsideration of language education in Europe, in order to foster language and plurilingual competences among its population¹⁰. These documents promote and support three main directions for language teaching and learning:

- 1) The improvement of the quality and effectiveness of foreign language teaching across Europe (see European Commission, 2016).
- 2) The development of linguistic awareness and of plurilingual and intercultural competences.
- 3) Capitalising on the diversity of languages present in the classroom (Meierkord and Day, 2017; European Commission, 2015).

Nevertheless, Member States are currently making insufficient progress in promoting language acquisition, and the goal agreed at the Barcelona European Council in 2002, which called for further action “to improve mastering of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age” (European Council, 2002), has not been achieved. While most pupils in the EU are starting to learn a first foreign language earlier than in previous decades, the level of ambition with regard to a second

⁹ See <https://languagefriendlyschool.org> (Accessed: 13.02.2020)

¹⁰ See, for example, the EC’s New Skills Agenda (European Commission, 2016) or the Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages (Council of the European Union, 2019)

foreign language remains low (in 11 countries a second foreign language is not compulsory in general secondary education). When looking at the actual acquisition of competences, studies have generally found a low level of proficiency among students at the end of compulsory education, with very large differences apparent between Member States (see, for example, European Commission, 2012a; 2012b). The results of the first European Survey on Language Competences¹¹, show that, despite investment in language learning and teaching, education systems still struggle to improve language competences and embrace the multilingualism of modern classrooms.

Despite wide recognition of the benefits of plurilingualism in individual, societal and economic terms, and the commitment of EU Member States to improve the efficiency of language teaching in schools, responses have been insufficient to address these needs, or to use opportunities to cultivate plurilingual students. The linearity of school curricula and the narrowness of their programmes do not facilitate the adaptation of academic content to the proficiency level of the students upon entering school. These school programmes presuppose a homogeneous level of language proficiency among students, which is no longer the reality in many European classrooms. Moreover, all too often, teachers do not have the capacity or resources to address these new needs (OECD, 2014). In many cases, teachers are insufficiently prepared for teaching linguistically diverse classrooms. Meanwhile, given the increasingly permanent multilingualism within schools, with language becoming an essential component of every school subject, now every teacher has to become a language teacher (Le Pichon et al., in press).

The majority of pedagogies and practices across Europe do not perceive or use languages as resources in the classroom in order to build on the different proficiencies and competences of students in different languages within the teaching and learning process. Language education in many contexts remains exclusive, as not all languages present in the classroom are valued and included in the teaching and learning process – even in many bi- or multilingual programmes (Anderson et al., 2008; Escobar, Urmeneta and Unamun, 2008; O’Laoire, 2008). This exclusion is reinforced by a strong inherent hierarchy of languages present in schools, attributing greater value to some languages compared to others (typically, majority or dominant languages are placed higher in this hierarchy than minority or non-dominant languages) (Vetter, 2013). Recent developments in plurilingual approaches to language education are bringing about a shift from a hierarchical towards an inclusive perception of languages, and a variety of pedagogical approaches are being adopted that promote and support the development of plurilingual repertoires among students.

2.3. Plurilingual approaches and practices: Moving away from the hierarchisation of languages

Against the backdrop of language hierarchies, this section briefly discusses a variety of approaches and strategies currently being practiced and further developed in Europe that aim to developing the plurilingual repertoires of learners. This section provides a comprehensive (though not exhaustive) overview of language learning practices in Europe.

2.3.1. Bi/multilingual educational models

Bi- or trilingual education models have been integrated in many countries for several decades due to large-scale immigration, or in contexts in which non-dominant groups have historically been concentrated geographically (for instance, in Luxembourg, the Basque country and in Northern Italy). As a consequence, these education systems have had a chance to experiment with different strategies and select those that were most effective

¹¹ The European Survey on Language Competences was conducted in 2011 (see its findings in European Commission, 2012b). To date, this is the only European-level survey conducted on language proficiency that allows comparison across Member States (European Commission, 2019).

when it comes to adapting to multilingual classrooms. In such places, reforms of curricula have been carried out since the 1980s, implementing bi- or multilingual education to include the use of community languages (O’Laoire, 2005). These revised curricula often also addressed the challenges faced by teachers in working with learners who possess a range of proficiencies in these languages. However, even in this context, the growing presence of languages other than the ones spoken by long-standing minorities challenges established systems of bilingual and trilingual education. And while this influx of new languages calls for new approaches to multilingualism, a large proportion of these schools still work on the basis of the more traditional model of bilingualism, focusing on language as a channel for communication (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017) and neglecting or even suppressing a significant section of students’ linguistic repertoires (Slembrouck et al., 2018; Auger, 2016). Moreover, these models in many cases still operate on the basis of an inherent language hierarchy, assigning greater value to the two or three languages on which the school focuses, in comparison to other languages within students’ repertoires, or even creating hierarchies between the school’s selected languages.

In classification of bilingual models applied by Baker (2001), those environments in which languages are only taught as subjects, and where the objective and final outcome of the programme remain monolingual, are called “weak” forms of bilingual language education. “Strong” models, contrast, aim to support students’ “bilingual and biliterate development” (to use Baker’s terminology). Baker identifies four types of strong models: immersion; maintenance or heritage language; two-way or dual language bilingual education; and mainstream bilingual education (Baker, 2001, p. 194).

- **Immersion** models, in which the target language is both the medium of instruction and the content to be learned, aim to develop students’ competences in both first and second languages, at no cost to overall achievement (see Cummins, 2014). Immersion can take various forms based on the starting age of the student and the time spent in immersion. However, in many cases immersion practices are still based on monolingual assumptions: the two languages are used in separation, which inhibits “teach[ing] for transfer across languages” (Cummins, 2014, p. 3).
- **Maintenance or heritage language education** is mostly applied in the cases of (linguistic) minority communities. This approach aims to promote and support the plurilingual development of all children (e.g. in the case of heritage language education in Wales, with English as the second language). For the maintenance of heritage language education, the home/heritage language is used at least 50% of the time in the school as the language of instruction, and developed parallel to the majority language. Schools in Wales that use Welsh as their language of instruction are inherently bilingual schools, as they contain children who speak Welsh at home as well as children who do not. Different teachers use different approaches to overcome the challenges that relate to this issue, and create opportunities to develop bilingual and biliterate learners. These schools are models of maintenance bilingual education, as they aim to maintain and support the Welsh language in a predominantly English-speaking context in which the number of Welsh-speaking people has been slowly decreasing.¹²
- **Two-way or dual language bilingual education** aims to strengthen students’ linguistic repertoires by focusing not on one, but on two, target languages. In this model, pupils “with different native languages learn each other’s language through interaction in the classroom” (Sierens and Van Avermaet, 2014, p. 212; see also Garcia, 2005; Howard, Sugarman and Christian, 2003; Valdes, 1997). The two languages are given equal value and a balanced use of the two languages is

¹² For more about Welsh-medium education, see <http://theconversation.com/welsh-schools-an-approach-to-bilingualism-that-can-help-overcome-division-79935> (Accessed: 26.09.2019); and at the website of the Welsh Government: <https://gov.wales/welsh-medium-and-bilingual-education> (Accessed: 26.09.2019)

required¹³, while only one language is used during each instruction period (Baker, 2001). This means that languages are separated without opportunities for transfer (similarly to immersion), and less value is attributed to languages other than the two included in the programme.

- **Mainstream bilingual education** occurs in bilingual countries or in societies with significant native, minority or expatriate communities (Baker, 2001). Students typically learn at least some of the curricular content through their second language. Although most mainstream bilingual programmes target elite students and involve high-prestige languages to support their international carrier opportunities (Sierens and Van Avermaet, 2014), the pedagogies and practices used in these schools could prove relevant for other models, and may be adaptable with a more inclusive view on languages (see, for example, the approach of European Schools in **BOX 1**).

BOX 1 Bilingual education in European schools

The network of European Schools is a mainstream language education model. European Schools are first and foremost intended for the children of the staff of European institutions¹⁴, but it is common for the children of staff from other international organisations, as well as those of diplomats, to attend these schools. Depending on their capacity, European Schools also cater to local children. Their primary goal is to support the mobility of these officials by guaranteeing education and a sense of cultural identity to their children in their home languages. At the same time, the mission of these schools is to foster multilingual proficiency and provide children with a multicultural education (Le Pichon, 2018).¹⁵ The European Schools model is based on a gradual transition from instruction in the student's first language towards partial instruction in a second (and in some cases, a third) language, therefore, the first language is not the sole medium of instruction. This ensures that by the time students begin secondary education, they have the skills and literacy in both first and second languages necessary for their academic use (Housen, 2002).

All students at European Schools study a third language. Longstanding structural arrangements such as the organisation of teaching of a minimum of three languages including the first language, the right to establish language sections for the first language where numbers warrant it, the requirement to study some subjects through a second language, and the mixing of students from diverse nationalities, have all helped school graduates to work side by side and become multilingual (Leaton Gray et al., 2018). However, the use of languages tends to be compartmentalised and strictly separated from one subject/classroom/teacher to another. Multilingual practices tend to develop informally, depending on a student's social behaviour and to the degree to which they mix with peers from other language sections.

Although these models provide the foundation for many language education programmes, in many ways they are still based on monolingual norms and need to further evolve to embrace and foster the dynamic and developing linguistic repertoire of contemporary school populations. The extent to which traditional bi/multilingual models are evolving to address the needs of plurilingual students is further discussed in Chapter 3, based on the examples of models in the Aosta Valley (Case Study 3) and the Basque Country (Case Study 4).

2.3.2. Plurilingual pedagogies

Continuing migration, as well as internal mobility within the EU, is bringing increasingly linguistically diverse groups of learners together in the classroom. Together with prevailing policy objectives towards encouraging plurilingualism for all learners, this diversity is inspiring a shift towards plurilingual pedagogies. In this sense, migration has served as a driver for increased interest among researchers and practitioners as to how to adapt to

¹³ In some cases, unequal value is attributed even between the two languages in the programme, see Valdes, 1997.

¹⁴ For more information about the European Institutions and bodies, see https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/institutions-bodies_en (Accessed: 23.03.2020)

¹⁵ Find more information at the website of the Office of the Secretary-General of the European Schools. <https://www.eursc.eu/en/European-Schools/mission> (Accessed: 23.09.2019)

these new linguistic landscapes and design new pedagogies that can support plurilingualism for all students.

Researchers and practitioners have been developing 'plurilingual pedagogies' – that is, language learning pedagogies which capitalise on the diverse language repertoires that students bring into the classroom (see CEFR as a reference in Council of Europe, 2018). These pedagogies are based on the view that languages are *resources* with which to access academic content, learn new languages or maintain and enrich existing knowledge in languages, including the languages of the school (Ruiz, 1984). They are further meant to increase students' participation and investment in learning. Consequently, the methods employed by plurilingual pedagogies are based on the principle of inclusion to foster the participation of each student and to address their needs individually. Plurilingual pedagogies may be implemented by an individual teacher at classroom level, or become an integral part of a school- or system-wide programme. Multilingual models can even be developed around these pedagogical approaches.

The promotion of plurilingual education is one of the key priorities of the Council of Europe's European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). The ECML supports practitioners, primary and secondary education teachers and teacher trainers with a variety of projects and resources for the development of plurilingual and pluricultural practices (see examples in the box below).¹⁶ Another Council of Europe initiative within the ECML in relation to plurilingual pedagogies and practices is its work on the 'languages of schooling'. As language education extends beyond the teaching of foreign languages, the notion of 'languages of schooling' entails a holistic approach to language learning and supports the identification of individual learners' language needs, both in language and other subjects.¹⁷

BOX 2 Examples of ECML projects and tools promoting plurilingual pedagogies

- **CONBAT+**: The project Conbat+ provides teaching materials, together with a training kit, to address the challenges of linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom. The initiative combines plurilingual and pluricultural approaches with content-based instruction, and facilitates the implementation of innovative methods and activities that can easily be linked to different subjects within the curriculum. The materials are designed to serve not only primary and secondary school teachers but also teacher trainers, as well as education inspectors and decision makers.¹⁸
- **ROADMAP**: The roadmap for schools to promote the language(s) of schooling supports schools in developing a whole-school strategy for cultivating students' competences in the language(s) of schooling, based on the school's own needs. ROADMAP offers three web-based tools for the development of linguistic and critical thinking skills: a 'self-assessment tool', which evaluates the school's needs and provides a starting point for the creation of the strategy; a 'promising practices database', which includes useful practices to inspire the school's developments; and a 'coordinator's package', which supports the implementation of the strategy with a variety of documents (e.g. guides) and templates (e.g. letters to parents).¹⁹
- **Majority language in multilingual settings**: The range of actions proposed for this tool include small-scale activities such as planning a lesson relating to a specific aspect of grammar. These strategies incorporate all languages spoken in the classroom. This tool also involves comprehensive strategic approaches that involve head teachers and/or parents (Boeckmann et al., 2011).
- **Developing language awareness in subject classes**: This tool aims to support teachers in any subject to identify the linguistic needs of their students and to provide them with tailored support. The resources and materials of this project are organised into three sections: planning (highlighting the

¹⁶ For more on the theme of plurilingual and intercultural education, see <https://www.ecml.at/Thematicareas/Plurilingualandinterculturalaleducation/tabid/4145/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

¹⁷ For more on the theme of languages of schooling, see <https://www.ecml.at/Thematicareas/Languagesofschooling/tabid/2968/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

¹⁸ For more, see <https://conbat.ecml.at/> (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

¹⁹ For more, see www.ecml.at/roadmapforschools (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

importance of language in subject learning), teaching (practical support to help teachers identify students' language needs) and learning (tools for reflection on one's own learning and teaching).²⁰

- **Maledive: Teaching the language of schooling in the context of diversity:** This website offers a set of pedagogical materials aimed at harnessing linguistic diversity for the benefit of all learners, as well as promoting teacher collaboration between school subjects in order to develop a whole-school approach to plurilingual teaching practices.²¹

As an overarching goal, these pedagogies also aim to improve the effectiveness and quality of language teaching, especially in multilingual settings. At the same time, the specific focus of the tools may be slightly divergent. But although the pedagogical approaches discussed in this section represent different perspectives on language teaching and plurilingualism, they cannot be completely isolated from each other, and in many cases may build upon each other.

Linguistically sensitive teaching and language awareness

Linguistically sensitive teaching and language awareness approaches the learning of language from the perspective of inclusive education. This approach aims to create a learning environment that is equally beneficial for all learners (see Villegas and Lucas, 2002; Chumak-Horbatsch, 2012, 2019). By regarding language awareness and linguistically sensitive teaching as elements of culturally responsive pedagogy (see Gay, 2010), the approach is based on using students' "own cultural and linguistic resources, to create a common academic, linguistic and cultural set of knowledge, habits and attitudes, i.e. a common space." (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017, p. 53). The successful implementation of this approach requires positive attitudes among teachers towards linguistically sensitive teaching and the value of plurilingualism (Lucas et al., 2008). Consequently, teachers need to pay attention to their instruction from a language perspective, irrespective of the subject they are teaching (Zhang-Wu, 2017). They must also consider the diverse linguistic backgrounds of their pupils, in order to use students' knowledge and competences in different languages (e.g. their first language) as an asset in the classroom (Lucas et al., 2008; Gay, 2010; Hersi and Watkinson, 2012). Practices such as differentiation (Lucas et al., 2008); temporary support to learners; scaffolding; valuing and building on learners' first language and their already existing language knowledge (especially when learning vocabulary); are all facilitators of linguistically sensitive teaching (see, for example, Zhang-Wu, 2017).

BOX 3 Examples of linguistically sensitive teaching and language-aware practices and tools

- **Leadership for Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Schools, by Martin Scanlan and Francesca A. López:** This book serves as a guiding tool for educational leaders (including leaders at regional and school levels, as well as teachers), helping them to create a culturally and linguistically responsive environment within their school and classrooms. The project comprises a book and an online platform containing exercises from the book, ready to use in classrooms in response to increasing cultural and linguistic diversity.²²
- **AVIOR:** The AVIOR project²³ aimed to improve educational opportunities for minority-language pupils across Europe through the development and use of plurilingual materials. A total of 48 teachers (from pK to grade eight) worked together with parents on a variety of numeracy and literacy materials that included the dominant/school language and six other non-dominant languages (13 languages in total). Although no information is yet available about the learning outcomes for children, all teachers reported improvements in their relationships with parents and communities.²⁴
- **EDINA:** The Education of Newly Arrived Migrant Pupils project provides support to municipalities, schools and teachers for the reception and integration into the school system of newcomer students (K-12). The

²⁰ For more, see www.ecml.at/languageinsubjects and <https://marille.ecml.at/> (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

²¹ For more, see <https://maledive.ecml.at/>

²² See <https://routledgetextbooks.com/textbooks/9780415710299/default.php> (Accessed: 25.09.2019)

²³ Erasmus+ 2016-1-NL01-KA201-022978

²⁴ The (open source) materials are available at <https://avior.risbo.org/> (Accessed: 14.01.2020)

site offers tools for reception, observation, differentiation, assessment and intercultural communication. It takes into account the school as a multilingual environment, the students and their plurilingual resources, their 'translanguaging' norm, and how processes of language acquisition work.²⁵

- **The voXmi school network²⁶** (*Voneinander und miteinander Sprachen lernen und erleben*, "Learning and experiencing languages with and from each other") supports schools in the implementation of language-sensitive teaching in order to promote language skills across all areas of school life. Around 50 Austrian schools of all types are part of this network. All languages are given equal importance under voXmi, and each language is regarded as a basic element contributing to the comprehensive language education of learners.

The concept of linguistically sensitive teaching can extend beyond classroom-level instruction and be embedded into a school's culture or a system-level approach. At school level, the whole-school approach involves parents and the local community in the teaching process, including the linguistic resources of these stakeholders (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017). This approach supports diversity and the more holistic inclusion of non-dominant languages within schools. At system level, the implementation of language-aware and linguistically sensitive teaching entails curricular reforms and changes to other educational strategic and policy documents. One examples of system-level change is the new curriculum in Finland (2014), which focuses specific attention on language awareness as an integral part of teaching and learning across all subjects (for more details, see Case Study 5).

Case Study 2 of this report, which describes the Accelerative Integrated Method of foreign language teaching, provides an example of a pedagogical approach to language teaching that facilitates learning a foreign language in a multilingual classroom – all pupils have equal access to quality teaching and learning, regardless of their first language.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL programmes and methods understand language not only as a means for daily communication, but also for academic purposes. They build upon and teach "one language that is already known and one language that is being learned" (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017, p. 56). Both languages are used to promote the cognitive development of learners, perceiving the content of the language from the aspect of meaning, besides the language itself (Muñoz and Navés, 2007). Consequently, the dual benefits of CLIL, by improving both content- and language-related competences in two languages, challenge traditional conceptions of foreign language teaching (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017).

CLIL programmes in Europe generally focus on two languages: the dominant language of the educational context (which is also the language of school instruction), and English as a foreign language (Lasabagaster and Sierra, 2009). In countries with a large linguistic minority – especially where geographical concentrations of a minority language exist, or near border regions, CLIL is also used to provide assistance for learners of the non-dominant language – e.g. the Russian minority in Estonia (Mehisto and Asser, 2007). This practice also benefits students whose first language is the dominant language, by capitalising on both the dominant and the non-dominant languages when teaching subject-specific curriculum content.

BOX 4 Examples of CLIL practices and tools for the introduction of CLIL across Europe

- **CLIL in upper-secondary schools in Italy:** CLIL was introduced in all upper-secondary schools in Italy from the school year 2014/15, as part of a comprehensive educational reform. This reform requires one non-language subject to be taught in a foreign language during the final year of the school. The Ministry of Education defines the skills and competences required from a CLIL teacher. Training (CPD) is

²⁵ The (open source) material are available at <http://www.edinaplatform.eu/en> (Accessed: 14.02.2020)

²⁶ See <http://www.voxmi.at/voxmi/english/> (Accessed: 14.02.2020)

available for teachers to acquire the necessary competences (e.g. CLIL methodology training within the framework of the National Teacher Training Plan).²⁷

- **Guidelines for the implementation of CLIL:** The British Council has prepared a short document containing guidelines and recommendations for the creation and implementation of CLIL practices. This encompasses aspects such as the curriculum, assessment and the professional development of educators, as well as the potential dissemination of good practices and the advantages of CLIL across Europe (see British Council, 2014).
- **Useful CLIL teaching techniques:** The FluentU General Education Blog has collected eight useful CLIL teaching practices in the categories of Comprehensible Inputs, Scaffolding and Task-based and Communicative Activities.²⁸

In a similar manner to language-sensitive teaching, a comprehensive CLIL programme requires all teachers to have linguistic awareness in their classes, and to reflect upon their instruction from a language perspective. However, CLIL requires each teacher to be familiar with both languages that are part of the programme. Consequently, teachers need to be trained to know the languages, in order to apply practices that encourage students to use both languages in subject classes, as well as to stimulate and reinforce positive attitudes towards multilingualism and intercultural awareness (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017). The way in which CLIL methodology is implemented in different contexts is reflected in the case studies further discussed in Chapter 3: the bilingual education model in Basque Country (Case Study 4) and the CertiLingua network (Case Study 6).

The use of Information and Communication Technologies to promote plurilingual language teaching

The use of Information and Communication Technologies in language learning has been encouraged and promoted by the European Commission, in order to improve the effectiveness and quality of foreign language teaching in European classrooms (European Commission, 2014). Instructional practices involving of Information and Communication Technologies, such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual education opportunities and digital collaboration (Magalkumar, 2012) are used to promote and facilitate language learning. These practices are referred to as computer-assisted language learning (European Commission, 2014, p. 19). Computer-assisted language learning tools offer diverse benefits for students from both the dominant and the non-dominant language community. The use of technologies in language teaching can improve the student motivation by integrating audio-visual elements such as videos and interviews in a chosen language into the learning process, as well as making learning more playful and engaging, e.g. through the use of game-based learning. Moreover, online sources offer additional authentic materials in various languages, such as news, articles and stories. They also offer various channels for communication, offering the opportunity to practice communication with speakers of different languages online (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017).

BOX 5 Examples and resources using Information and Communication Technologies in language teaching

- **Interactive Fiction:** Interactive Fiction is a text-based digital game promoting active reading, which helps to develop comprehension, vocabulary and grammar skills (through typing commands according to the context). A variety of prepared texts are available and accessible online, supporting teachers in using the tool. Moreover, Interactive Fiction is often practised in pairs, further developing students' oral skills as they discuss how they should shape the story. For more information on Interactive Fiction (along

²⁷ For a short summary of CLIL in Italy, see European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017, p. 14; for a detailed overview of the introduction of CLIL in Italy, see Cinganotto, 2016.

²⁸ For more information on these techniques, see <https://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator/clil-teaching/> (Accessed: 25.09.2019)

with other examples of the use of Information and Communication Technologies in language learning)see Pim (2013).

- **Inventory of Information and Communication Technologies tools and open educational resources:** The European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe offers resources for the use of Information and Communication Technologies in language teaching and learning. The tools are searchable by category (based on their main functions, the type of interaction between students, and skills the tool aims to develop). A short description is provided for each of them, along with an evaluation and an indication of potential costs.²⁹

The use of technologies in language learning also provides opportunities to foster plurilingualism in a diverse classroom through the integration of the non-dominant (minority) language(s) into instructional practices. This fosters students' home languages and reinforces the importance of plurilingual competences (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2017). In addition, digital technologies become tools enabling teachers to support all students in a multilingual classroom setting, as they may not speak all (or any) of the non-dominant languages present in the classroom. An example of the potential for digital technologies to be used in a multilingual setting is the instructional tool Studi/Binogi, which we reflect upon further in the next chapter (Case Study 1).

2.3.3. Language labels and cross-border networks of schools

Many studies suggest that the capacity of today's complex and fragmented education systems to learn and share knowledge is an important enabler for the spreading and sustaining of innovations in teaching and learning (European Commission, 2018). Working in connection with diverse networks of schools and professional learning communities can help to build and sustain innovative learning environments, and reciprocally benefit schools. This is also true for language education. School networks and partnerships promote collaboration in the development of plurilingual pedagogies, while also encouraging knowledge exchanges and networking among teachers and other educational stakeholders. Many networks also provide online resources for teachers and school leaders, which can help them innovate and reflect upon their language teaching practice in line with the longer-term vision promoted by the networks (see examples in Box 6 below).

BOX 6 Examples of cross-border networks of schools

- **The Language Friendly School:** This network consists of schools across the world which, as a minimum requirement, commit to not punishing or suppressing the use of minority languages that are other than the language of school instruction. The Language Friendly School network promotes language-friendly learning environments and innovative multilingual pedagogies. The network provides support for the creation of such environments, and access for teachers to tools and good practices (e.g. through networking). A Language Friendly School plan is adapted to a school's own needs, and aims to create an inclusive and language-friendly learning environment for all students. In 2019, the Language Friendly School network was nominated for the European Language Label.³⁰
- **Schkola:** Schkola is a network of schools in the border area of Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. Its specific pedagogy includes an open perspective, personalised assessment, working in mixed age groups, and a strong focus on multilingualism and cultural awareness. Children begin learning the languages of the other countries at an early age, and the schools in these three countries cooperate through exchange programmes, study visits and various other programmes that provide students with opportunities to use the language and get to know the culture.³¹

The eTwinning³² platform is a community of schools and teachers promoting international collaboration among school leaders, teachers, students and school staff through the use of

²⁹ For more, see <https://www.ecml.at/ECML-Programme/Programme2012-2015/ICT-REVandmoreDOTS/ICT/tabid/1906/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> (Accessed: 26.09.2019)

³⁰ See <https://languagefriendlyschool.org> (Accessed: 28.08.2019)

³¹ See <https://schkola.de> (Accessed: 28.08.2019)

³² <https://www.etwinning.net> (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

Information and Communication Technologies. It was launched in 2005 and has been co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme since 2014. Schools and teachers from 44 countries are involved, across and beyond Europe. Since its inception, more than 790,000 teachers from more than 206,000 schools have participated in the eTwinning platform. More than 105,000 projects have been commenced or completed within the framework of this initiative.

eTwinning offers teachers opportunities for peer-learning, sharing good practices, co-creating lessons and developing innovative pedagogical approaches and projects. eTwinning further supports the activities of teachers by offering professional development in various forms, such as online workshops and seminars, conferences, or featured events. eTwinning projects encourage learner-centred pedagogies and support the development of various transversal, cross-curricular skills in line with the Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning (Council of the European Union, 2018). The enhancement of intercultural skills and competences for effective and meaningful communication in both the mother tongue and foreign language(s) are among the key aims of eTwinning projects. eTwinning projects can address any topic, from environmental to technological or societal issues³³, with language and intercultural competences as well as computer literacy always playing a crucial role.

Overall, eTwinning promotes innovative teaching and learning, as well as the implementation of effective pedagogical approaches, through the use of digital technology and the creation of a collaborative and supportive environment in which both teachers and students can improve. Examples of eTwinning projects, as well as kits supporting teachers in setting up projects, are available at the eTwinning website³⁴.

To what extent such cross-border networks have the potential to foster plurilingualism and systematically promote an inclusive, multilingual ethos across systems is further explored in Case Study 6. This looks at the example of the European network CertiLingua, which awards an international certificate for multilingual, bilingual and international competences.

³³ Diversity is also a feature of the themes covered by eTwinning Groups, which provide opportunities for teachers to discuss specific topics and areas, such as game-based classrooms, STEM, inclusive education or English as a second language. For more, see <https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/about.htm> (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

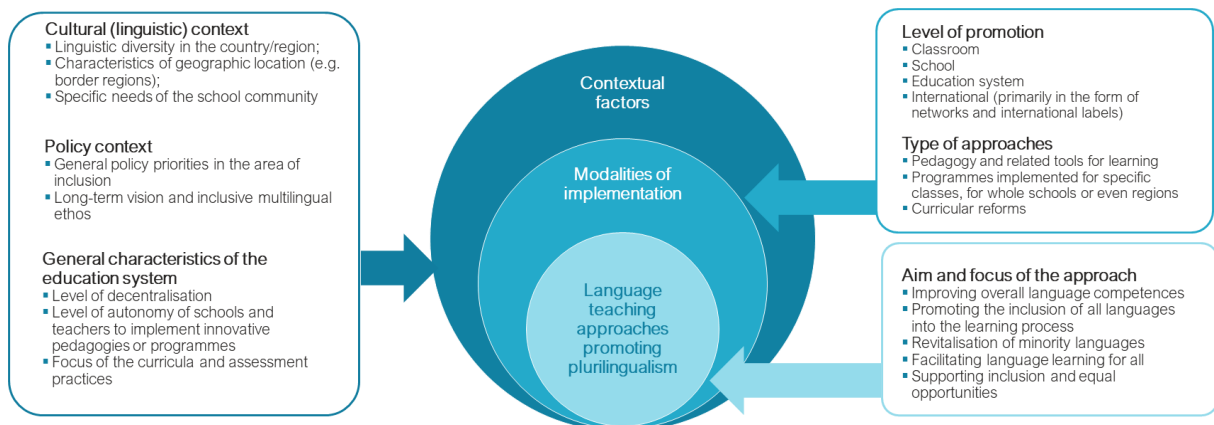
³⁴ <https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/get-inspired/projects.cfm> (Accessed: 10.01.2020)

Chapter 3: The course towards innovation of language education – case studies

The various political, cultural and linguistic contexts across and within EU Member States call for tailor-made approaches to language teaching and learning that are able to accommodate regional (or local) linguistic diversity. While the specific goals of various approaches might focus on different aspects, common principles can be identified, based on the available research on multilingual education, as well as on the practices that have been successfully implemented. This could support and inspire other countries, regions or schools to develop their own practices to promote plurilingualism and develop students' language repertoires. The present report aims to contribute to this by showcasing examples of existing practices and approaches, reflecting upon both their potential and their limitations in fostering plurilingualism.

As discussed in the overview provided in the previous chapter, various language teaching strategies are already in place. Each of these has its own specific goals and modalities of implementation, but nevertheless possesses the potential to foster plurilingual competences with Europe's population. The way in which these strategies are implemented, and the extent to which they actually achieve their goals, is shaped by a variety of factors in both a local and a system-level context. These factors must be considered when reflecting on the upscaling and transferability of these approaches (see **FIGURE 5** below).

FIGURE 5 Factors influencing the adaptation of language learning approaches fostering plurilingualism



Source: compiled by the authors.

The approaches to the development of plurilingual repertoires among learners presented in this chapter (see **TABLE 1** below) aim to highlight a diverse set of strategies used across Europe to improve language learning and promote plurilingualism. The case studies that follow attempt to provide illustrations of how some of these approaches work in practice. The proposed selection of practices aims to reflect upon a wide range of aspects and factors that can influence the effectiveness of particular approaches.

Each case study in this report addresses issues relating to the learning, maintenance and enrichment of languages from a different perspective. Innovative strategies, practices and technologies are presented which bring new language learning opportunities to the classroom. The information presented in this report aims to help policy makers and other educational stakeholders to make informed choices out of a variety of models and practices.

TABLE 1 Summary of case studies presented in Chapter 3 of this report³⁵

Case Study	Level of implementation	Approach to language teaching
Multilingual programme Studi/Binogi	Curriculum, classroom & individual levels	The use of Information and Communication Technologies to promote plurilingual language teaching
Accelerative Integrated Method of foreign language teaching in Canada and the Netherlands	Curriculum & classroom levels	Language learning pedagogy
Bilingual education model in Aosta Valley	Regional & curriculum levels	Bi-/plurilingual educational model
Bilingual education model in Basque country	Regional & curriculum levels	Multilingual educational model
Language sensitive curriculum and focus on language awareness in Finland	National & curriculum levels	Linguistically sensitive teaching and language awareness
CertiLingua network promoting plurilingualism	International network of schools	Cross-border networks of schools and labels

Source: compiled by the authors.

The case studies reflect upon diverse aspects of the implementation of a particular practice, including those at both classroom (pedagogical elements and organisational practices) and policy level. In addition, each case study provides a description of the historical, policy and cultural context, a mapping and analysis of the inspirational practice, key success factors and challenges to its implementation, as well as reflections on its scalability and transferability.

³⁵ The case studies are presented in this order on the basis of their level of implementation: starting from classroom practices, followed by practices and policies implemented at regional and national level, to a case of an international network of schools. It is nevertheless important to highlight that all practices may also affect the curriculum.

3.1. Case Study 1. Multilingual programme Studi/Binogi

Case study authors: Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman and Jim Cummins



Dr. Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman is Assistant Professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, head of the Centre de Recherches en Éducation Franco-Ontarienne (CRÉFO). From 2006 onwards, she has worked at the Utrecht Institute of Linguistics at Utrecht University, in the Netherlands. Since 2009, she has led several projects on the inclusion of minority students in education. Emmanuelle works as a consultant, researcher, evaluator and reviewer for several international organisations and international journals. Her keen interest in migration policy has led her to conduct research studies on issues related to multilingual education, particularly on the education of newly arrived migrant students in Europe and in Canada and indigenous pupils in Suriname in collaboration with the Rutu Foundation. Emmanuelle's research expertise and interests relate to educational linguistics, linguistic diversity, education rights of linguistic minorities, migration and mobilities, inclusive education, language learning and teaching, and metacognition.



Dr. Jim Cummins is a Professor Emeritus at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. He has also served as an adjunct professor at Åbo Akademi University in Finland (2016-2019). His research focuses on literacy development in educational contexts characterised by linguistic diversity. In exploring ways in which students' multilingual repertoires can be mobilised for learning within the classroom, Jim has worked actively and collaboratively with educators to document promising instructional initiatives. His published work includes numerous articles and books that examine the nature of language proficiency and its relationship to literacy development, with particular emphasis on the intersections of societal power relations, teacher-student identity negotiation, and literacy attainment. A central theme running through his scholarly work has been that educators, individually and collectively, who aspire to reverse patterns of underachievement among minoritised students must be prepared to challenge patterns of coercive power relations operating both in the wider society and in schools. Jim is the recipient of honorary doctorates from the Bank Street College of Education, New York City (1997), Hedmark University College, Norway (2014), the University of Athens (2017), and the University of the Aegean, Rhodes, Greece (2017).

Description of the programme

The increased mobility of people has led to schools experiencing a rise in the numbers of students who are already fluent speakers of at least one foreign language, but who still need to learn the language of schooling. Currently, in most European school systems, students' rich linguistic repertoires are often ignored if not rejected. The multilingualism of the education system is reduced to the languages taught within the curriculum, and schooling is organised on the basis of students' school language proficiencies. There is thus an urgent need for the development of a culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy that capitalises on students' background knowledge and individual linguistic resources.

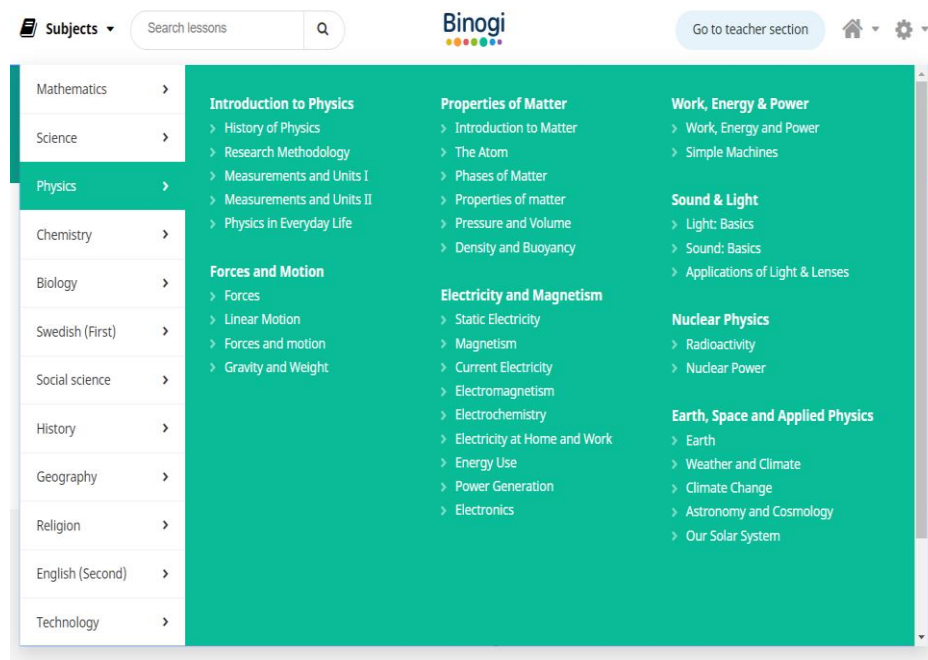
One particularly powerful tool to facilitate the integration of language learners into the new educational (and social) environment is to maximise literacy engagement in the students' own languages. This strategy is supported by a host of studies that show its advantages in maximising literacy. However, policymakers and school boards may be reluctant to embrace this starting point, as they do not possess the necessary tools to support plurilingual development, and teachers cannot engage with all of the languages of the students.

Studi/Binogi³⁶ is an online system developed in Sweden that is designed to support students in gaining access to and learning curriculum content in a way that enables

³⁶ "Studi" is the term used in Sweden and Finland. "Binogi" is used internationally outside of these countries.

multilingual content-integrated learning. Curriculum content is presented through short animated modules that are narrated both orally and in written form (subtitles) in multiple languages (see binogi.com). Students can choose whether to listen to the content and read the script or subtitles either in one of their home languages or the school language. The language options vary between different content modules. The lessons incorporated into Studi/Binogi cover most areas of the curriculum ranging from Sciences, Mathematics and Social Studies to a variety of other subjects. The scope of Studi/Binogi can be seen in the partial list of subject matter and the specific Physics topics shown in **FIGURE 6**.

FIGURE 6 Example of the scope of the Studi/Binogi system



Source: <https://app.binogi.com/s/36832>

Studi/Binogi covers much of the common European curricula from the later grades of primary/elementary school (from age 10 to 14) and provides multiple access routes to enable students with diverse backgrounds to gain access to concepts and skills, regardless of their current knowledge of the school language.

Lessons in Studi/Binogi are designed to be accessible both to students who are fluent in the school language, and those who are in the process of learning it as an additional language.

The following section is divided into two sub-sections:

- A description of the goal and rationale for Studi/Binogi, its key objectives, motivational factors for students to work with the webtool.
- An overview of the Studi/ Binogi framework and content.

The goal and rationales of the initiative

The essential characteristic of the Studi/Binogi system is that content modules on specific areas of the curriculum are presented via engaging video animations accompanied by spoken and written narration in multiple languages. Thus, the system provides support for content learning and cross-lingual transfer not only during the process of initially acquiring the school language, but also during the extended 'catch-up' period during which students are taught in mainstream classrooms without additional linguistic support. In short, Studi/Binogi provides linguistic and conceptual resources designed to enable plurilingual

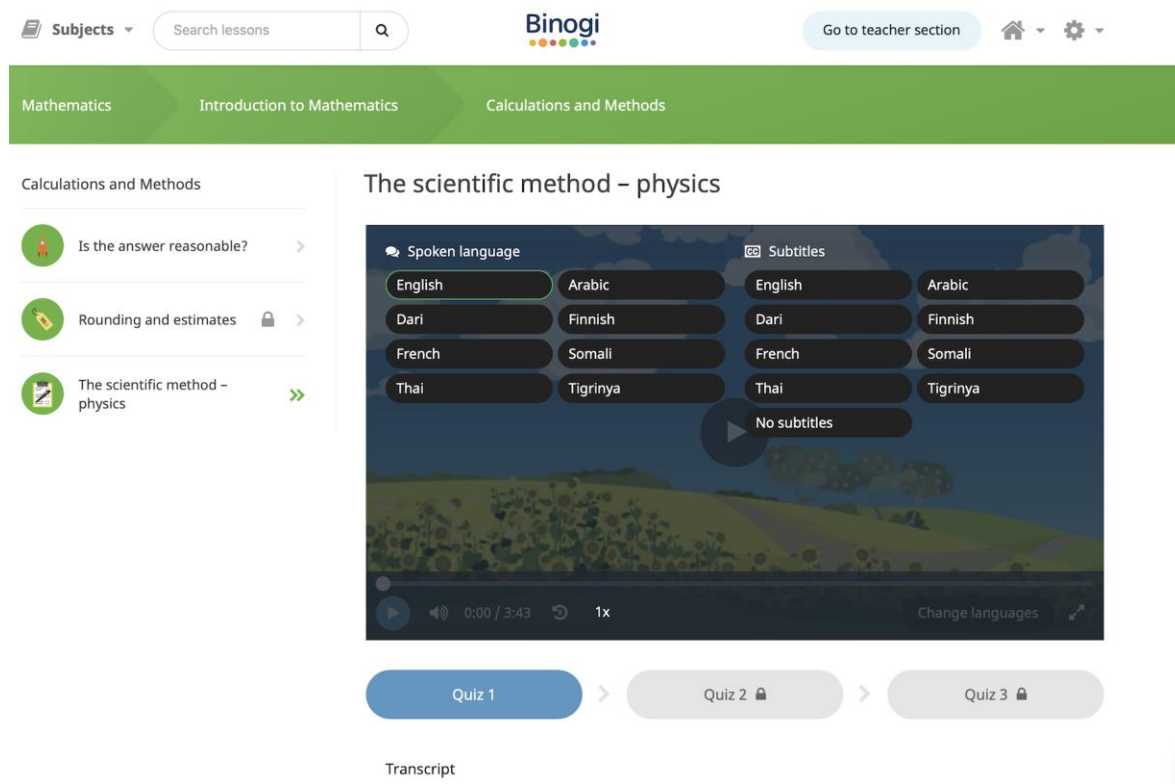
students to expand their knowledge of curriculum content and the increasingly complex academic language of the school, in which this content is expressed. As a result, because many languages are being acknowledged and recognised without being forced on the students, the classroom naturally becomes a multilingual space.

The initial rationale for Studi/Binogi is that curriculum content can be made more comprehensible and engaging for students through the use of video animations (derived from advances in gaming techniques), together with clear explanations and examples for creating lessons that focus on a single concept within a particular subject area. A second rationale is that this content can be presented orally and via subtitles in multiple languages, in order to enable newcomer students whose knowledge of the school language is minimal to gain access to curriculum concepts and skills while they are learning the school language. Furthermore, this process is likely to accelerate newcomer students' acquisition of academic skills in the school language, because the concepts and knowledge they acquire using their home languages can be transferred to the school language.

Studi/Binogi framework and content

Because of the influx of newcomer students experienced by European countries particularly in 2015, the developers of Studi/Binogi prioritised the languages of these communities rather than the languages typically taught as additional languages in the school context. The programme addresses the problem of curriculum access by providing academic content to students in both the school language and their home languages. Thus, input in both languages contributes to the development of conceptual knowledge. The languages offered depend on the highest percentages of language minorities within the local school systems. As the figure below shows, the languages available are English, Dari, French, Thai, Tigrinya, Arabic, Finnish and Somali. In Sweden, all subjects are also available in Swedish.

FIGURE 7 Studi/Binogi language coverage



The screenshot shows the Studi/Binogi interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Subjects', a search bar, the 'Binogi' logo, and a 'Go to teacher section' button. Below this is a green header for 'Mathematics', with sub-sections 'Introduction to Mathematics' and 'Calculations and Methods'. The main content area is titled 'Calculations and Methods' and lists three lessons: 'Is the answer reasonable?', 'Rounding and estimates', and 'The scientific method - physics'. The selected lesson, 'The scientific method - physics', is shown in a video player. The video player has a title 'The scientific method - physics' and a subtitle menu. The subtitle menu has two columns: 'Spoken language' and 'Subtitles'. Each column has buttons for English, Arabic, Dari, Finnish, French, Somali, Thai, and Tigrinya. There is also a 'No subtitles' button. Below the video player are three quiz buttons: 'Quiz 1', 'Quiz 2', and 'Quiz 3'. At the bottom, there is a 'Transcript' button.

Source: <https://app.binogi.com/l/is-the-answer-reasonable>

In addition, the video animations and the dynamic relationship of transfer between the two languages enhance overall conceptual development in a variety of ways:

- In themselves, the animations represent more powerful and engaging scaffolding than the static visuals of typical textbooks.
- As students develop an understanding of the concept through the home language lesson, the content of the lesson in the school language becomes significantly more comprehensible.
- As students switch between content in their home and school languages in Studi/Binogi, their awareness of language and understanding of the academic content increases.

The online nature of the Studi/Binogi system means that it can be used in flexible ways by teachers to support students' learning. For example, it can be used in the following ways:

- To support classroom instruction for all students (e.g., the entire class might watch and listen to a lesson in the school language).
- To scaffold or support individualised instruction in which students work through a lesson or lessons at their own pace, using whatever language supports and assessment quizzes work best for them.
- To enable students (and other family members such as parents and siblings) to access the system from home either using computers or mobile phones, and to reinforce their learning and 'time-on-task' outside the formal context of the school.

In terms of pedagogy, Studi/Binogi can be adapted to different forms of teaching and learning depending on the subject matter and the students' learning style. Students may switch back and forth between languages, modify the speed of speech, repeat a video, or even skip the audio and simply read the text underneath. Thus, Studi/Binogi builds upon students' own learning agency and supports them in taking responsibility for their own learning (Le Pichon, Cummins and Vorstman, 2019) and is therefore ideal for blended learning approaches. The developers provided three possible scenarios for the use of the programme, namely: flipped or inverted classrooms, enquiry-based learning, and dialogical peer-learning.

- Flipped classrooms have been increasingly used to support students in becoming self-directed learners. This pedagogy stipulates that the student views the learning material outside the classroom, and that the learning activities can then be completed in the classroom. In the case of Studi/Binogi, students may be assigned to watch a video outside school and answer the first quiz. When they then come to school, students only need to be supported in understanding the core of the lessons better through various practical applications.
- Enquiry-based learning starts with watching the lesson together in class, after which each student or group of students may define some research questions that need to be addressed. The next session is then devoted to the presentation of the results of these enquiries.
- Dialogical peer learning starts with the whole class watching the video in the school language. Subsequently, students are divided into groups, with the teacher giving each group some research questions to discuss related to the core concepts of the lesson. For instance, if the lesson is on probabilities, in smaller groups, the students can throw a die ten times, add up the numbers that appear on the die each time. The groups can then compare their results. Key questions are discussed as a whole-class group under supervision of the teacher. While forming the groups, the teacher can choose to form groups of students according to students' home languages, to

facilitate translanguaging practices and better include students who are weaker in the school language.

Scientific background and key results of the programme

Two sets of research findings are directly relevant to the rationale behind Studi/Binogi. The first concerns the nature of academic language and the length of time typically required by students with immigrant backgrounds to catch up academically with grade expectations. The second set of findings concerns the relationships between students' home and school/additional languages as they acquire bilingual and multilingual skills. In recent years, the term 'translanguaging'³⁷ has been used to highlight the dynamic connections between languages and the importance of enabling students to make use of their entire linguistic, conceptual, experiential and intellectual repertoire to support their learning.

With respect to the first set of research findings, it has been well established by research in various international contexts that multilingual students typically require, on average, at least five years of schooling (and sometimes much longer) to catch up academically with their native-speaking peers (see, for example, Collier, 1987; Cummins, 1981a; Demie, 2013, 2018; Levin and Shohamy, 2008). Obviously, in many contexts, substantial numbers of multilingual students never catch up academically and drop out of school with minimal qualifications (OECD, 2016). Students often pick up everyday conversational skills in the school language more rapidly (1-2 years) because this language is characterised by high-frequency words and common grammatical structures, and is supported by face-to-face interpersonal clues to its meaning such as gestures, facial expressions, intonation, etc. Academic language, by contrast, includes many low-frequency words, less common grammatical structures, and is found primarily in only two contexts: classrooms and written texts. This typical academic catch-up trajectory of five years or more means that many multilingual students are likely to continue to struggle with the academic language demands of content subjects for several years after specialised language support has ended.

The second set of research findings focuses on the well-established, positive relationships between conceptual development in the students' home languages and their level of attainment in the school language (e.g. Cummins, 2000; Edele and Stanat, 2016; Thompson, 2017). What this means is that concepts, knowledge, and skills developed in students' home languages can be transferred to the school language when this process is encouraged by the school. Cummins (1981b) synthesised these research findings by proposing that academic concepts, knowledge and skills in students' home and school languages are interdependent in the sense that there is a common underlying proficiency that enables two-way transfer between languages (Cummins, 1981b). In other words, although the surface aspects of different languages (e.g., pronunciation, fluency, etc.) are clearly separate, there is an underlying knowledge base that makes possible the transfer of concepts, literacy skills and learning strategies from one language to another.

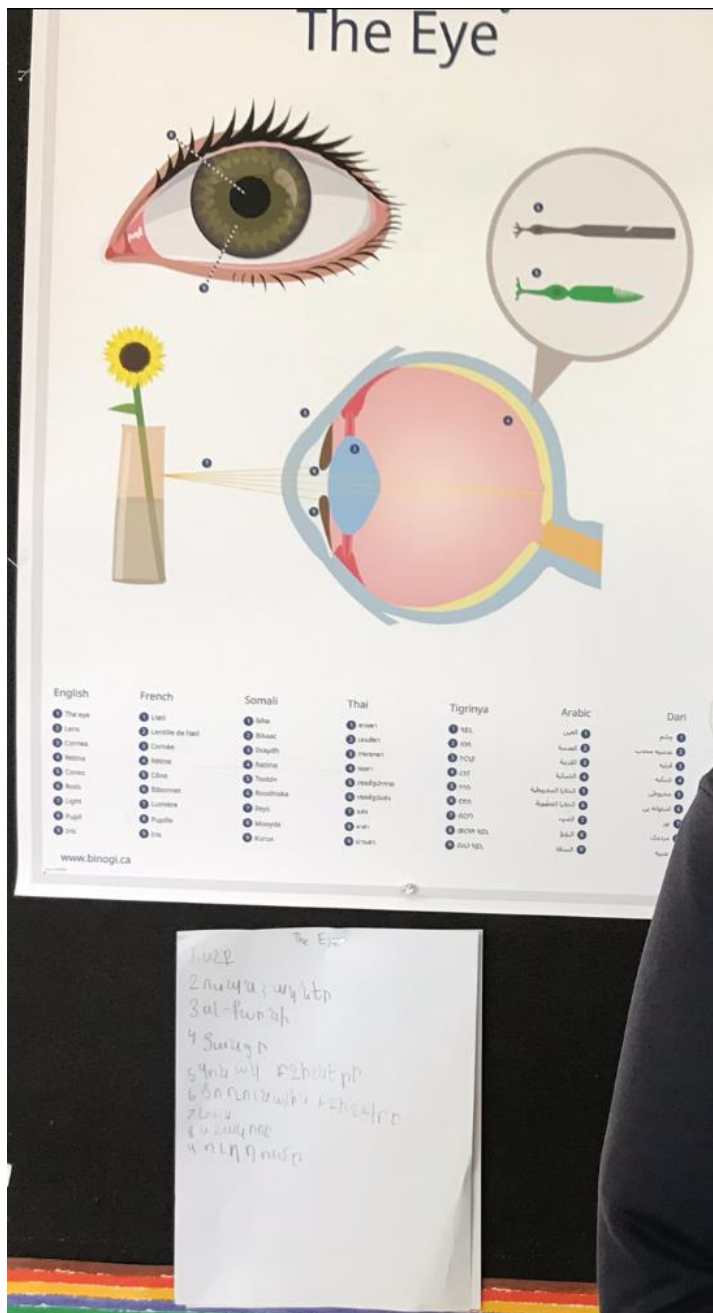
The major impediment to academic success experienced by many plurilingual students is that they typically have very little opportunity to develop their conceptual knowledge of curriculum content in their home languages, and often receive insufficient support in the school language to access the curriculum. In the absence of effective instructional scaffolding, they don't understand enough of the school language to acquire complex content that is communicated through that language. Students' difficulties in understanding instruction are likely to be exacerbated in many contexts by the fact that teachers in mainstream classrooms have not had opportunities to develop expertise in

³⁷ The use of the concepts of translanguaging and/or plurilingualism is still controversial among academics. It is important to note that both notions refer to a deconstruction of earlier beliefs about the hypothetical solitary development of languages. In this case study, both concepts may be used interchangeably, depending on the theoretical context to which the authors refer.

supporting second language learners through scaffolding strategies and other instructional techniques. This process often becomes a downward spiral: as students fall further behind in their understanding of subject's content, subsequent lessons become even less comprehensible to them. In terms of home language academic development, most schools have no way of presenting content in the home languages of multilingual students, and thus academic input into the common underlying proficiency through this channel is also blocked.

Studi/Binogi addresses this problem by providing grade-appropriate curriculum content to multilingual students in a form that they can potentially understand. Meaning is communicated via video animations that enable students to 'see' the concepts, as well as via a combination of spoken and written language input, and through the use of students' home languages together with the school language. All of these supports enable multilingual students to become more autonomous and to take greater control over their own learning. This autonomy is reinforced by the quizzes that accompany each lesson, which enable students to monitor their progress and their understanding of the lesson content.

FIGURE 8 Studi/Binogi poster about the eye. Originally available in English, French, Somali, Thai, Tigrinya, Arabic and Dari, the student added a translation of the terms in her own language, Chaldean (Figure source: *Le Pichon, Cummins & Vorstman, 2019*).



Interviews with teachers, parents and students in Toronto revealed that Studi/Binogi has a positive effect on:

- teachers' awareness of their students' academic potential and on the development of positive attitudes by teachers towards their students' languages. Interviews with teachers suggested that Studi/Binogi might play a useful role in helping teachers to work together to integrate language and content for language learners.

- families and communities in the learning process, Studi/Binogi helps to establish educational continuity across school and family contexts.

- students' motivation to engage with the learning content. Data also shows an increase in students' self-confidence in relation to mathematics;

- students' metacognitive awareness and self-regulation; they liked the fact that they could use their full repertoire of languages, taking into account their unequal competences in these languages. Interestingly, not all of the languages spoken by the participants in Le Pichon, Cummins and Vorstman's research were represented on the platform (Le Pichon et al., 2019). However, instead of becoming isolated or frustrated, students felt legitimised by the presence of diverse

languages within the platform, and activities were developed to encourage them to link the academic content to their own languages.

According to the interviewees, another positive effect of the implementation of the programme in schools may also be expected, in relation to the creation of a school community. Overall, linguistic and cultural diversity in schools places complex demands on pedagogical professionalism. A plurilingual and pluricultural perspective is expected from the school stakeholders. This pedagogical approach emphasises interactions between students, their families, caretakers and school. Within these interactions, the respective languages and cultures should be considered as both interrelated and interdependent. However, while schools are expected to serve ethnically and linguistically diverse students

(countries like Finland and Italy have recently explicitly added this expectation to their curriculum), language and literacy education are still heavily oriented towards monolingual practices (Kafle and Canagarajah, 2015). This is partly due to the fact that schools lack the resources to support learners in their own languages. Online technologies such as Studi/Binogi have the power to address these issues. Recent studies have illustrated how supporting and using the languages of the learners, as well as fostering their multiliteracies within classrooms, might enhance the engagement of students in learning and enhance their sense of belonging (Cummins and Early, 2011; Potts, 2011; Naqvi et al., 2013; Stille and Prasad 2015). Studi/Binogi provides students with a chance to build on their plurilingual repertoires to support the acquisition of the school languages and the maintenance and development of the languages that the students bring with them, as well as allowing them to access academic content knowledge from the very beginning of their stay in their new country.

Key enabling factors

The widespread mobility of the school population requires highly flexible and adaptable educational strategies. The new forms of literacies introduced by new digital pedagogical technologies have created new opportunities for the implementation of multilingual pedagogical tools that foster the maintenance and development of multilingualism among students. However, when a school implements an online teaching and learning tool for classroom use, technical difficulties may arise, resulting in time being wasted when accessing the computer-assisted learning tool. The likelihood of Studi/Binogi having an effective impact may therefore be enhanced by preparing teachers and students in advance on how to properly use the school infrastructure. For example, a workshop session could be offered to students by their teachers so that students can rehearse from beginning to end the procedure for using the online learning tool within the school environment. This preparation session would help teachers and learners to make more efficient use of the online learning time. This first discovery session could be included in teachers' professional development days. Pedagogical approaches appropriate to each context could be discussed in light of the specific realities and constraints of that context (e.g. the range of students' languages, the nature of access via computer, tablet, or mobile phone, etc.).

In summary, to implement the platform successfully, educational institutions must ensure the following:

- Professional development for teachers, ensuring that they can use digital technologies to enhance students' investment in learning.
- Good access to the Internet, and follow-up maintenance of the school's digital technologies as well as the development of digital literacy across the whole school community.
- If the platform is considered an individual learning platform, there is a need to ensure that all students have adequate access to the Internet.
- If Studi/Binogi is used within the classroom, digiboards and digital tablets may be useful.
- Awareness of the programme and its possibilities. Regional and national education departments could promote the programme to schools and support teachers in discovering and implementing the programme.

Importantly, Binogi is available both online and offline. The offline alternative offers interesting perspectives for schools working with populations who have little access to the internet.

Scalability and transferability

Digital learning materials offered by the Studi/Binogi programme align with national curricula and are developed in the languages of the larger minorities in the country concerned. In Sweden, Binogi is used by 40 per cent of all students in grades 7 to 9. It is currently used in Sweden, Finland, Germany, Canada and Tanzania. Thus, Studi/Binogi can easily be implemented in other countries. The system's potential for scalability and transferability is high. When a municipality, school or teacher is interested in implementing Studi/Binogi within its educational programme, the company's preferred approach is to build a long-lasting and productive partnership to support the project's sustainability. The developer helps schools to implement and use the programme: examples of this support include solving problems with passwords and logging on to the system, as well as supporting schools to provide digitalised environments. Thus, the external costs of implementation are included in the company's project costs. However, schools and teachers also need to consider their own internal investment in time. For instance, each school needs to create its own project team to ensure a structured implementation in accordance with its short- and long-term goals.

Conclusions

In mainstream classroom settings, if students don't already understand a concept, and also have an insufficient understanding of the language of instruction, they are likely to experience considerable difficulty both in learning academic content and in learning the language through which this academic content is expressed. However, when students already understand an academic concept, it becomes easier to infer the meaning of instruction in the school language, and to learn the language of instruction. This is why newcomer students who enter the school system with strongly developed literacy and conceptual skills in their home languages often succeed well in catching up academically in the school language.

Studi/Binogi not only facilitates the comprehension of content-related topics, but by offering the students the opportunity to switch between their home and school languages, it supports the maintenance and development of literacy in both their home and school languages. The platform responds to students' own needs in terms of school language development, and offers a necessary bridge to the core curricula.

In sum, by introducing courses in the students' own languages within mainstream education, the Studi/Binogi web-based platform attempts to reverse the pattern of underachievement among many language learners with immigrant backgrounds, thereby supporting them in catching up academically with curriculum expectations. In addition, it is important to underline that Studi/Binogi is first of all a general academic learning tool for all students that also: (1) has the potential to include minority students in education; and (2) can be used as part of bilingual education programmes (for instance, CLIL programmes). Studi/Binogi provides schools with online multilingual resources that align with the country's curriculum and capitalise on the potentially rich resources plurilingualism represents, – upon which, education and future careers need to be scaffolded.

3.2. Case Study 2. Accelerative Integrated Method of foreign language teaching in Canada and the Netherlands

Case study authors: Audrey Rousse Malpat and Marjolijn Verspoor



Dr. Audrey Rousse-Malpat, assistant professor of Language Learning at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands, holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics (University of Groningen). Her PhD project focused on the effectiveness of different types of instruction (implicit vs. explicit) on the development of oral and written skills for L2 French. She is now working on several projects dealing with the implementation of innovative language curricula in universities, vocational education studies and junior high school in the Netherlands and in Germany. She specialises in L2 acquisition in poor-input environment settings and in dynamic usage-based inspired pedagogy. She is also the co-owner of *Projectfrans.nl*, a platform aimed at informing, training and supporting foreign language high school teachers in changing their practices according to a dynamic usage-based view of language learning.



Marjolijn Verspoor is Professor of English Language and English as a Second Language at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands, and at the University of Pannonia, Hungary. Her main research interests are second language development from a dynamic usage-based perspective, and instructional approaches in foreign language teaching.

Description of the teaching method and its context

The accelerated integrated method (AIM), devised by Maxwell (2001), is intended to teach a foreign language³⁸ (also referred in this case study as 'L2' or 'target language') authentically and playfully through scaffolding techniques, which use story-telling, gestures, active collaboration and repetition. So far it has been used to teach French, English, Spanish and Mandarin to young beginners from around 7 to 15 years old. The method has been used all over the world, but empirical evidence on its implementation only comes from Canada and the Netherlands, and concerns only French as the foreign or second language. In Canada, the method is used in primary schools for learners aged between 7 and 12 years old. In the Netherlands, the method is used in high schools for learners aged between 12 and 15 years old. It is used in regular or in immersion (English/Dutch) schools. In this case study, we use French as the target language taught to young learners (aged 7-10) in Canada and teenagers (11-15) in the Netherlands, during their first three years of high school.

BOX 7 Description of the stories used as source of input in AIM

The programme begins with fairy tales such as 'The three little pigs' and later uses short narratives about the life of children or teenagers (depending on the age group) with topics concerning the family, travelling, school, the school dance, and friends. Even though some stories are based on fantasy such as *Comment y aller?* ('How to get there?'), in which the main character meets an alien, the topics mostly relate to the real world. In the case of *Comment y aller?*, learners talk about different countries and nationalities, about travelling and about family.

This scripted method allows teachers, who should be trained to use AIM effectively, to use the target language almost exclusively with absolute beginners from the very beginning. AIM's theoretical premises are in line with methods for early communication such as The

³⁸ We define the term foreign language (FL) as a language that is not spoken or heard frequently in the direct environment of the learner, so that exposure to this language is limited to the classroom.

Natural Approach (Krashen and Terrell, 1983; Terrell 1977) and Total Physical Response (Asher, 1965), now often expanded with story-telling. The method is also in line with the dynamic usage-based approach in which the frequency of exposure, obtained via playful drilling and repetition with a strong focus on meaning, is assumed to drive the learning (Rousse-Malpat and Verspoor 2018) and the neurolinguistic approach (Germain and Netten 2005). Each instructional unit is based on a story. This is told in very small increments using pared-down language, and with a great deal of repetition. Visuals from the story and iconic gestures representing the meaning of each word are used to scaffold the meaning. Lessons are fast-paced, and use different classroom configurations. First, the teacher reviews words and expressions with their accompanying gestures, then introduces new parts of the stories, all in small increments and with a great deal of repetition. The learners sit in a semi-circle around the teacher so that s/he can maintain eye contact. Later, learners work in small groups of 3 or 4. Together they work on tasks developed around the topic of the story.

BOX 8 AIM classroom procedures

Step 1: The teacher begins by addressing questions using the L2 to the entire class, which is seated in front of the teacher in a semi-circle. The class rehearse the gestures, answer questions about the meaning (not at all creatively at first). Learners are then asked to repeat chunks in answer to questions. This is done at a fast pace, very actively and playfully, with the use of gestures and variety in the types of questions. Sometimes one student answers the question, and the answer is then repeated by the group. This group activity is meant to reduce anxiety levels, and only learners who volunteer are asked to perform on their own.

Step 2: The teacher continues telling the story using visuals and gestures. Then, the same part of the story is segmented and activities are designed around the vocabulary and the meaning of the story. For example, learners are first asked to repeat the sentences to each other (as in a play), but later they can be asked to invent a follow-up of the story.

Step 3: Students work in small groups to carry out activities relating to the meaning of the segment, and to practice the gestures. Activities usually consist of task sheets called 'feuilles d'activités', containing word puzzles or 'fill the blank' exercises. Other activities involve singing or dancing (based on the story) or playing games such as bingo. During the first six months, learners will mostly listen to the story and repeat the chunks and the gestures. They learn the story almost by heart in order to learn a play, which they perform for their parents. Only after six months are learners introduced to written language.

Step 4: After each lesson, learners go to the teacher and say in French that they talked only French during the lesson – "j'ai parlé seulement en français aujourd'hui" – and if that is the case, the teacher gives them a reward, which can be a treat, a card or extra points.

Step 5: At home, learners have a DVD or access to an online portal in which the vocabulary of the lessons is repeated (with the gestures), and they are asked to repeat any gesture or word that they still don't know.

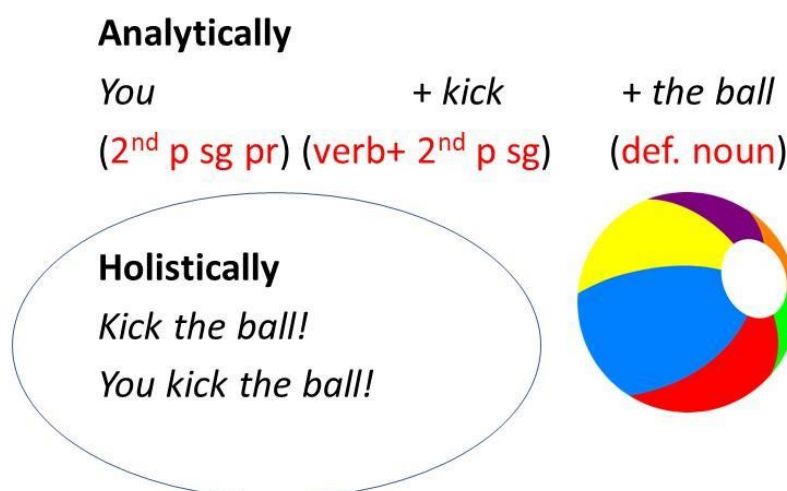
Source: Rousse-Malpat and Verspoor, 2018.

Maxwell (2001) started designing AIM as she was not satisfied with the existing teaching methods used in Canada. She realised that in Canada, a country in which French is an official language, some children were still unable to speak or understand the language after years of instruction in school. For her, part of this failure was due to the fact that existing teaching methods focused too much on teaching and practising grammatical rules, and not enough on using the language meaningfully. She invented a method for teaching French in primary schools that employed various techniques from different language teaching theories that she had found to be effective, and which were fun for children. AIM came to the Netherlands for very similar reasons. French teachers were frustrated with the poor results obtained using traditional (book) methods. They were unable to sustain an entire class in the target language, and saw that their students were not learning much. Students reported that they were unable to speak the language after seven years of instruction, which was a source of frustration for them.

In the Netherlands, French, like English and German, is a compulsory foreign language in high school. Some schools also offer the opportunity to learn Spanish, Mandarin or Russian. On average, learners have two hours of instruction per foreign language per week. After three years, learners may choose to stop or continue with German, French or another foreign language. The number of learners choosing French as a foreign language is decreasing. Learners often say they find the language difficult and that they feel they cannot speak it well enough (Voogel, 2016). Many French teachers in the Netherlands have therefore tried to alter their teaching practices to achieve better results and increase student motivation. In 2007, meeting Wendy Maxwell at a conference, several French teachers started to use AIM in their schools. They have often been cited as examples of good practice at conferences for language teachers such as The Day of Language, Art and Culture (in Dutch, 'de Dag van Taal, Kunst en Cultuur') or the French Conference ('Congress Frans'). This has inspired other teachers to adopt the method. Since 2008, teachers have been able to follow an AIM course to teach French at the University of Amsterdam (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam). Today, more than 100 schools use AIM for the three compulsory years of French, and an annual AIM conference is organised in Amsterdam.

The key principles of AIM align with dynamic usage-based (DUB) principles for language learning and teaching (Rousse-Malpat and Verspoor, 2018), in that AIM provides a great deal of meaningful, comprehensible input, with a great deal of imitation and repetition, before the language is used creatively. The meaningful and comprehensible input is realised by the use of pared-down language, familiar stories and iconic gestures (Stam, 2012). Recognising that different skills may compete early on, the method focuses on oral skills (listening and speaking) before written skills (reading and writing) are introduced. Language is always offered in meaningful phrases and linguistic contexts, which are repeated often so that learners can make associations not only between words and their meanings, but also between words that go together in a phrase or sentence (Schmid, 2020). Finally, some grammatical forms (such as articles or verb endings) are made salient using gestures, so that morphology can be learned accurately without explicit grammar explanations. In sum, DUB represents a holistic approaches to language learning in that words and rules are never offered separately, but always within a meaningful context. This is quite different from the more analytic approaches used in traditional teaching methods in the Netherlands (see West and Verspoor, 2016)

FIGURE 9 How do you learn? Analytic vs. holistic approach to language learning



Pared-down language means language that is reduced. Forms that are difficult to remember or produce are avoided at the early stages of the acquisition process. During the first year, AIM exposes learners to only a limited number (600-700) of high-frequency

words that have been selected because they are relatively easy to pronounce. Where possible, these are used in simple forms. For example, AIM introduces learners quickly to different verb tenses, infinitives and modals, but limits these to the first three persons of the singular form (I, you, he, she, it and one) as the verb forms sound very similar in French. For example, the first three persons of the verb *prendre* (to take) in the present tense are written as follows: *je prends, tu prends, il prend, elle prend, on prend* (I take, you take, s/he takes, one takes). However, all of these forms are pronounced the same: \ʒəʁvɑ̃\.

As authentic input, AIM initially uses fairy tales. Later, narratives written by Wendy Maxwell are introduced as a source of input. The script of each story is used to help learners memorise short, meaningful phrases (called 'routines') and to practice plays and songs in the target language. Learners repeat the routines from the stories in many different ways so as to form strong associations between form, use and meaning. The teacher is another source of input as s/he gives instructions, examples and organises activities around the story. Usually, only one or two stories are dealt with in one academic year. Over time, learners are asked to re-tell the stories or re-write them creatively.

Another tool used to make the input comprehensible and to form strong associations between form and meaning is to provide an iconic gesture for each single word used in the stories. For example, the word *pig* is indicated with two fingers pushing up the nose, depicting a pig's snout. There are clear gestures not only for the hundreds of French concrete words, but also for some aspects of grammar such as the feminine/masculine article, word order, plural, and finite-verb markers. Early on, these gestures are used with each word the teacher and the students utter.

To avoid competition for cognitive resources, AIM focuses on oral and listening skills exclusively in the first few months. Only then are writing skills introduced. Because writing is postponed, learners can focus exclusively on sounds, reducing competition with the written form, as French contains large discrepancies between spoken and written forms. In addition, cognitive load is reduced because children don't have to pay attention to the many irregularities of the written French language at the beginning of the acquisition process.

The main principles behind AIM teaching are the frequency of exposure, and making forms salient so that they can be recognised by learners. In other words, grammar is learned implicitly. However, to avoid the automatising of non-target forms (usually called 'fossilisation'), attention is paid to form as errors are corrected, but without explicitly providing rules. This error correction is never an activity in itself, but emerges from learners' needs in several steps, which are covered as part of the AIM training that teachers receive. For example, teachers first provide an alternative to the students by saying, for instance: "Do you say 'she goes to bathroom?' or 'she goes to the bathroom?'". If the students do not appear to know, the teacher provides cues by, for example, performing a gesture. If that does not work, they draw the attention of the entire group to a few sentences written on the blackboard by asking: "Does somebody see a mistake?". In other words, with error analysis techniques to increase accuracy, AIM has an inductive approach to grammar.

AIM teachers experience a feeling of success with their learners. The AIM method is also suitable for larger classes (30 students), as students can repeat the verbal routines as a group and then work in smaller groups.

Effectiveness of AIM

Although the AIM method is used all over the world and can be applied to many different foreign languages, the only empirical evidence available is for its use in teaching French as a Second or Foreign Language, from studies conducted in Canada and the Netherlands. In Canada, AIM was found to be at least as effective as the traditional methods used there,

but communicatively there were clear differences in favour of AIM (Bourdages and Vignola, 2009). Maxwell (2001) and Michels (2008) investigated oral fluency and reported that AIM learners were better than non-AIM learners, but both of these were very small-scale studies, for which no statistics were collected. Studies with a greater number of participants and including statistical analyses have not revealed any significant differences between AIM and non-AIM.

Qualitative findings, however, reveal that AIM teachers spoke more French in the classroom, and that AIM learners reported feeling more at ease in their listening and speaking skills (Mady, Arnott and Lapkin, 2009). Bourdages and Vignola (2009) looked at the oral communication skills of two groups of third-grade learners in Canada (AIM vs. non-AIM) by means of interviews. They concluded that there were no significant differences between the groups with regard to proficiency and grammatical accuracy. However, Cummins (2014) pointed out that these conclusions were based on accuracy measures only, and not on communicative fluency. The authors failed to take into consideration that “[s]pecifically, the AIM students produced 1,751 utterances compared to 811 for the non-AIM students – more than twice as much. The AIM students also produced 1,662 utterances completely in French (95%) compared to 306 for the non-AIM group (38%)” (p.3). This was especially interesting because unlike the studies conducted in the Netherlands, teachers of both AIM and non-AIM groups used French exclusively in their instruction, so the differences cannot be attributed to differences to exposure to French.

In the Netherlands, several longitudinal classroom studies to date have looked at the effects of AIM on oral and written proficiency using free-production data in the first years of high school. In 2012, Rousse-Malpat and Verspoor (the authors of the present case study) presented evidence that AIM was significantly more effective than a commonly used method in the Netherlands that involved a great deal of explicit attention to grammar. Because parents and teachers fear that implicit learning leads to more errors, the study also looked at accuracy. For specific grammatical constructions such as the present tense and negation, no differences were found, but for gender, the non-AIM group was found to be more accurate after the first year. However, this difference vanished after the second year, suggesting that it may take more time for learners to discover language patterns on their own. In addition to the statistically proven similarities and differences, there were some clear qualitative differences. AIM students showed greater creativity than the non-AIM group in, for example, negative constructions. The non-AIM group used only a very limited number of prefabricated routines. The same was observed for the present tense. Another noticeable difference was in the use of Dutch during the interviews. As in Bourdages and Vignola (2009), we found that the AIM students kept speaking French, using many different creative ways to communicate, while the non-AIM students tended to fall back on Dutch as soon as they did not know a word in French, or when they wanted to indicate that they didn’t understand. The same was seen in relation to writing skills (Rousse-Malpat, Verspoor and Visser, 2012).

In 2019, Rousse-Malpat published a longitudinal study in which she traced the development of 229 learners over the course of three years in their L2 French classes. She found that the AIM method was more effective than the two common methods used in the Netherlands after one, two and three years of instruction – thereby confirming the positive effects of the AIM method on the acquisition of oral and written skills in the long term (Rousse-Malpat, 2019). AIM learners were more proficient at both speaking and writing. The main explanation for these positive results was that AIM focuses much more on L2 exposure and frequency effects. However, as the amount of L2 exposure was found to be so different between the AIM and non-AIM methods, it was difficult to tease apart whether it was the AIM method that accounted for the positive effects, or merely the extent of L2 exposure. However, two detailed studies on spoken and written L2 French have compared one AIM and one non-AIM group that had very similar levels of L2 exposure, and which were similar in terms of academic aptitude. Analysis of these studies with 41 participants also showed

positive effects for the AIM method, specifically in terms of fluency and syntactic and morphological complexity, both in the oral and written data. No differences were found in the use of lexical measures, except for the fact that the AIM group used relatively shorter formulaic sequences, which they had practiced so often in their lessons. These findings are thus very similar to those of Bourdages and Vignola (2009), which involved a non-AIM comparison teacher who spoke only French and thus presumably provided a similar level of exposure.

Studies show that AIM learners are more fluent and confident not only in the spoken language, but also in the written language. They can learn to communicate in the target language very quickly, and they develop a certain ease and confidence in using the target language. This difference is already apparent after six months of instruction. Students with various language backgrounds and literacy levels can be placed in the same classroom, as the key principles behind the method are the repetition of routines in the form of a story and playful learning. From our observations, we know that all AIM learners of different academic levels enjoy the French class, as they learn new skills without anxiety. Some learners see their teachers as pioneers or innovators because the French classroom differs very much from the more traditional German or Spanish classroom.

To conclude, in both Canada and the Netherlands, the AIM method was found to be clearly more effective in teaching communicative skills. Learners in the Netherlands were older, and their non-AIM methods were probably more grammar-oriented than in the Canadian study. Unfortunately, a classroom study does not lend itself to teasing apart the effects of specific factors involved in the success of a method. Still, the researchers assume that all aspects of AIM were important. In addition to the enormous amount of playful repetition of short routines in L2 French, which is spoken almost throughout the entire class, the focus on oral skills early on and the kinetic associations made by means of gestures are needed to form the strong form-use and meaning associations. Finally, the fast-paced class with fun and creative activities helps to keep learners engaged and motivated.

Key enabling factors and constraints

As the current chapter pertains specifically to Europe, we will focus on the key enabling factors and constraints that exist in the Netherlands, where several studies have taken place.

Probably the most important enabling factor is that foreign language teachers in the Netherlands are fairly autonomous. Even though L2 teachers usually work together as teams within schools and decide on curricular changes together, they are not bound by a national curriculum. In the Netherlands, schools only need to ensure that their students acquire the skills necessary to pass the national exam. This gives schools and teachers a great deal of freedom to try out innovative methods and techniques.

Due to this autonomy on the part of teachers, it was possible in the Netherlands to introduce a new method using a bottom-up approach. A small group of teachers, who had heard Wendy Maxwell speak, became enthusiastic and inspired other teachers. The Free University of Amsterdam started to offer AIM courses for teachers, and referred to online certification in Canada. To appease parents and teachers, one school in Groningen asked researchers to compare the effects of AIM against more traditional methods. This initial project led to a series of studies and two funded PhD projects. The first author and her colleague Wim Gombert, who is looking at the effects of AIM extended (AIME) in higher classes, have since set up a website (www.projectfrans.nl) to inform teachers of their findings. The site also provides teachers with information on the latest research, the opportunity to attend workshops on topics they are struggling with (such as how to assess with AIM or how to create material), and support in the event that they want to change their curriculum. AIM researchers and teacher trainers are often invited to give guest lectures in teacher training classes, or asked to advise groups of teachers on how to implement the approach within a school setting. The findings of the empirical studies have

been widely disseminated, as foreign language teachers are fairly well organised in a national association (the National Association of Teachers in Modern Languages, '*Vereniging Van Leraren In Levende Talen*'), as well as on the official AIM website³⁹. Aside from organising annual conferences, the association publishes an academic journal mainly directed at teacher trainers and teacher trainees, as well as a magazine to inspire teachers with new ideas. The mainstream media also published various articles on the findings of the AIM method in 2019.

However, despite the positive media attention regarding the effectiveness of AIM, the use of AIM is still fairly limited, with most teachers and schools preferring to use a traditional method. Even some of the schools that participated in the recent empirical studies and recognised that AIM was more effective have reverted back to more traditional methods due to worries about the AIM methodology on the part of parents or other staff members.

Another serious constraint is teacher beliefs. As Graus and Coppen (2015) show, teachers on average prefer more traditional, explicit form-focused types of instruction. This study also shows that teacher training curricula appear to encourage the use of traditional, explicit methods as they themselves offer courses in explicit grammar. As a result, teachers who believe that a language must be learned according to rules are very sceptical that an implicit approach such as AIM can work. Thus, to begin with, teacher training should incorporate knowledge about usage-based theories in which frequency of exposure and repetition is the key to acquisition.

Another constraint is that switching to the AIM method requires an extra investment in time and energy from teachers during the first year. They require a course (also available online) to learn the basic principles of AIM and to memorise the gestures. After taking a two-day workshop, teachers note that they prepared classes by practising the gestures at home. While the practice of AIM does not formally require a minimum proficiency level from teachers, our work on the field has shown us that a high level of proficiency (C1), especially in oral skills, is highly recommended – as is the ability to make themselves understood with pared-down language. Teachers need to know how to assess the language competence of the students without focusing on rules and vocabulary in isolation. Thus, they need to know how to create teaching and assessment materials according to the principles of the method, and preferably collaborate with other teachers to exchange materials and good practice. The only database in which teachers can find examples and materials is on the AIM website. Meanwhile, some teachers have created their own network, sharing materials via a shared Dropbox.

Finally, the AIM method was originally developed for very young learners, and some students in the Dutch population (those over 12) find the gestures and fairy tales somewhat childish. Moreover, at many schools in the Netherlands, the AIM method stops after three years and learners have to catch up with conventional grammar in their fourth year. These students are often seen as less proficient because they do not know the rules explicitly. Fortunately, some schools now continue to teach using the same dynamic usage-based principles beyond the first three years. Gombert, Keijzer and Verspoor (2018) show that also after six years of instruction, these AIM extended learners outperform traditionally taught learners, especially when considering oral and communicative skills. Assessment is, however, the aspect of AIM with which most teachers struggle. This is why AIM trainers offer special training sessions on assessment that teachers can follow online or at the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam, to help them create tests. Rather than focusing on language forms such as vocabulary and grammar separately, they learn to assess more holistically using free oral and written assignments, with a rubric to assess content.

³⁹ www.aimlanguagelearning.com

Scalability and transferability

The studies in the Netherlands have shown that a dynamic usage-based method such as AIM without explicit grammar is more effective than a traditional textbook method. This suggests that the AIM method — or other methods built on the same principles — should be considered for wider practicing. Preferably, national exams should include productive (oral or writing) skills. The current studies on the use of AIM were based on French, but there is no reason to believe the method would not work with other foreign languages. The AIM method is available for French, Spanish, English, Mandarin and Japanese, and can be used in any country. Because of its fairy tale content, the method is particularly well suited to young children and young teenagers, but AIM can be adapted for older students, too.

The advantage of AIM is that it is offered as a complete method. Because much of the method is scripted, it helps the teacher to use the target language almost exclusively and build in enough repetition. It requires only a modest investment (one kit costing around 500-600 EUR per level). Students' booklets can be copied. If schools have more money to invest, they can also apply to use the digital portal. However, teachers must invest time in learning the method. Once sufficient time has been invested in learning the gestures and the routines, however, teaching involves little preparation time.

AIM is not the only method to provide rich, meaningful exposure using the principles of scaffolding and repetition. However, to our knowledge, it is one of the most ready-to-use methods to use those principles. More than anything else, it provides teachers and learners with good tools, enabling them to use the target language as much as possible from the first language class by providing a large amount of authentic input, made comprehensible by providing only short utterances at the time, which can be processed for meaning.

Conclusions

The AIM method aims to teach a foreign language more quickly than traditional methods within the constraints of a classroom. There is evidence that the method achieves this goal, especially in relation to speaking. For instance, in less than 200 hours of instruction, Dutch learners achieved an A2 level in both spoken and written French, with some learners achieved a B1 level in speaking.

Another important observation that can be made is the inclusive nature of AIM, as it does not require proficiency in a particular first language to learn French as a foreign language. In other words, learners with different L1s were not disadvantaged. Its use in the classroom can be seen as more inclusive of non-Dutch speakers, and can be applied to heterogeneous groups in terms both of academic level or mother tongue.

However, in order to implement this method effectively, teachers, learners, school boards and parents need to be appropriately educated on its use and effects. Particularly with regard to teachers, we think that teacher training programmes should include a module on (dynamic) usage-based, implicit approaches to language teaching (such as AIM). Teachers need to learn a new set of skills and acquire new knowledge about language acquisition. Schools should support investments in moving from analytic and rule-based approaches to the teaching of foreign languages, to ones that are holistic and usage-based.

3.3. Case Study 3. Building disciplinary knowledge in two languages: a model of bi-/plurilingual education⁴⁰

Case study author: Marisa Cavalli



Mrs Marisa Cavalli worked as a language teacher for 17 years in the schools of the Aosta Valley in Italy, and is also an author of published didactic materials and of an international manual for teaching French to teenagers. For 23 years, she has been a research teacher at the former Regional Institute for Educational Research for the Aosta Valley (IRRE-VDA) where she has worked in the field of language teacher training, the development of teaching materials, action-research and educational research. She has taken part in actions and projects of the Division and subsequently the Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe, notably in the project "Language in Education - Languages for Education". In this context, she has co-authored various texts including the 'Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education' (2016). She has been involved in three projects relating to Language Policy Profiles in three countries: Slovakia, Luxembourg and Malta. Her field of work is bi-/plurilingual education in relation to the construction of knowledge within the framework of linguistic policies to safeguard minority languages. She is now a consultant to the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe in Graz.

Description of the model and its context

The Aosta Valley (FR: Val d'Aoste), a region of Northern Italy, belongs linguistically to the francoprovençal (Gallo-Romanic speaking) area. French has been the language of administration in the region since 1561, under an edict of Duke Emmanuel Philibert. Progressively, French became the language of the church and, later, of the school. With the unification of Italy in 1861, the Aosta Valley joined the country's Italian-speaking area. In 1948, a special statute was granted to the Aosta Valley by the Italian state. This recognised the Region's bilingualism, and granted it certain legislative and financial autonomy. Article 40 of the statute allows the region to make "adjustments which are appropriate because of local needs" to national education programmes. Since 1948, on the basis of this article, equal numbers of hours of Italian and French have been taught in all school levels in the Aosta Valley education system. Moreover, since 1984, through slow bilingual reforms, all subjects must also be taught in both languages at three levels of education – pre-primary, primary school and secondary school, level 1⁴¹. Thus, bilingual subject teaching is a central feature of the region's education system, although it is open to the foreign languages and ideally also to the languages of its pupils' repertoires. The Aosta Valley model is, therefore, a model of "bi-/plurilingual" education.

When, in 1984, after a long period of reflection, experimentation and training, the reform of bilingual education was formalised for pre-primary schools – and subsequently for other educational levels – decision makers chose to involve all schools, all students and all teachers in bi-/plurilingual education, without distinction. This decision stemmed from a desire not to create divisions or fractures among the population, both between schools and within the teaching profession. The political choice made by the Aosta Valley presupposes that its model for bi-/plurilingual education should be based on the alternation of the region's two main languages, Italian and French. This was certainly far from being an immediately operational didactic option, since what prevailed was the political choice of a certain type of society in which all the speakers, without distinction, would be bilingual,

⁴⁰ This text reproduces very closely the information and reflections contained in two contributions by the author (Cavalli, 2003, 2018). This case study was originally written in French and translated into English.

⁴¹ Despite three successive projects (Cavalli, 2005), second-level secondary schools were only affected by bilingual reform in 2016; this reform will not be discussed here since it is currently suspended.

and in which one would not artificially create two separate groups of speakers, each speaking mainly one language.

Thus, since all teachers and students were required to use two languages in learning, this model was based practically – and ideally – on the alternating use of the two languages by all school staff on duty: in other words, both languages were to be used in the teaching of all subjects. Initially, this alternation was carried out according to ‘monolingual’ modalities of application: according to a principle of one language, one person; half a day in Italian and the other half in French. However, as the reforms progressed, more flexible modalities were adopted, providing for certain activities to be carried out in one language and other activities in the other (monolingual spaces), as well as providing times during which the languages used could be the pupils’ choice (plurilingual spaces). This was part of both didactic planning and the didactic contract with the pupils⁴². Of course, micro-alternating, as a means of helping students and teachers alike, was always permitted.

The reform was a courageous political choice that ran counter to the model of bilingual education (Canadian immersion) that was most in vogue at the time. Canadian immersion is currently classified by the scientific literature as a monolingual-inspired model: the L1 of the children is first before its gradual reintroduction as a subject, typically at grade 2, and as a medium of instruction at grade 3, followed by grades 4, 5, and 6 being taught half in each language. This was the model *par excellence* for many contexts (Day and Shapson, 1996; Johnson and Swain, 1997; Baker and Prys Jones, 1998; Cummins and Hornberger, 2010). However, the didactic principles and methodology for the model chosen in the Aosta Valley were still to be developed.

The goal and rationales of the initiative

The project aimed to safeguard a minority language (French), which, without its teaching in schools, would face the risk of extinction in the Aosta Valley (Fondation Chanoux 2002) in a plurilingual sociolinguistic context in which Italian and French are co-official languages and many dialects are spoken (Francoprovençal, Walser German, Italian dialects, and more recently varieties of languages spoken by immigrants). For the proportions of languages spoken, see Fondation Chanoux (2002). This level of language planning required a flawless political will: through the action of schools, the goal sought is nothing less than to see French reacquiring a linguistic vitality that it appeared to have lost.

The creation of the bi-/plurilingual education system in the Aosta Valley has taken place gradually over many years. In 1984, the choices made in relation to pre-primary school level helped to shape the model. Later bilingual reforms of primary school (1988) and secondary school (1993-1994) education have in fact gathered and continued the legacy of the pre-primary school.

The three reforms, although carried out at different times and in changing pedagogical climates, followed the same implementation path: all were the result of the political will to preserve the French language, and relied on a top-down approach by those in political power. This was mitigated, however, by encouraging bottom-up approaches: the pre-phases experimentation with bi-/plurilingual education, parallel training initiatives and the development and provision of teaching materials designed for the context have been carried out with the help of some of the most enterprising volunteer teachers.

Officially, excluding the somewhat prolonged period of experimentation at the level of the pre-primary school, the Aosta Valley experiment has lasted for approximately 35 years. Its model, based on the alternation of languages, is now praised within the academic field. In this model, the two languages, Italian and French, are also taught as language subjects.

⁴² A didactic contract is the set of implicit or explicit rules that define the roles of the student and the teacher according to their roles in the interaction. In this case, the contract also covers the use of languages: which language is used, for which activities, and at what times.

This bilingual framework opens up plurilingual perspectives thanks to the foreign languages, in particular English, which is introduced very early as a foreign language at primary school level.

Principles of bi-/plurilingual education in the Aosta Valley

The model used in the Aosta Valley is characterised in an original way by the basic principles of bi-/plurilingual education. Unlike most immersive models, the joint and alternating use of the two languages covers all subjects and school activities, and is undertaken by all teachers on duty. This means that bi-/plurilingual education is achieved through the alternation of codes: it cannot, therefore, rely on the mono- and equilingual conceptions of bilingualism sometimes at work in models that explicitly rely on a clear separation of languages according to teachers and/or disciplines. All teachers are required to teach their subject in both Italian *and* French. Bi-/plurilingual education is thus based on a plurilingual conception of bilingualism, involving the management of a repertoire composed of more than one code, within which the competences of the speaker can be asymmetrical and meet communication needs differentiated according to languages and domains. It thus exploits, for didactic purposes, a characteristic of the bilingual speaker: the bilingual-speaking, alternate use of codes for different communicative purposes (Grosjean, 1982; Lüdi and Py, 2002).

In terms of teaching practices, the alternation of languages takes place at two levels:

- At a macro level, the planning of pedagogical activities is programmed in a strategic way to meet disciplinary learning needs: under this French is used, like Italian, at all the stages of disciplinary conceptualisation. Through the didactic contract, its aim is to establish monolingual spaces for one or other language, and plurilingual spaces in which both languages can be used according to the choice of the learners. Alternation thus takes place in different phases of these sequences: activation/reactivation of prior learning; construction by progressive complexity/abstraction of knowledge; implementation of knowledge and evaluation.
- At a micro level, in the urgent and on-the-spot management of language and communicative breakdowns, which generate Potentially Acquisitional Sequences (De Pietro, Matthéy and Py, 1989), the alternation of languages can meet various types of needs relating to language learning: to compensate for a lexical “vacuum”, to remove a semantic ambiguity (a “lifeline” or “relay in communication”, or even springboard to the acquisition of sequences [Moore, 1996]) or to signal in communication the change of the interactive framework according to the interlocutors (friends or teachers), the creation of stylistic effects (puns), the arrangement of parentheses/brackets compared to the official speech of the class, etc. (Pekarek, 1999).

Finally, within the learning process, the use of both languages represents both a means and an opportunity for conceptual redundancy and interlinguistic reformulation to “explore, analyse and manipulate the concept at various levels of cognitive complexity, thereby helping to anchor it” (Gajo and Serra, 1998). As an approximation, this makes it possible to build up knowledge on the (dual) linguistic side (linguistic completeness), as well as on the cognitive side (conceptual saturation) (Gajo, 2006; Gajo and Grobet, 2008 and 2011).

Code-switching is thus one of the methods available to teachers and learners for the construction of knowledge. It may be argued that the learner constructs concepts through successive, increasingly complex, efficient and specialised reformulations based on naïve representations and everyday concepts and language, as well as through direct experience of the collective solution of problems. These reformulations are based both on linguistic means, and on the various tools of conceptual representation specific to each discipline (Coste and Pasquier, 1988 and Coste, 1997b): from approximation to approximation, they

become gradually clearer and more complex through the alternating use of languages and content-specific tools.

In the objectives for the Aosta Valley, this concept of linguistic switching is less in the service of a better acquisition of languages than it is of a better construction and appropriation of concepts within a discipline.

Just as for the instrument of code-switching, interlinguistic reformulation works on two distinct levels:

- At a macro level, sequence planning makes it possible to establish language choices in advance, so that the learner can reformulate, in a systematic way in one code, the acquisitions that were made previously in another.
- At a micro level, reformulation takes place immediately, on the spot, within an activity, either on the occasion of a linguistic breakdown or in the face of a conceptual “vacuum”. In this sense, in a bi-/plurilingual education, Potentially Acquisitional Sequences (Di Pietro et al., 1989) can involve both linguistic acquisition and disciplinary conceptualisation. In fact, classroom observations have made it possible to stress that linguistic breakdown can hide a conceptual vacuum that requires a different didactic intervention.

Scientific background and key results of the programme

The reflection on code-switching gradually took root and developed to the point of forming a body of theoretical principles and diverse practices in the classes, as evidenced by a number of publications (for example, Coste et al., 1997). Reflections on bilingual repertoires and the discursive analysis of the alternating use of languages by bilinguals (Ludi and Py, 1986/2002) have gone hand in hand in Switzerland with the development of psycholinguistic research on the psychological functioning of bilinguals (Grosjean, 1982; 1998; 2008; 2010; Grosjean and Li, 2012).

The long work of collaboration and experimentation has enabled reflections on bilingual education in the Aosta Valley to move from a monolingual conception (deeply rooted in common representations) to a bilingual conception. This collaboration made it possible to develop scientific and realistic definitions of concepts such as “bilingual person” and “bilingualism”, in which “code-switching” plays an important role (Py et al., 1997). In addition, languages have been conceived as being in the service of disciplinary conceptualisation, and as having to bring a positive benefit to it. It is accepted that the construction of concepts in various subjects is a matter of gradual semantic appropriation, moving from everyday language formulation to increasingly complex formulations and relying less and less on memorisation. The ability to reformulate concepts using one’s own words, in what Lemke (1990, p. 91) calls “repetition with variation”, draws from the use of two languages, from textual diversification (Coste and Pasquier, 1992) and other methods of reformulation that facilitate abstraction and whose use in the classroom has shown positive effects on success in tasks within a discipline (Assuied and Ragot, 1999; 2000).

The objectives of the programme

The use of the two languages alternately in all subject areas was intended to offer students flexibility and expressive richness in the construction and consolidation of knowledge. Their use in the classroom showed that this enrichment was not only at the expressive level, but also at the level of the ‘thickness’ – the cultural density – of the concepts, and the conceptual illumination that the two languages mutually promoted.

The Aosta Valley model differs from others in its strong focus on the cognitive aspects of bilingual learning, placing the learner, an active actor-speaker, at the centre of didactic activity. The learner thus participates with others in the co-construction of knowledge in a

socio-interactionist Vygotskian-inspired model (Bronckart, 1985; 1996). The use of the two languages is in the service of more solid disciplinary acquisition by taking into account the double linguistic dimension that bi-/plurilingual education entails and the various conceptual effects that the two languages play in the teaching-learning process.

The basic work carried out in relation to the concepts behind a bilingual education, involving the adoption of realistic conceptions of what 'bilingualism' and the 'bilingual person' are, should have protected the Aosta Valley and its decision makers from outdated representations such as 'bilingual as equilingual', or as the sum of two monolinguals. The varied and alternating use of languages in this conception, now widely acknowledged in the world of research, is one of the characteristics of the bilingual person (the bilingual speaker). It is this characteristic that we took into account to define the bi-/plurilingual pedagogical approach described above.

Bi-/plurilingual education in the Aosta Valley is still relevant and in full force. However, the return of monolingual and normative conceptions is always possible, even when reflection on these themes has been undertaken in a rigorous manner.

For instance, in 2016 a reform project introduced, in addition to Italian-French bilingual education, CLIL teaching in English from primary school onwards. This adaptation seemed to follow an orientation towards even greater bi-/plurilingualism. However – and paradoxically – it reintroduced certain principles that were oriented towards monolingual practices: for example, the one person-one language strategy, the assignment of each language to a specific subject (with no longer French being used in all school subjects) thus suppressing the prior development of a pedagogy based on alternating languages for every subject.

Prejudices often associated with the notion of alternation that relate to the "mixing" or "crossbreeding" of languages among themselves have stimulated a return to monolingual conceptions (Grosjean, 1982 and 2010; Tabouret-Keller, 2011; Cavalli et alii, 2003). However, the 2016 reform project was suspended following protests from schools, dissatisfied with various aspects of the reform and with the modalities of its implementation. Previous measures are therefore currently back in force, pending new legal provisions.

Action research involving classroom teachers, observation sessions and analysis of video-recorded sequences has highlighted some advantages of bilingual education that is based on a model of alternating languages. In particular, we will analyse the advantages of such a model for learning other subjects, because other models take less account of this aspect, and because this case study deals specifically with this issue.

It was, in fact, by means of observation sessions during the course of action-research activities carried out by the office of inspection and the Regional Institute for Educational Research (IRRE-VDA), that it was possible to verify, in a qualitative way, some positive effects of the use of an L2 or the alternation of two languages for disciplinary learning.

The first effect is one that has been called "defamiliarisation" or distancing: the L2 (second language) – because it is either more or less opaque to the learner compared to the L1 (first language) – acts as a kind of filter at various levels:

- because it is more distant from the learner's everyday language than the L1, it encourages, through this distance, passage to the specific language of the disciplines.
- because it is less familiar, it induces a more analytical inspection of the language (for example, instructions and texts), facilitating success in the task.
- from a cognitive point of view, this type of inspection also helps to locate conceptual voids beneath apparently familiar words.

The positive consequences of this “defamiliarisation” effect have been verified by quantitative research (Assuied and Ragot, 2000). In a test involving discipline-specific tasks that were equivalent in terms of cognitive requirement but different for each language, average students performed better in the French language tasks (L2) than in the tasks carried out in Italian (their own L1). The L2 (here, French), rather than being an obstacle to learning, became a teaching aid even for students who had not yet fully developed their abstraction skills. Thus, the alternation of two languages in the teaching–learning process may have had a mutually clarifying effect at the level of concepts: their formulation and reformulation in two codes work as a mirror, one language illuminating the obscurity of the other. The use of the two codes thus multiplies possibilities for understanding concepts.

A second effect on teaching is an awareness on the part of subject teachers of the language dimensions of their teaching, seen via the central role played by interactions and by the effective actions of teachers in the classroom to support and scaffold conceptual construction. The action-research schemes put in place have enabled teachers, with the help of linguists and methodologists, to reflect on the ways in which knowledge is constructed in each subject, and also upon language activities and functions, and on the textual and discursive genres specific to each subject and in each language. This reflection is also facilitated by textbooks in the two languages, which employ different epistemological conceptions, and by comparing them with one another.

Key enabling factors

Positive aspects of this model, which could also be assumed by other models, can be summarised as follows:

- Its democratic character: without the slightest trace of the elitism that other bilingual models often carry, the Aosta Valley model does not discriminate between students, nor does it create a divide between them. Bilingual education is conceived as the right of every student, and as contributing to the overall formation of the individual.
- Its didactic viability: the model is based on the actual functioning of the bilingual person, and not on an ideal and misguided model of the native speaker or double monolingual.
- Its didactic advantages for languages and for other subjects, both in terms of learning and teaching through didactic renewal, which any bilingual reform implies.

For a model of this kind, too strong a political (macro) weight on the choices made could result in weak commitment on the part of some school heads and teachers. It must be added that the obligation imposed on every head of school and every teacher, without exception, to implement bi-/plurilingual education – a complex and far-reaching undertaking – risks meeting fierce resistance from some actors, who may be ideologically opposed to it (see, for example, the research on social representations of languages and bilingualism, Cavalli et al., 2003). These limitations may result in a wide disparity in of this type of education between different situations. As in any bilingual context, languages in Aosta Valley are a highly political and ideological subject and individual positions vary greatly; however, resistance appears minimal. According to an analysis of research by the Chanoux Foundation (2002), only 13-15% of Aosta Valley residents are openly hostile to French, and the regional administration continues to invest heavily in the provision of bi-/plurilingual education.

This heterogeneity, which affects both the quantity and quality of exposure to French, can manifest itself between schools or within the same school, between classes or even within a single class, between teachers of different disciplines. All of this is reflected in a strong limitation of the right to bi-/plurilingual education, which is thus unequally guaranteed to learners. Thus, students enrolled in a school or classroom, or with a teacher who is

genuinely engaged in a significant bi-/plurilingual education, find themselves at an advantage over their friends who attend institutions or classes in which bi-/plurilingual education is reduced to a minimum and delivered without great conviction. As with any reform, the strength of the commitment by management and teaching staff is the guarantee of its success.

The bi-/plurilingual reform of lower secondary school was characterised above all by a methodological renewal of teaching and by a strong interdisciplinarity: integrated didactics of languages, project pedagogy and collaboration between language teachers and teachers of other subjects.

As far as language skills are concerned, teachers from the Aosta Valley are supposed to be bilingual, since they have been taught the French language within the region's education system. Teachers from elsewhere in Italy must take a test in French and in culture of the Aosta Valley. Every teacher also receives a bilingualism allowance that varies according to the level of the school.

The process has been accompanied by in-service training for teachers, ranging from interdisciplinary reflection on the linguistic dimensions of school subjects, the integration of subject-specific language training and methodological training, to the more complex formula of action-research. It should be noted that, for this level of education, the modalities for the implementation of the model were developed in the framework of research-actions that brought together linguists and methodologists from various disciplines, from Switzerland, France and Italy, as well as teachers conducting experiments from the Aosta Valley.

The number of classes conducted by some teachers has been reduced to allow them to plan their interventions in class during working hours with their colleagues, and to carry out modalities of simultaneous co-teaching for a reduced number of hours (involving French teachers together with teachers of other disciplines), often as part of interdisciplinary projects.

Professional intermediaries have been trained to, support, accompany and follow up on colleagues in relation to bi-/plurilingual education, documentation tracking and in-service training in the field (didactic collaborators, coordinators of bi-/plurilingual education, trainers for linguistic assistance, depending on the school level), in order to provide assistance to schools.

According to research by the Chanoux Foundation (2002), respondents⁴³ believed that the role of schools in safeguarding French far exceeds those played by respondents' own families, the regional administration or the media. This appraisal is far from being an insignificant result, given the linguistic insecurity at work in the Aosta Valley, a French-speaking periphery (Cavalli, 2003). In addition, in the same survey, self-assessments by French speakers of their skills have grown increasingly positive over the generations as bilingual reform has progressed through the various grade levels. Younger people who have experienced the bi-/plurilingual programme rate their French skills more highly than do their parents and older generations, who did not experience the bi-/plurilingual programme.

Scalability and transferability

Due to the complexity and scale of an undertaking that involves an entire regional education system, this model could not be realised without considerable financial commitments. For all these reasons, if it were adopted at the "macro" level (state, region,

⁴³ A representative sample of the entire population, scientifically established and made up of approximately 7,000 participants (7,250 questionnaires returned) from all generations (see <https://www.fondchanoux.org/plan-denquete/> for more details on the preparation of the sample).

city), this is a model that is probably more suited to geographically limited contexts where there is a strong political will as well as the resources to implement it. At the time of the first bilingual reforms, the population was not very diverse, although some difference existed between students in the town of Aosta, the Central Valley and the major tourist resorts – the majority of which were Italian-speaking – and students from the rural villages of the side valleys, where more dialects (Francoprovençal and Walser German) were spoken. Immigration within Italy, as well as new immigration, both from within the EU (Eastern European countries) and outside (Maghreb countries), have changed the demographic fabric of the region, making the composition of classes even more heterogeneous. Extra-curricular initiatives to support Francoprovençal speakers have always existed. With regard to Walser German, a later article of the special autonomy statute from 1948 grants speakers of the dialect the right to an education in the German language. As far as immigrant populations are concerned, support courses are provided by schools and by the regional administration for the upgrading of Italian (L2) and French (L2) (with the Alliance française).

However, the principles of this model can apply to all bi-/plurilingual experiments, since it is a valid alternative for other bilingual contexts, in particular current multilingual classes, with a view to using the repertoires of allophone students. In the presentation of this case, a decision was made to use the term 'code-switching'; instead of 'translanguaging': indeed, the European experience of code-switching in bilingual education already has a very long history in scientific literature. In our view, the concept of translanguaging, which is based on a completely decompartmentalised, sociolinguistic vision of languages (García and Baetens Beardsmore, 2009; García and Wei, 2013; García and Klein, 2016) does not sufficiently account for real inclusion at school and in society. Code-switching, as conceived in the Aosta Valley, envisages inclusion in terms of the linguistic and cognitive empowerment of students, whether migrants or not, through the two languages of schooling with a view to a better, more profound and solid acquisition of disciplinary knowledge. The conception of code-switching in the Aosta Valley provides students with both the ability to express themselves in bilingual mode and the ability to separate codes (use of monolingual mode) in the case of communication with speakers of either language.

The conditions to be met for the implementation of this model – which would doubtless be useful for any model considering bilingual education – can be summarised as follows:

- Systematic work with all those involved in the system, including politicians, on social representations (concerning language learning, bilingualism, plurilingualism, the functioning of the bilingual speaker, the alternation of languages, etc., which can represent a major obstacle. To this end, see Cavalli et al., 2003).
- The need to move from a bilingual concept to a more broadly plurilingual and inclusive concept of all languages and cultures, incorporating the diversified repertoires of learners;
- Comprehensive training for school stakeholders:
 - ⇒ For heads of institutions: training that focuses on their role as responsible for the institution's language policy.
 - ⇒ For all teachers, from initial training onwards: training on topics such as taking into account the linguistic and cultural diversity present in the classroom, bi-/plurilingual didactics, the socio-constructivist approach, the integration of languages with disciplinary content, interdisciplinarity, the use of ICT, teamwork, and the development of materials.
 - ⇒ Specific training for language teachers that targets plural approaches and convergent/integrated didactics of languages.

- ⇒ Specific training for teachers of other subjects who wish to make themselves aware of the language dimension of their subject.
- The implementation of genuine flexibility within internal organisational modalities, whether at school, course or classroom level.
 - The provision of adequate equipment.
 - A system evaluation to guarantee to all learners their right to bi-/plurilingual education.
 - The development of a curriculum conceived globally for the entire school, based on a knowledge of its sociolinguistic context, its educational culture and the language needs of its students. This must be conceived in both longitudinal terms (continuity) and horizontal coherence (with regard to aims, objectives, contents, approaches, evaluation methods, etc.), and with a view to its gradual and evolving implementation.

Conclusions

The participation of teachers in bi-/plurilingual teaching programmes is of crucial importance to their success. Moreover, when a community commits itself to a project to safeguard a minority language, as is the case in the Aosta Valley, any change to the education system should be the subject of public debate. The actors involved in a language safeguarding policy are by no means limited to decision makers, since the safeguarding of a language depends first and foremost on its speakers (Cavalli, 2013).

Tools currently exist for thinking coherently and over time about plurilingual and intercultural education (see Beacco et al., 2010). Numerous experiments have already been carried out, including that in the Aosta Valley, among many others, which reveal possible paths to realisation. The fact remains, however, that a successful bi-/plurilingual education cannot be achieved without great efforts being made to take account of its context and specificities. It is the latter of these that is paramount, and must contribute to the shaping of an effective, relevant and useful model. Models borrowed from other contexts may simply not be right.

The European Commission advocates mastery of two languages in addition to the language of schooling, as well as their early learning and via school subjects (using the CLIL methodology): the Aosta Valley model could provide food for thought for other European contexts. Finally, the Council of Europe encourages its Member States to implement plurilingual and intercultural education and (in order to ensure fair and high-quality education) to take into account in their education systems the linguistic dimension of any school discipline. Here, various publications show the way forward (Beacco et al., 2010, 2015, 2016). For bi-/plurilingual education systems, these very valuable indications and guidelines must take into account the presence of the two codes and their effects on the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge. The model of code-switching used in the Aosta Valley can offer an example of a decompartmentalising way of using languages.

This reflection on the use of two languages in the construction of concepts is becoming an emergency in modern societies, where the risk that knowledge will be built only in the single language of globalisation is more than real: the model of the Aosta Valley shows how two languages enrich and diversify conceptual construction. It is the opposite of the conceptual impoverishment – and simultaneous cultural impoverishment – that constitute the dominance of a single language. Yet this continues and grows, and on a very large scale.

3.4. Case Study 4. Towards a multilingual model of education in the Basque Country

Case study authors: Jon Andoni Duñabeitia and Eneko Antón



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The development of multilingual⁴⁴ education in the Basque Country

Euskera or Basque is an isolated language that shares official status with Spanish in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), also known as the Basque Country or Euskadi, as well as in the north of the Autonomous Community of Navarra in Spain. The sociolinguistic reality of Euskadi has undergone substantial changes in the last half-century. As a direct consequence of this, its educational system has been adapted in order to respond to a plural and varied linguistic landscape. The present case study discusses the manner in which the Basque educational system has aligned dynamically with the sociolinguistic changes that have taken place in Euskadi over recent decades, with a special focus on changes in language allocation strategies within schools. These changes have been accelerated and become more marked since the end of the 20th century, when socio-political circumstances within Spain affected the use and expansion, and even enhanced the legal position of Basque.

As a result of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the period of dictatorship by Francisco Franco (1939-1975), Basque lost the co-official status it had won under the Autonomy

⁴⁴ In this study, the use of the term 'multilingual' is intended to reflect the same nuances of meaning as the term 'plurilingual'. In line with the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ 2018/C 189/01), here multilingualism emphasises the acquisition, development and use of effective communication skills in the different languages present within the community (majority, minority and foreign languages).

Statute of the Basque Country of 1936, approved by the Second Spanish Republic (1931-1939). During the dictatorship, Spanish was imposed as the sole national language, denying any economic and legal support for any institution that had as an objective the defence or the study of the Basque language. As a result of this, the first educational centres to use the Basque language as a vehicle, the **ikastola** system, had to officially cease their activity; the persecution of Basque would not be reversed until the end of the 1950s. The ikastola system re-emerged officially in 1957. Nowadays, it is formed by a consortium of more than 100 educational centres encompassing more than 4,500 teachers, 500 non-teaching staff, and more than 57,000 pupils.

Thanks to the recovery of the official status of Euskera, endorsed by the Statute of Gernika from 1979 and the various linguistic policies carried out by the Basque Government, the earlier critical situation of Euskera has been reversed and the number of speakers of the language and has grown significantly. According to data collected by the Basque Institute of Statistics (Eustat)⁴⁵, the population in the BAC over the age of 16 that speaks Basque has grown significantly since 1991. In that year, the number of persons whose mother tongue and whose language of use at home was Euskera stood at 24% of the population in the age range studied. This figure rose to 29% in 2001, 32% in 2011 and 34% in 2016. This is mainly due to a substantial rise in the proportion of people between the ages of 16 and 24 who speak Basque, which increased from a 25% in 1991 to a 71% in 2016, presumably as a result of the implementation of educational models in which Basque is a vehicular language.

Euskadi regulated the incorporation of Basque into the educational system in 1983, when it legislated on the inclusion of Basque as a vehicular language in non-university education. Two main parallel pathways were followed in the process of promoting the use and knowledge of Basque in school contexts. On the one hand, during the academic year 1981/1982, the Basque Government designed the programme IRALE⁴⁶, which implemented multiple actions mainly aimed at improving the level of written and oral Basque among teachers teaching in non-university education centres. Meanwhile, three main educational models were established regarding the use of Basque and Spanish at school:

- 1) Model A: the vehicular language is Spanish, with the exception of Basque as a subject.
- 2) Model B: part of the subjects is taught in Basque and part in Spanish.
- 3) Model D⁴⁷: the vehicular language is Basque, with the exception of the Spanish as a subject.

Each of these models includes English as a foreign language, following the guidelines of the Spanish legislation.

Key results of educational models using Basque as a vehicular language: the case of the *ikastola* system

In spite of the sociolinguistic complexities of the BAC that will be detailed below, as a language, Basque is healthier than in previous decades. Thanks to the linguistic policies developed by the Basque Government⁴⁸ over recent years, which advocate the use of positive actions in favour of the minority language (Basque) together with a firm

⁴⁵ An autonomous body of the Basque Government, created in 1986. See <https://en.eustat.eus/indice.html>

⁴⁶ IRALE (*Irakasleak Alfabetatu eta Euskalduntzea*) is a programme designed to promote Basque literacy skills among teachers in Euskadi: <https://www.euskadi.eus/irale-presentacion/web01-a3heusk/es/>

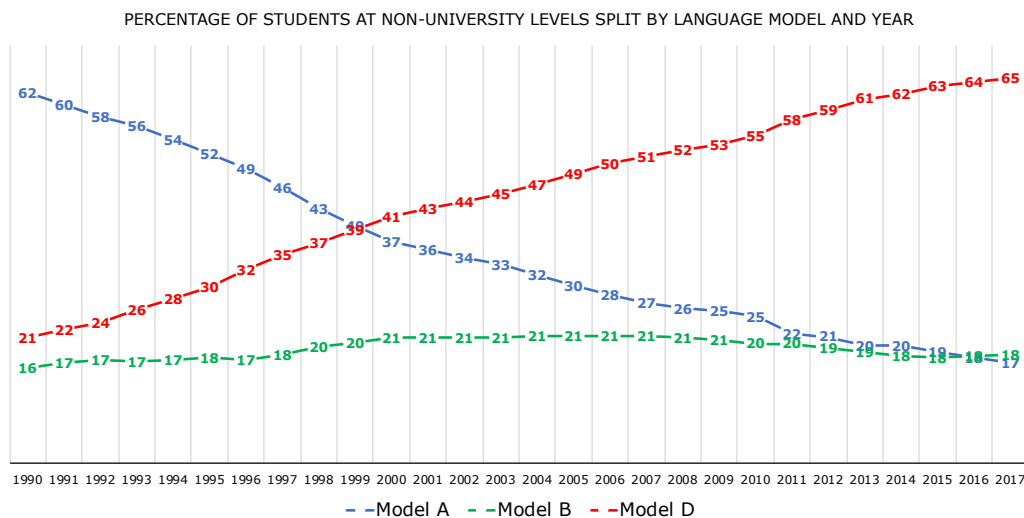
⁴⁷ The letter D is used to refer to the model in which the vehicular language is Basque, rather than C, because of the scarce appearance in Basque of the letter C.

⁴⁸ See information from the Department of Culture and Language Policy of the Basque Government in this regard: <https://www.euskadi.eus/gobierno-vasco/departamento-cultura-politica-linguistica/>

commitment to the promotion of educational models in which Basque is the vehicular language, an increase is evident in the number of Basque speakers.

Currently, the educational model in which Basque is used as the main vehicular language (model D) is clearly the hegemonic one in Euskadi, comprising 66% of the students, compared with 18% attending an institution employing a bilingual model in which Basque and Spanish are used equally (model B), and the 15% being educated under a model that uses Spanish as the vehicular language (model A). As shown in the following graph, created to depict the data reported by Eustat, the percentage of students from non-university educational levels attending schools in which Basque is primarily used as the *lingua franca* has grown at a rate of approximately 1.5% every year, while the percentage of students enrolled in a Spanish-only model has decreased at a similar rate. While in 1990 the percentage of pupils attending an institution based on model A was three times higher than the percentage of students attending model D (60% vs. 21%), by the year 2000 the ratio had already reversed (37% vs. 41%). This trend has been maintained since then; nowadays, the number of students educated under model D is more than four times larger than the number of pupils under model A. This preference is ever more marked in the earliest levels of education, with 76% of primary school students and 70% of secondary school students using Basque as their only vehicular language.

FIGURE 10 Percentage of students distributed across different models of bilingual education in the Basque country



Source: case study authors.

Using the hegemonic model of language immersion in Basque (model D), the ikastola system welcomes a large percentage of students and focuses its work on offering an education in Basque that fosters knowledge and use of the Basque language and an appreciation of Basque culture, thus reinforcing multilingualism within society. To achieve this, in recent years the ikastola system has adopted a series of methodologies that try to respond to the diversity of the linguistic backgrounds of its students. Each school develops its own pathway towards Basque immersion, with different degrees of prioritisation being given to Basque over other home language(s) during students' initial reception phase. Thus, one can easily find an ikastola in which students progressively move to a Basque-only model starting from a scenario in which languages other than the minority language are present (i.e. Spanish, the majority language). At the same time, one can also find an ikastola that focuses on the use of Basque as the core vehicular language from the initial stages. The approach taken depends on where a school is located and on the usage of Basque in its immediate context. In addition, the ikastola system, in accordance with national guidelines, includes within its curriculum a space dedicated to the learning of

foreign languages. Following agreements reached in the matter at state level, the space devoted to foreign languages in the ikastola system is mostly occupied by English. Importantly, the ikastola system has gradually shifted from teaching English as a subject, to a model based on Content-Based Instruction (CBI) and on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL; see Cenoz, 2015). The competences of students in the foreign language is increasing progressively.

To illustrate this flexible model in which Euskera and Basque culture are given priority, we will turn to two paradigmatic examples of ikastola, Lauro Ikastola (in Bizkaia) and Olabide Ikastola (in Araba). The history of both centres is extensive and reflects the political and linguistic difficulties that Basque society has faced. Lauro Ikastola began in Bilbao in 1957 as the first ikastola within its respective territory; likewise, Olabide Ikastola was the first centre in its area when it opened in 1963. The sociolinguistic reality of the territories of Bizkaia and Araba is very diverse – a fact reflected in the trajectory of both centres. Olabide Ikastola and Lauro Ikastola both adopted the linguistic model of Basque as a vehicular language (model D). However, the reality of their students is very different. In Olabide Ikastola, the majority of students come from Spanish-speaking families while the Basque-speaking families represent a minority. The linguistic profile of Lauro Ikastola is different: currently, around 75% of students' families contain at least one parents who knows Basque.

In Olabide Ikastola, children begin their learning process with two years in a framework in which both Basque and Spanish are present simultaneously. The communicative options are plural, and communication can be in both Basque and Spanish, taking into account the real situations that occur in the classroom and giving singular value to the effective link between each child's mother tongue and the ikastola (see Costa, Duñabeitia and Keysar, 2019 for an explanation of this). At the age of four, Spanish, Basque and English are already present in the various scenarios Olabide Ikastola offers to the children in the context of free movement. It is during the Primary Education stage that subjects are introduced in English following the CLIL model. During Secondary Education, two other foreign languages – German and French – are offered, along with corresponding opportunities for exchanges with France and Germany. In addition to this, and taking into account that Basque is a minority language and that English is a foreign language with a limited presence within the historical territory in which the school is located, Olabide Ikastola offers short stays to encourage the use of English and Basque in natural language environment through linguistic immersion outside the school with native teachers, in order to reinforce the knowledge and use of both languages.

Students attending Lauro Ikastola begin their educational journey at the school when they are three years old, and receive from the beginning an Euskera reinforcement system with daily splits with specialists, followed by specific workshops in Primary Education. Since the beginning of the process, the vehicular language has been Basque, and the ikastola system prioritises as a primary objective the acquisition by students of a high level of competence in Euskera. Once this goal has been achieved, other languages are introduced. Spanish is introduced in primary education. English is the first foreign language to be added into students' repertoires, introduced at the age of 5 by native teachers using a playful approach to language. French is the second foreign language to be introduced, this time in secondary education. The linguistic project is complemented with an internationalisation plan that includes stays abroad and exchange programmes.

Key enabling factors and challenges

Lauro Ikastola and Olabide Ikastola, despite sharing ideals and vision regarding the promotion of Basque and the Basque culture, respond differently to the miscellaneous linguistic profiles of their families. The different linguistic approaches that are followed are simply paradigmatic examples of a complex educational system that is sometimes difficult to govern and manage. This requires the different treatment of languages in each centre,

resulting in a diverse educational picture that calls for the design of general educational policies that include an overarching transversal pedagogical approach to language use and management.

The real success of the ikastola system is a consequence of the way in which the minority language is managed in response to a highly complex linguistic landscape where its presence (and that of the majority language) is highly variable. This diverse and adaptive system for the use and management of languages is the key enabling factor boosting language competences in the Basque Country, and it stems from the series of challenges faced by the ikastola system. Schools within the ikastola system must respond continuously to five major challenges that are intrinsically linked to the idiosyncrasy of a Basque region set in a Spanish state, in a world where cross-border movement is constant. The way in which languages are managed within a given school in response to the immediate context of its students is a key factor determining whether such challenges can be turned into an opportunity for improvement, leading to excellence.

First, as has been well documented in the literature (see Leonet, Cenoz and Gorter, 2017), the use of Basque as the main vehicle for communication within a school means that the institution's educational *lingua franca* is a minority regional language. This constitutes the first challenge an ikastola needs to face, since the language that monopolises most time within the school is not the majority language of Basque society, nor the main communication language within the Spanish state (Gorter, Zenotz, Etxague and Cenoz, 2014).

Second, the response made by a school to the heterogeneity of the Basque competences of its students when entering the school system is a key factor that can enable educational success. According to data for 2016 reported by Eustat⁴⁹, in family settings, friendships or formal contexts, 40% of the population of Euskadi speak mainly in Basque, 39% speak mainly in Spanish, and 21% use both languages. Thus, a comparatively large percentage of students enter the ikastola being mainly Spanish-speaking monolinguals, compared with the percentage of children who access the ikastola speaking mainly Basque in their family environment, and or using both languages. Therefore, the percentage of people who have learned Basque as a second language at school is not negligible, giving rise to a complex linguistic diversity that generates a heterogeneous linguistic picture in the profile of student access (Ortega et al, 2015).

The third challenge that must be addressed by the ikastola is closely linked to the previous one. It refers to the different levels of use of Basque within families, depending on the historical territory in which they are rooted. Euskadi has three historical territories (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and Araba), and the knowledge and use of Basque is not comparable between them. According to Eustat data for 2016, while 42% of the families in the historical territory of Gipuzkoa use either both languages or only Basque, this percentage drops to 18% in Bizkaia, and 9% in Araba. As expected, these percentages are directly reflected in the linguistic profiles of new pupils entering each ikastola. Therefore, it is not possible to establish general parameters that adequately characterise the students within the ikastola system and their linguistic knowledge and competence, without taking into account the territory in which each centre is located. While this directly affects the management of languages in each ikastola, it also has a clear impact on the way in which students' immediate social context supports the use of one language or another, through a symbiotic process of linguistic reinforcement that is not always supportive to Basque.

The fourth challenge for the ikastola corresponds to the use of non-official languages in the family context, as a result (in most cases) of migratory movements. Eustat estimated in 2016 that the percentage of families in Euskadi using a non-official language was 3%,

⁴⁹ Euskal Estatistika Erakundea - Instituto Vasco de Estadística [Basque Statistics Intitute]: <https://en.eustat.eus/indice.html>

which represents more than 60,000 people. In addition to this, the number of students of foreign nationality enrolled in non-university education centres has grown at a rate of more than 1,000 people per year, rising to more than 36,000 for the 2017-2018 academic year according to Eustat. Of these, around 50% are enrolled in the Basque-only model (D) and it is therefore assumed that many of them enter an ikastola. The challenge of this is not trivial, since in these cases the family language is not only far from the regional minority language, but also from the majority language of the community, representing a clear linguistic barrier that hinders processes of acculturation (see Schwartz et al, 2010).

Finally, the fifth challenge facing the ikastola is that of responding to the current national legislation on the teaching of foreign languages in the school context⁵⁰, which aligns partially with the recommendations of the Council of the European Union (2019) for the inclusion of foreign languages in the school curriculum. The ikastola system is still far from achieving results similar to those obtained in many other European countries as far as foreign language learning is concerned. The reasons for this stem from a confluence of factors linked to the linguistic complexity inherent in Basque society; an inappropriate approach to foreign language teaching strategies; the limited provision of adequate human resources; and to a social context in which foreign languages have only an incidental presence. We firmly believe that CLIL-based methodologies that also allow a comprehensive response to language diversity will yield a progressive increase in students' foreign languages competences.

Steps forward: towards effective multilingualism and effective multilingual teacher training

The idiosyncrasy of the Basque region in all of the dimensions mentioned above presents great educational challenges in terms of the management, teaching and learning of languages. These challenges require new approaches and fundamental structural changes on at least at two levels. On the one hand, it is absolutely necessary to address linguistic diversity by adopting an inclusive approach in which different languages actively coexist without creating diglossic⁵¹ scenarios (see Duñabeitia, 2017). On the other hand, and deriving from the above, it is essential to provide teachers with sufficient grounding and competence in the use and management of languages in order to allow them to respond to current needs within their schools.

Next, we will elaborate on these two parallel paths, with views and contributions from both the scientific field and from those who design and coordinate teacher training plans in the university context, in order to generate a comprehensive vision.

For a correct response to linguistic diversity and language training needs, it is essential to understand that the reality in the Basque territory is that many speakers of region's the two co-official languages use both constantly, alternating between them depending on the interlocutor, or even within the same conversation. This phenomenon, known as 'language switching' is very common among bilingual communities (Auer, 2013; de Bruin, Samuel and Duñabeitia, 2018). Language switching occurs frequently in communities that want to strengthen or preserve a minority language, as is the case with Euskera or Welsh (Lewis, 2008). The underlying cognitive and linguistic processes involved in this have been studied deeply in laboratory contexts (Costa and Santesteban, 2004; Grainger and Beauvillain, 1987; Meuter and Allport, 1999; Thomas and Allport, 2000). Despite the fact that language switching is an extended reality in multilingual societies, mixing and alternating between languages is typically discouraged and actively avoided in the educational contexts of multilingual centres.

⁵⁰ Organic Law 8/2013 for the improvement of the quality of education (LOMCE).

⁵¹ Diglossia corresponds to a situation in which two languages or two varieties of the same language are used under different conditions within a community, creating different linguistic contexts depending on the language selection made by the speakers.

As stated above, a student in Euskadi can choose to receive all of their education in Spanish (model A), all of it in Basque (model D), or in a setting in which half of subjects are taught in one language and the other half in the other language (model B), the last of these being similar to the separation of languages that takes place in two-way immersion programmes implemented in the United States and Canada (Alanís, 2000). But even in the seemingly bilingual model (B), it is not expected that the same subject will be taught using two languages during the same academic year (a rule known as 'one subject – one language'). However, this practice has not received scientific support and no evidence exists to show that learning academic content is more successful when it is carried out through a single vehicular language compared to the use of two (or more) languages. In fact, the existing scientific evidence calls for a very different conclusion. A seminal line of research coordinated from Euskadi has consistently shown that learning is no worse at the behavioural or cerebral level in truly multilingual learning scenarios in which active code switching occurs, in comparison to monolingual contexts in which only one language is used for instruction (see Antón, Thierry, Dimitropoulou and Duñabeitia, in press; Antón, Thierry and Duñabeitia, 2015; Antón, Thierry, Gaborov, Anasagasti and Duñabeitia, 2016).

It seems clear that there is no scientific evidence supporting any drawback or negative effect of language mixing during learning, and yet the separation of languages is the most widespread practice within formal educational contexts in Euskadi today.

In addition, bilinguals who constantly switch between their languages have been shown to perform better in contexts in which they have to quickly change routines and adapt to new rules (Hartanto and Yang, 2016), and their language production skills in multilingual contexts are significantly better when free language switching is allowed (de Bruin et al., 2018). Therefore, while it is true that the educational models currently operating within the Basque education system have done a great job of increasing the number of Basque speakers and their proficiency in the language, it appears that it is not yet the ideal model, and is far from the kind of multilingual immersion that is sought in a society that must also incorporate foreign languages into the curriculum. This is a challenge that policymakers, scientists and educators must face together in a three-way dialogue specifically oriented towards the improvement of teacher training programmes and the development of new educational paradigms.

Thus, teacher training requires adjustments at university level too in order to provide the educational system with trained professionals equipped with good language skills and with strategies for the effective management of these languages⁵². Solid work has been done in the process of spreading Basque within the education system of Euskadi and among the educators, and the current quality of the Basque educational system is mainly *the result of the implementation of linguistic immersion models*. Nonetheless, structural changes to teacher training programmes are required in order to adapt them to the current needs of Basque society and its education system. The proposed *improvements in teacher training* concern the way in which future teachers access university studies, promoting the creation of specific entry criteria and tests, similar to those used in other communities such as Catalonia, where basic competencies relating to emotional and attitudinal aspects are given value within university entrance exams. In this vein, *ad hoc* practices to assess future teachers' knowledge of the three key languages (Basque, Spanish and English) could be promoted, as this would ultimately have a clear impact on the management and implementation of language plans in schools.

⁵² The authors would want to thank Begoña Pedrosa, dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Education Sciences of Mondragon Unibertsitatea, for her insightful comments at this regard, and Asier Romero, dean of the School of Education in Bilbao of the University of the Basque Country (Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea) for his recommendations and suggestions regarding the future of teacher training programmes in Euskadi.

Scalability and transferability

The path to be followed with regard to the training of future Basque teachers must thus be integrated into the framework of a trilingual education system advocated by the Department of Education of the Basque Government, and grounded also in the report made by the Advisory Council of Euskera (EAB, from its Basque name *Euskararen Aholku Batzordea*). This underlines the need to devote more significant space to the teaching of a third language alongside the teaching of the official languages of the region. In order to make effective societal changes towards an increase in the knowledge, use and promotion of Basque, and to achieve a long-lasting impact on the linguistic landscape of Euskadi, new language management models need to be designed. It seems clear that the most widespread language management models are not in harmony with current needs, and new proposals based on effective multilingualism, code switching and CLIL methodologies should play an increasing role in the Basque education system. Stemming from models that favour linguistic immersion in Basque (model D), and with an eye on the paradigmatic example of the ikastola system, policymakers should seek new plurilingual strategies that respond comprehensively to the linguistic diversity of the Basque Country. In addition, and in response to heterogeneity in the use of languages across the different historical territories of Euskadi, it is necessary to provide each school with greater autonomy to establish its own linguistic projects in response to its own sociolinguistic reality.

It should be taken into account that the essence of the linguistic models implemented in the Basque educational system stems from the idiosyncrasy of the region's linguistic panorama, in which a minority language, Euskera, enjoys co-official status with the majority language, Spanish, in addition to a series of foreign languages. This imposes clear limitations when analysing the transferability of concrete surface structure models to other communities. At the micro level, it is important to remember that the key to the overall success of the ikastola project has been the degree of autonomy given to each school in relation to its internal organisation and its flexibility to develop its own language management strategies. Moreover, at a macro level, it is not easy to find bilingual regions in which the linguistic distance between the two co-official languages (and the historical facts and changes that have determined the social presence of each of them) are similar to those in Euskadi. The sociolinguistic singularity of the territory, the specificities of its linguistic policy, the commitment to linguistic immersion in the minority language and the typological distance between the two official languages of the region, suggest that fully transferring the concrete experiences of the Basque model to other regions could be a chimera. But the lessons learned from the Basque Country at a conceptual level could easily serve to orient educational proposals for language management in other regions. Despite the vast range of sociolinguistic contexts found within Euskadi, and the diverse educational responses made to them, one clear-cut result remains constant and could serve to orient policies in other multilingual regions: the increased presence of the minority language in schools does not lead to a hampering of literacy skills in the majority language. Hence, the degree of autonomy with which each ikastola has responded to its own sociolinguistic context could be informative to policymakers in other contexts, assisting them in the process of developing language allocation and management strategies that fit their unique sociolinguistic configuration.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it seems necessary to provide a global response to the needs of a changing educational system in the Basque Country on the part of the various institutions involved in the school system and the training of professionals, while still paying attention to the characteristics surrounding context of each school. It is therefore essential to address the idiosyncrasies of the multilingual reality of Euskadi and its sociolinguistic complexity, taking into account the recommendations of the European Union that are supported by political, scientific and educational agents.

3.5. Case study 5. Language sensitive curriculum and focus on language awareness in Finland⁵³

Case study author: Jenni Alisaari



Jenni Alisaari worked at the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Turku, Finland since the autumn of 2013. She teaches pre-service and in-service teachers on linguistically and culturally diverse education. Her main areas of research and teacher training include linguistically and culturally responsive teaching, advocating multilingualism, language learning, and especially language learning by singing. Alisaari has trained teachers and student teachers at various levels of education: early childhood, primary school, secondary school, upper-secondary school, vocational training and adult education. She has also been involved with curriculum design at national and municipal level in Finland.

The Finnish Core Curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014) determines the operating culture for basic education in Finland. One of the main aspects of the curriculum is the concept of language awareness: school is a place where languages and identities meet and interact with each other. Students should be enabled to use and develop their whole linguistic resources. Every student has a basic right to their own language and culture, and multilingualism⁵⁴ is seen as a natural part of every school.

Finland has two national languages, Finnish and Swedish, and in many municipalities schooling is carried out in both languages. Every student in Finland is expected to learn both languages. In addition, the Sami language has official status in four municipalities in northern Finland. Here, schooling is also carried out in Sami. Many students also have first languages other than the official languages of Finland – for example, Russian, Estonian, Arabic or Somali – and all students learn at least one more additional language at school, usually English. Thus, within the curriculum, every student is considered to be multilingual and every language equally valuable: “Each community and community member is multilingual. Parallel use of various languages in the school’s daily life is seen as natural, and languages are appreciated.” (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 26.) According to the curriculum, in a language-sensitive community, attitudes towards languages and language communities are discussed, and it must be understood that language plays a central role in learning, interaction, collaboration, the development of identity and integration into society.

Aims of the language-sensitive curriculum

Education in Finland has an excellent reputation. However, recently, some concerns have challenged educators and the providers of education to consider new solutions: learning environments in schools, as well as the whole of Finnish society, have become more linguistically and culturally diverse, and at the same time, reading habits have changed. For example, not all Finnish adolescents who finish basic education, especially boys, have sufficient reading skills to live in a society that emphasises reading within every area of life. By the end of basic education, boys’ reading skills are 1.5 years behind those of girls (Vettenranta et al., 2016). There also exists a considerable gap in learning outcomes between students with immigrant backgrounds and other students (Harju-Luukkainen et al, 2014; Kuukka and Metsämuuronen, 2016; OECD, 2015; Vettenranta et al., 2016), and the Finnish language skills of students with immigrant background are not at a level sufficient to study academic subjects (Kuukka and Metsämuuronen, 2016). On this basis,

⁵³ This chapter is partly based on a study about changes in language policy in Finnish curricula between 2004 and 2014: Alisaari, Vigren and Mäkelä (2019b). Multilingualism as a resource: Policy changes in Finnish education. In: Hammer, S., Viesca, K.M. & Commins, N.L. (eds.) *International Research on Content Teachers Working with Multilingual Learners: Policy, Perspectives, Preparation, Practice*. (pp. 29–49). Abingdon: Routledge.

⁵⁴ Multilingualism consists of all of the languages and dialects that students interact in, including their first languages, the language of schooling, and any additional languages they start to study. In this view, all children can be seen as multilingual.

concerns have been raised about the development of democracy in Finland, and thus, greater attention to the role of language has also been taken into account in the design of the current curriculum.

At the same time, the European Union has guided support for multilingualism and the role of language in learning. Furthermore, Finland's National Agency for Education, the main body involved in designing the curriculum, has shown a good understanding of research and global trends indicating that attention to literacy skills is an important development topic at school (Personal discussions with Paula Mattila and Leena Nissilä, August 2019).

To respond to these challenges, the Finnish National Agency for Education renewed the curriculum for basic education in a way that highly emphasises the role of languages in learning (National Agency for Education, 2014). Its values are specifically connected to the Constitution of Finland, Non-discrimination Act 21/2014, and to human rights. According to the curriculum, in schools, students from diverse linguistic backgrounds should be able to encounter each other and learn together in authentic interactions without being blocked by the school language (Alisaari, Vigren and Mäkelä, 2019b). Thus, the goal of the curriculum is to provide educational equity for all students, and to ensure that every student, regardless of their background, achieves effective literacy and academic language skills during basic education (see also Beacco et al, 2015). As a result, the current curriculum emphasises that language-sensitive teaching is relevant for every student, and targets not only Finnish language learners.

The renewed Finnish Core Curriculum (National Agency for Education, 2014) came into effect in 2016. The requirement of this new, language-sensitive curriculum is that "every teacher is a language teacher" (National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 242). In practice, this means that every teacher must take into account the role language plays in learning, as well as the role of language use within their specific subject area and the challenges language may pose in different subjects. Furthermore, every teacher must be aware of the linguistic skills that students need to learn while studying different subjects (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014). Thereby, Finnish policy makers have responded to the call for linguistically responsive pedagogy made by Lucas and Villegas (2011; 2013). In this kind of pedagogy, teachers have sociolinguistic consciousness, they value linguistic diversity, and advocate for language learners. They understand the basic features of language learning and the linguistic features common to their disciplines. In addition, they are able to determine the language demands of classroom activities and the know-how required to scaffold their learners (Lucas and Villegas 2011). Linguistically responsive pedagogy benefits every student in the school, but especially those learners who are vulnerable due to learning difficulties or developing language skills (Beacco et al., 2015).

BOX 9 Language subjects in the curriculum

In the curriculum, "first language and literature" is used as a main subject (hypernym), which has several sub-syllabi beneath it: Finnish language and literature; Swedish language and literature; Sami language and literature; Romani language and literature; sign language and literature; other languages as a first language; Finnish and Swedish as a second language and literature; Finnish and Swedish for Sami speakers; and Finnish and Swedish for sign language users. The main subject includes various core duties that are common to every underlying syllabus, and it is emphasised that there must be collaboration between sub-syllabi. The fact that sub-syllabi resemble each other more than they did previously is a significant change as this raises the status of all first languages and reduces the separation of Finnish or Swedish as a first or additional language. This is a concrete step on the way to reducing language hierarchies.

Source: Alisaari et al., 2019b; National Agency for Education, 2014.

Importantly, basic education values within the new curriculum include valuing multilingualism as a resource for learning, and understanding the significance of all languages (Alisaari et al., 2019b; National Agency for Education, 2014). Teachers are

required to consider students' first languages as resources for learning (see also Blommaert, Creve and Villaert, 2006) and use multilingual practices in their classrooms (Beeman and Urow, 2012; Escamilla et al., 2013; Garcia and Wei, 2014) because, according to research, students' first languages play an important role in their learning of other languages and subjects at school (Cummins, 1979, 2007; Goldenberg, 2008; Ovando and Combs, 2011; Slavin and Cheung, 2005). The goal is to achieve better learning outcomes for multilingual students by supporting multilingual practices (see also Garcia and Hesson, 2015).

The curriculum acknowledges that linguistically responsive education is every child's right, and every student's languages, cultures, identities and prior knowledge must be taken into account (see also Ladson-Billings, 1994; Valdiviezo and Nieto, 2017). Pupils are guided to view cultural and linguistic diversity fundamentally as a positive resource. Thus, the viewpoint of the curriculum approaches languages and multilingualism from the perspective of linguistic human rights (Skuttnabb-Kangas, 2017): it sees languages as being valuable *per se*. Every student is encouraged to know and appreciate their own linguistic background (Alisaari et al., 2019b; National Agency for Education, 2014). The curriculum also requires that "[e]ducation supports the pupils' development as versatile and skilful users of language, both in their mother tongue and in other languages. They are encouraged to use even limited language skills to interact and express themselves" (National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 19).

One way to support and value multilingualism is also to provide first-language education for students with a first language other than the language of the school. Within the curriculum, "first languages of immigrants" have their own curriculum with aims, content and evaluation criteria. This is important for the recognition of the value of all languages. Moreover, when teaching additional languages, multilingualism, as well as other languages and cultures, are valued: one of the aims in learning languages is to increase students' understanding of cultural diversity and linguistic awareness. Multilingualism is also present in the curriculum's requirements for multiliteracy: every student needs to be able to interpret, produce and value various forms of information mediated by different media, using verbal, visual, auditory, numeric and kinaesthetic symbols and incorporating all of the languages they know (Alisaari et al., 2019b; National Agency for Education, 2014).

One of the goals of the curriculum is to support the learning of the multiliteracy and academic language of all students: "multiliteracy is developed in all school subjects, progressing from everyday language to mastering the language and presentational modes of different ways of knowing" (National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 21). Every subject is considered to have a specific language with its own genres, textual practices and concepts. Every teacher is considered to be a linguistic model and a teacher of the language of the subject they teach, and thus, learners' competences in the content are developed at the same time as their language skills (see also Beacco et al., 2015).

In the section of the curriculum relating to assessment, teachers are instructed to consider the language level and linguistic background of students with immigrant backgrounds. Teachers are also encouraged to use various flexible methods for assessment. For example, students are provided with opportunities to use information and communication technologies, and they can show their skills orally. For assessments, teachers are also advised to gather information on students' progress in different areas of learning and in different learning contexts. Possible lack of knowledge in the language of instruction (Finnish or Swedish) must be taken into account when planning and implementing assessments. Furthermore, students whose first language is not Finnish can be assessed verbally instead of using numeric grading up to the end of Basic Education (National Agency for Education, 2014).

BOX 10 Goals of the new Core Curriculum

Goals of the new Core Curriculum:

- Educational equity should be provided for all the students.
- Every student needs to achieve effective literacy and academic language skills.
- Every student should learn academic language.
- Every teacher is a language teacher.
- Better learning outcomes should be achieved for multilingual students by supporting multilingual practices.
- Every student needs to be able to interpret, produce and value various forms of information mediated by different media, using verbal, visual, auditory, numeric and kinaesthetic symbols and incorporating all of the languages they know.

Source: National Agency for Education, 2014.

Target students

Linguistically responsive pedagogy and language awareness target all students: nobody speaks academic language or subject-specific language as their first language; thus, everyone has to learn several dimensions of language at school. Moreover, according to the Finnish Core Curriculum, everyone is multilingual: dialects, registers and languages are all considered as part of multilingual repertoires.

Linguistically responsive teaching benefits every student in every classroom. It can promote more inclusive education and increase every student's opportunities for success in the wider society. It can be used to provide educational equity for our students: Our job as educators is to provide students with knowledge without allowing language to be a barrier.

Supporting languages and developing language skills

Specific reference is made in the curriculum to students with Sami, Romani, sign language or other multilingual backgrounds, and the importance of supporting the development of every student's identity and their path to becoming equal members of their own cultural communities. The curriculum advocates for the maintenance of these languages and support for the linguistic identities of these students, emphasising that all languages are resources for learning. The value of home languages is given remarkable emphasis.

For immigrant students, learning the national languages is seen as essential for school success. Emphasis is placed on Finnish language learning (or Swedish language learning⁵⁵ in Swedish speaking areas). In 2016, 5.2% of students in secondary school studied Finnish as an additional language, and 0.1% Swedish as an additional language (Education Statistics Finland, 2018). In addition, many municipalities arrange the teaching of multiple immigrant languages as the value of first languages is recognised. Even though the teaching of the first languages is complementary, it is worthy of note that they are included in the educational policy document.

Evidence on the implementation of curricula

In Finland, the student population differs with respect to students' linguistic backgrounds depending on the geographical area in which they live. For example, on the coast and in the archipelago, the Swedish-speaking population is larger than in other parts of the country. On the other hand, in the northern part of Finland, there are more Sami speakers than in other areas. Furthermore, especially close to the eastern border, Russian speakers

⁵⁵ These terms are used in the Finnish curriculum as the names of these sub-syllabi.

are well represented, and in major cities, along with many other languages, Estonian, Arabic and Somali are common among students. Meanwhile, in smaller municipalities – particularly those in central Finland – students may be mainly Finnish speakers, and thus teachers sometimes assume that language-sensitive or multilingual pedagogies do not apply to their schools. However, as previously mentioned, the Finnish curriculum requires that the same principles of language awareness should apply to every student and every teacher and in every school, regardless of the linguistic backgrounds of its students.

Multilingualism has been highly valued in Finland for decades, and the learning of additional languages has been given strong emphasis since the renewal of basic education in 1972. During grades 1–9, every student studies at least two additional languages, one of them being Swedish or Finnish, and another one of their own choice, most often English (99.3% of students). However, students are now choosing to study fewer foreign languages at school than in previous years, and English is the main foreign language taught, even being offered in primary schools. Previously, had been opportunities to study French, German and Russian as well (Pyykkö, 2017). Nevertheless, studying a first additional language begins in the first grade.

However, despite Finland's official multilingualism and the high value placed on learning additional languages, school practices were mainly monolingual until the implementation of the new core curriculum in 2016 (Alisaari, Heikkola, Acquah and Commins, 2019a). Even in the areas where both Finnish and Swedish or Finnish and Sami are spoken, there were – and remain – separate schools for each language. Language immersion or language-enriched classes have existed (in English, Swedish, French, German and Russian), but in their instructional practices, languages have been kept separate. Furthermore, in Finnish policy documents, linguistic diversity refers primarily to immigrant students (Zilliacus, Holm and Sahlström, 2017). Thus, increasing migration has widened the discussion of multilingualism and its effects on education in Finland (Alisaari et al., 2019b).

Despite the potential of the core curriculum, Aalto and Tarnanen (2015) claim that linguistically responsive teaching has not been a very common feature of Finnish teacher training. In addition, our recent research indicates that Finnish teachers and school leaders are unfamiliar with the principles of multilingualism presented in the curriculum, and lack knowledge and skills relating to linguistically responsive pedagogy. The administrators we interviewed were also worried about the way in which linguistically responsive pedagogy is actually being implemented in schools. Thus, there is a need for professional development in linguistically responsive teaching (Alisaari et al., 2019a; Alisaari et al., 2019b; Alisaari and Heikkola, under review, a & b).

Importantly, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, and Finnish National Agency for Education are currently funding several projects that focus on developing teachers' skills in linguistically responsive teaching, both in pre-service teacher education as well as in professional development for in-service teachers (see, for example, www.dived.fi).

Developing culturally sustained and linguistically responsive teacher education (DivEd) focuses on developing national teacher training programmes, as well as providing professional development for in-service teachers. The project's outcomes include practical suggestions for everyday school practices, and for the contents of curricula and courses in teacher education.

Another project, **New Finnish languages of Eastern Helsinki**, funded by the Kone Foundation, has developed methods for multilingual pedagogies by working closely with students and teachers in schools.

A third project, **Linguistically Sensitive Teaching in All Classrooms (LISTiAC)**, co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, also aims to develop teacher education and professional development. It shares the same goals as DivEd, but while DivEd only works nationally, LISTiAC's goals are common to several EU countries.

Thus, a lot is going on both within teacher education and within schools. However, as one Finnish administrator put it, “it is a big leap to make multilingualism part of mainstream thinking” (Alisaari et al., 2019). Thus, the results of the current curriculum and all of these development projects at the level of individual students and teachers remain to be seen. However, much anecdotal information already exists about good practices supporting the implementation of linguistically responsive pedagogy in schools. For example, collaboration between language and subject teachers has increased; subject teachers have become more aware of the challenges language can pose for students; and students are encouraged more than previously to use their first languages as resources for learning. For example, as a result of DivEd, teachers report that they have become more aware of languages and cultures, and that their attitudes towards them have become more positive. However, they have also expressed the need for further professional development to transfer these attitude level to practices (Personal discussions with Kiia Kuusento, February 2020).

Key enabling factors

The difference between the previous curriculum and the current one in Finland is remarkable: the whole understanding of the role of languages in learning and thinking has changed, and language education is now present throughout the curriculum. For this change to occur, a great deal of shared understanding was required between researchers, policy makers, teachers, school leaders and teacher trainers. It has also required a huge national commitment and political will from both the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the National Agency for Education, both on a financial and an administrative level.

For example, to give linguistically responsive education a central role in the process of designing the curriculum, the National Agency for Education established a special group that included experts on language and linguistically responsive teaching, and focused on multiliteracy⁵⁶ and linguistically and culturally responsive pedagogy. The work of this group can now be seen in different sections of the curriculum, especially in special sections relating to cultural diversity and language awareness. The group was also given opportunities on several occasions to talk to teacher trainers and the publishers of textbooks, which benefitted the implementation of the language-sensitive curriculum (Harmanen and Mattila, 2017; Personal discussion with Leena Nissilä, August 2019).

Many teachers and teacher trainers have collaborated with the National Agency for Education in training other teachers to be able to implement the current curriculum. This has required a lot of persistent work, but also trust on the part of each actor. In addition, school leaders, together with teacher trainers, have been placed a lot of emphasis on organising professional development afternoons for school staff on the subject of linguistically responsive pedagogy. The Ministry of Education and Culture and other funders (e.g. the Kone Foundation and the European Union) have funded several projects for teacher development and the refreshing of teacher education. Thus, the implementation of the curriculum for basic education has required remarkable commitment and shared vision by many different actors, and this work is still in process. The curriculum requires that linguistically responsive teachers understand the role language plays in every student’s growth, learning, collaboration, identity building, and socialisation into society (Alisaari et al., 2019b; National Agency for Education, 2014). This mindset does not develop in the blink of an eye, but requires from teachers long-term processing of the ideas, and motivation towards their own professional development.

⁵⁶ “Multiliteracy refers to the skills of interpreting, producing and valuing different texts, which help students understand the diverse forms of cultural communication and build their own identities. Multiliteracy is based on a broad understanding of the text. Texts mean information expressed by verbal, pictorial, auditory, numerical and kinaesthetic symbol systems and combinations thereof. Texts can be interpreted and produced, for example, in written, spoken, printed, audio-visual or digital form.” (National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 20)

In the long run, it remains to be seen what the actual consequences of the language-sensitive curriculum will be. Will it influence boys' reading skills and the learning outcomes of students with immigrant backgrounds? How will teachers implement the ideas of the curriculum in their classrooms? Ultimately, classroom practices are the ones that matter: the ways in which students' identities are encountered and supported, and their multilingualism is perceived, occurs in the classroom, not on paper. Thus, a lot depends, on the one hand, on individual teachers and their practices, and on the other hand, on teacher trainers and their understanding of the importance of the linguistically responsive pedagogies.

Transferability

From a global perspective, the Finnish National curriculum can be seen as very advanced in its language-related values. The fact that language is seen as being of value *per se*, and that the curriculum strongly supports multilingualism, reflect the socio-linguistic ideologies of Ladson-Billings (1994) and Lucas and Villegas (2013) with regard to linguistically and culturally responsive teaching. The curriculum also supports the views of Skutnabb-Kangas (2017) about the ideology of linguistic human rights. Furthermore, in acknowledging the dimensions of language from basic everyday language to academic language, the curriculum reflects the principles of multilingual pedagogies (see, for example, Cummins, 2007).

Thus, language-sensitive curricula could also be implemented in countries other than Finland. This would require a shared understanding of the importance of languages in learning, both in terms of policy and on a practical level. For a language-sensitive curriculum to be designed and implemented, policy makers, teacher trainers, school leaders and teachers would need to collaborate in a determined manner.

First, policy makers need to make the required changes to policies, with the initiative usually coming from teacher trainers, teachers and researchers.

Second, changes to the curriculum require both financial and human resources: professional development for teachers is a prerequisite for change to occur. It is very rare that this can happen without extra funding.

Third, and most importantly, motivation and strong will are required from teachers and teacher trainers to actually put the changes into practice.

Where all of these aspects are present, or when people are willing to make them happen, language-sensitive curricula can be implemented in any country.

Conclusions

It is difficult at this time to assess the results of the implementation of the current Core Curriculum. As already mentioned, however, much anecdotal evidence exists as to the positive impacts of the Core Curriculum on practices supporting the implementation of linguistically responsive pedagogy in schools. The knowledge we have on the benefits of linguistically responsive teaching shows that it has the potential to benefit every student in every classroom. To enable linguistically responsive teaching to occur, it has to be acknowledged and promoted at curriculum level. The current Finnish Core Curriculum provides teachers with this macro-level support to implement a pedagogy that supports students regardless of their backgrounds: linguistically responsive pedagogy promotes more inclusive education, and increases every student's opportunities for success in society.

Along with support at policy level, the implementing of the curriculum also requires teachers to have sufficient knowledge and skills about teaching in a linguistically responsive way. This approach is relatively new for many teachers, and opportunities must therefore be provided for professional development. It will be interesting what influence large

projects will have on Finnish schools in the future, such as those funded by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Finnish National Agency for Education, which focus on developing teachers' skills in linguistically responsive teaching both in terms of pre-service teacher education as well as in the professional development of in-service teachers. In other words, the most important work happens in classrooms and is carried out by the motivated and skilful teachers. The key role in the implementation of the curriculum is therefore that of individual teachers.

3.6. Case Study 6. CertiLingua network promoting plurilingualism

Case study authors: Orestas Strauka and Hanna Siarova



Mr Orestas Strauka has worked at the Public Policy and Management Institute (Vilnius) since 2018. His interests are linked to migration and education, inclusive education, student-centred learning and instructional practices within higher education institutions and public administration. Orestas served as the deputy Administrative Coordinator of NESET (Network of Experts on the Social Dimension of Education and Training) until the end of 2019, when he moved to work as a project officer responsible for strategic development at the National Agency for Education in Lithuania. He has contributed to the development of several studies relating to distance learning opportunities, educational measures to facilitate the integration of returning Lithuanian migrants into the education system, and student-centred learning practices in European universities.



Ms Hanna Siarova has been researching EU and national policies in the area of education and social inclusion for more than nine years. Hanna currently works as a research manager at the Public Policy and Management Institute (Vilnius), researching early childhood and school education policies, focusing in particular on the factors that explain social disadvantage, as well as the successful integration of students with immigrant backgrounds, looking at language support and multilingual education, intercultural education, the promotion of tolerance and respect for diversity through education. Hanna also represents PPMI as a Board member within the Policy network on Migrant Education (SIRIUS), through which she actively engages in EU-level discussions on inclusive education and the promotion of multilingualism, citizenship and common values of tolerance, freedom and non-discrimination. She was one of the co-authors of the earlier NESET report *Multilingual Education in the Light of Diversity: Lessons Learned*, which provided the contextual basis for the present report.

Description of the CertiLingua Label of Excellence

European integration and the internationalisation of the global economy has increased the importance of multilingualism. In the context of globalisation, young learners are more mobile and experience multiple transitions between different school systems and languages. Educational institutions need, therefore, to prepare pupils for cultural and linguistic diversity and for life in an interconnected world. In this context, the CertiLingua network of schools stands out for its recognition of the importance of multilingualism.

Schools in the CertiLingua network consider language learning an integral part of their educational organisations and teaching practices, being not only a goal in itself, but an important foundation for success in other disciplines. Language learning in CertiLingua schools includes the development of pupils' literacy skills, foreign language learning, bilingual subject teaching, recognition of other languages brought into the school by students, as well as communication with parents and with the wider school environment.

In 2007 the ministries of education in the Netherlands and the North Rhine-Westphalia region in Germany established the CertiLingua Label of Excellence for Plurilingual, European and International Competences. The initial aim of the initiative was to enhance cross-border cooperation and create an international certificate for multilingual, bilingual, European and international competences⁵⁷ (CertiLingua, 2018a). Secondary education institutions award the certificate to high-school students who have demonstrated outstanding achievements in acquiring these competences. Currently, more than 300

⁵⁷ European and international competences consist of students' knowledge, skills and attitudes or, in other words, student's ability to act in an intercultural context. European and international competences are described in more detail in section 1.2.

schools in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and Sweden award CertiLingua certificates (CertiLingua, 2019).

FIGURE 11 The nine countries of the CertiLingua network



Source: authors.

This section further zooms in on:

- The rationale for establishing the CertiLingua initiative, its key objectives and motivational factors for students to pursue CertiLingua certificate.
- The CertiLingua competency framework, and the requirements that a student must meet in order to received the CertiLingua certificate.
- The criteria that educational institutions must meet in order to be accredited to award the CertiLingua certificate.

The goal of the initiative

The CertiLingua Label of Excellence is inspired by European Commission, European Parliament and Council of Europe initiatives to enhance cooperation in the field of multilingualism and improve the effectiveness of language teaching in schools (CertiLingua, 2018a). For instance, the European Commission's aim that all citizens should master at least two languages (hereinafter referred to as 'foreign languages'). in addition to the language(s) of schooling is the central idea behind CertiLingua.

BOX 11 Policy documents that constitute the basis for the CertiLingua initiative

- European Commission (2005). 'A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism'. COM (2005) 596;
- European Commission (2003) 'Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: An Action Plan 2004 – 2006'. COM (2003) 449.
- European Parliament and the Council (2006 and 2018) 'Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning'. OJ 2006/962/EC and OJ 2018/C 189/01.
- Council of the European Union (2008) Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on multilingualism'. OJ 2008/C 140/10.
- European Commission (2008) 'Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment'. COM (2008) 566.
- European Commission (2010) 'Common Framework for Europe Competence'.
- European Centre for Modern Languages (2010) 'Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures'.
- Council of Europe (2018) 'Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture'.
- Council of the European Union (2019) 'Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages'.

Source: compiled by the authors.

CertiLingua's objective is to offer students an education that enables them to pursue a wide array of opportunities after completing secondary education, by focusing on their linguistic and cultural competences (CertiLingua, 2018a). The initiative presents opportunities to students for enhanced language learning. The educational institutions involved in CertiLingua usually offer English, French, Spanish, Dutch, German, Italian or Russian as a second foreign language⁵⁸. Schools in border regions may sometimes offer the neighbouring country's language as a second foreign language.

Once a school joins the CertiLingua network, its students gain the chance to obtain the certificate. The opportunity to improve language competences is free of charge and open to all students. Students are motivated to obtain the certificate because: a) CertiLingua enables them to learn two foreign languages and develop intercultural and plurilingual competence; b) CertiLingua awards students with internationally recognised documentation of their competence that can facilitate access to higher education institutions or enhance employment opportunities. Yet, there are several limitations that the CertiLingua network still has to address on its way to promoting plurilingualism.

First, students can only choose to learn the foreign languages that the school offers. In other words, language learning opportunities are constrained by the capabilities and location of the school (CertiLingua, 2018b). The network does not represent a large proportion of European languages, even though the languages offered are used by an increasing number of students across Europe. Only a handful of the schools teach the languages of immigrant communities. For instance, Salzmänn school in Germany is the only member of CertiLingua network to offer Arabic, Japanese and Chinese. However, according to representatives of the CertiLingua steering committee, the goal of the CertiLingua initiative is to expand its language offer and encourage schools to introduce more languages of growing importance is growing in the school's region.

Second, the requirements of CertiLingua (that students must be able to use two languages at a level of B2 or above⁵⁹) are higher than those set in the national curricula of the countries involved. Consequently, students need to put in additional effort to obtain a

⁵⁸ These are the languages which are pre-filled as options in the feedback form for schools in the network, which they must submit annually to the national CertiLingua Representative (CertiLingua, 2018h). This finding is also reinforced by Oonk, Maslowski and van der Werf (2011).

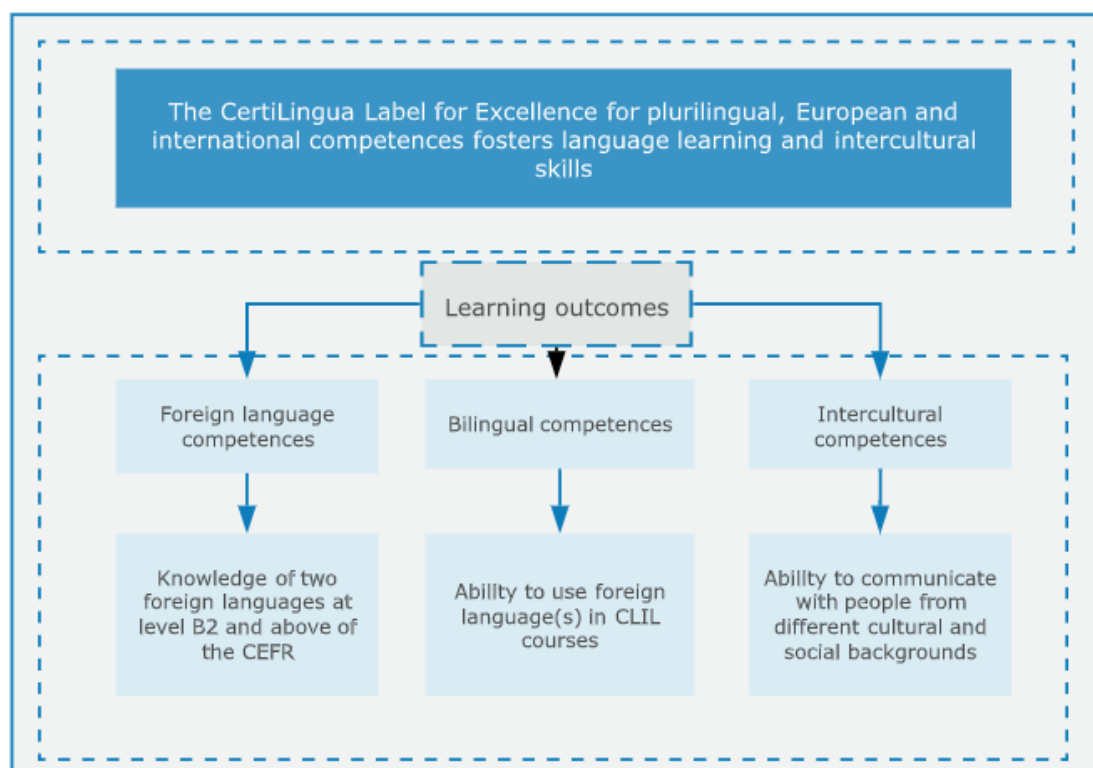
⁵⁹ The subsequent section describes CertiLingua's requirements for foreign languages, bilingual, European and International competences.

CertiLingua certificate This factor might demotivate some students in pursuing the CertiLingua certificate (CertiLingua, 2018b). At the same time, with its high requirements, CertiLingua strives for excellence in language learning.

The CertiLingua competency framework

The CertiLingua Label of Excellence for Plurilingual, European and International Competences is awarded as an addition to the secondary school leaving certificate. The label indicates that a student has acquired multilingual, bilingual and intercultural competences during his or her education in a European and international context (CertiLingua, 2018c). The figure below provides an overview of the CertiLingua competency framework.

FIGURE 12 CertiLingua Competency Framework



Source: created by the authors, based on CertiLingua Programme Description (CertiLingua, 2018a).

By gaining a CertiLingua certificate, students demonstrate that they have enhanced their multilingual competence by: a) reaching the level of B2 in two foreign languages; b) using foreign languages as their learning and working language in one or more content language integrated courses (CLIL) (CertiLingua, 2018c). The criteria for awarding the CertiLingua certificate align with the content of language teaching and learning set out in the respective school's national curriculum.

In addition, learners studying in CertiLingua schools must complete 70 hours of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) courses within the final two years of upper-secondary school, or 140 hours within the final four years before graduating from high school (CertiLingua, 2018c). Usually, the school offers geography, history, biology, chemistry and physics as CLIL subjects. Thus, as well as acquiring multilingual skills,

students with CertiLingua certificate learn to transfer subject knowledge from one language to another.

The CertiLingua certificate also aims to enhance students' intercultural competences. The label fosters pupils' intercultural competences⁶⁰ through their participation in an international face-to-face project: either a project involving students from other countries, or a period of international work experience (CertiLingua, 2018d). The face-to-face project adopts an enquiry-based or research-based learning pedagogy, and combines linguistic performance with CLIL. Students formulate their own research question, as well as collecting and analysing data (CertiLingua, 2018d). For example, students take part in international projects with a social and a pedagogical focus such as 'Childhood in North American and German Culture'.

More specifically, during the face-to-face project students have to prepare project documentation that provides proof of the European and international competences they have attained (CertiLingua, 2018e). The paper prepared for the face-to-face project is distinct from other school research papers. The CertiLingua Label requires students to form their own topic and reflect on their experiences (CertiLingua, 2018e). The student must prepare the project documentation in one of their two CertiLingua languages. Student-centred learning pedagogy is at the heart of the face-to-face project, as pupils need to reflect on their experience while learning in an intercultural context. After completing the project, pupils have stronger cultural awareness and have acquired key intercultural skills (CertiLingua, 2018c). These include:

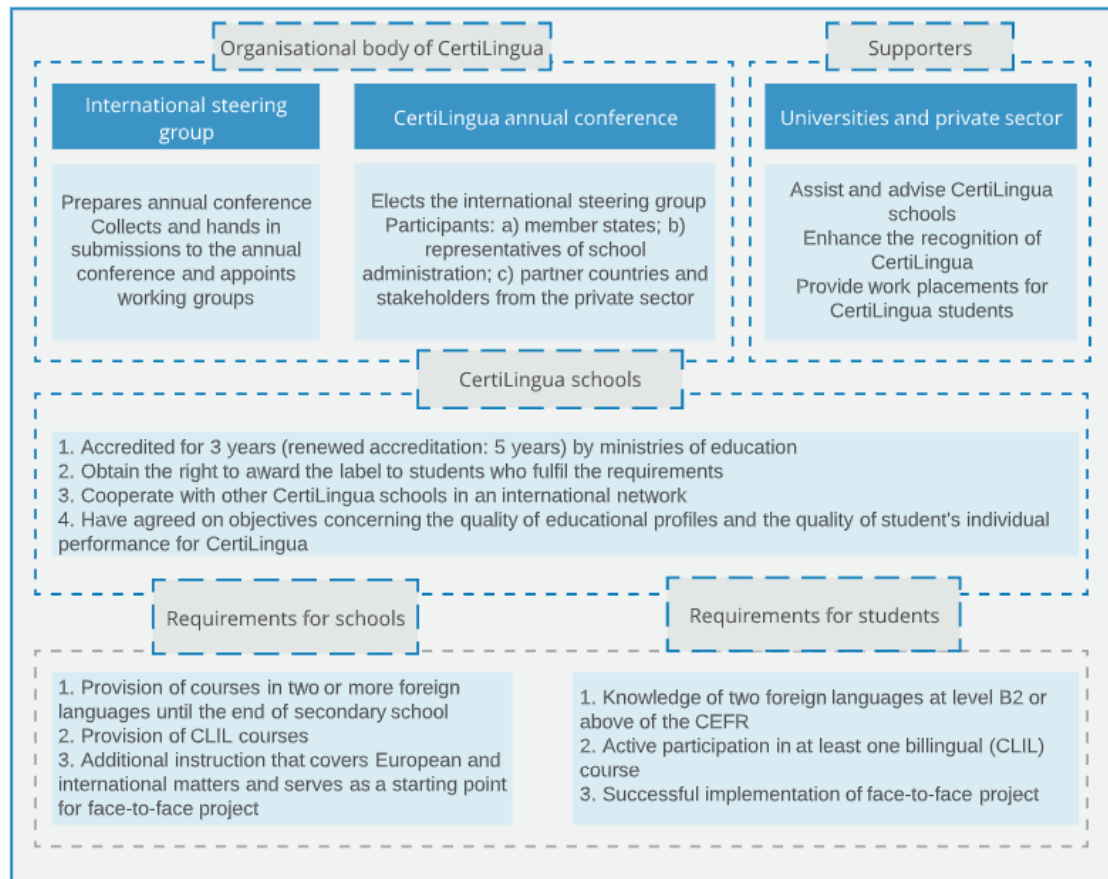
- Understanding of cultural and social diversity, including knowledge of the socio-cultural background of foreign languages and the ability to apply this knowledge while communicating with people from foreign cultures.
- Awareness and positive attitudes towards other languages and cultures. By the end of the trajectory, students have learned to be more open to and respect the diversity conveyed by foreign languages. They can also recognise, question and challenge prejudices relating to foreign languages. They are encouraged to form independent opinions about European and international issues.

Criteria for acquiring the label

The CertiLingua Label of Excellence is an international network that consists of more than 300 schools across nine countries. The process of school accreditation enhances the value of CertiLingua Label of Excellence. Accreditation ensures that the same quality of multilingual education is offered by CertiLingua schools in all member states. It also guarantees the Europe-wide comparability of the skills attained by students. The figure below describes CertiLingua's organisational structure and the requirements for institutions and students.

⁶⁰ Interculturality refers to the capacity to experience and analyse cultural otherness, and to use this experience to reflect on matters that are usually taken for granted within one's own culture and environment (CertiLingua, 2018b).

FIGURE 13 CertiLingua organisational structure and requirements



Source: created by the authors, based on the CertiLingua Organisation Chart (CertiLingua, 2019).

The ministries of education in the network's member states accredit secondary education institutions at the request of each school (CertiLingua, 2018f). Before they begin issuing accreditations, representatives of a country's ministry of education sign a memorandum of understanding that constitutes the basis for the country's participation in the programme. By signing the memorandum of understanding, the member states of the CertiLingua network declare their adherence to the CertiLingua standards by establishing evaluation and quality control measures carried out annually by the ministries of education (CertiLingua, 2018g). To ensure the quality of bilingual courses, schools must develop quality control measures (assessment tests, feedback from competent colleagues who attend lessons/tests) (CertiLingua, 2018c).

Accreditation is conditional on the capabilities of the school and country to take an active part in the international CertiLingua network, and to assure the quality of the courses offered. The main prerequisites for accreditation are the school's ability to provide education at baccalaureate level and meet the set requirements regarding the three key competences of the CertiLingua label (CertiLingua, 2018f). The requirements that schools must meet are:

- Provision of courses in two or more modern foreign languages until the end of upper secondary school, leading to level B2 or above of the CEFR.

- Provision of bilingual/CLIL courses in one or more non-language subjects for a minimum of 70 full teaching hours during the period of the final two years of upper-secondary education (or 140 hours over the final four years).
- Provision of instruction that focuses on European and international matters and serves as a starting point for face-to-face projects with students and partners from other countries.

In their application for membership, schools can provide additional information regarding their activities in the field of plurilingualism. For instance, an educational institution can highlight its multilingual context and state the activities it carries out that involve teaching foreign languages and fostering plurilingualism and internationalisation (e.g. the school has participated in international competitions). Schools can also indicate whether they use Europass and European language portfolios, and can provide information on the school's human resources and the qualifications of teachers (e.g. the school employs foreign language teaching assistants or teachers who can teach a subject in foreign language) (CertiLingua, 2018f). Once accredited, the school can award graduates with the CertiLingua Label of Excellence if they achieve the level of B2 or higher in two foreign languages, successfully complete CLIL course(s) and submit documentation for their face-to-face project.

Key results of the initiative

The key learning outcomes for pupils who have obtained the CertiLingua certificate are knowledge of two foreign languages to at least B2 level of the CEFR, the ability to apply foreign languages while learning a subject, and skills to communicate with people from different cultures.

Currently, up to 1,000 CertiLingua certificates have been awarded to students across 300 accredited schools. Pupils who have obtained a CertiLingua certificate benefit from increased employability and access to higher education institutions (Oonk, Maslowski and van der Werf, 2011). For instance, the University of Maastricht accepts CertiLingua as an alternative to compulsory language entry exams. Advocates for the label supporters in the private sector acknowledge that graduates who hold the certificate possess bilingual and intercultural competences that are useful in the labour market. The certificate is a 'soft' qualification that sets students apart from other applicants for internships, jobs and university programmes. CertiLingua provides proof that a person can interact and work successfully in international contexts.

The CertiLingua label has positive effects on the development of a school's foreign language programme and bilingual courses. As such, it enables students from various backgrounds to obtain a certificate of plurilingual competences (Oonk et al., 2011). For schools, it is advantageous to be a part of the network as CertiLingua has the potential to:

- Increase the attractiveness of schools by offering advanced multilingual programmes, international projects and exchange programmes.
- Foster schools' orientation towards European and international competences.
- Involve schools in cooperating and sharing examples of innovative practices with other educational institutions and, thus, ensure the provision of high-quality education.
- Further enhance mobility opportunities for pupils and teachers.

The label has promoted language and bilingual education in participating schools. The curriculum of CertiLingua schools is perceived as being "fuller" and "broader" in terms of European issues (Oonk et al., 2011). Overall, educational institutions that are part of CertiLingua network focus on language teaching as well as the development of multilingual

and intercultural competences. Thus, for participating schools, the CertiLingua network is also an instrument of institutional development (Oonk et al., 2011).

Key enabling factors

Key aspects that help CertiLingua to achieve its impact and improve language learning practices in schools are:

- Quality assurance of the school curriculum and teachers' pedagogy.
- Visibility and recognition of the CertiLingua label by governments, private sector and universities.
- A well-established that provides the possibility for schools to connect and disseminate examples of good practice.

For CertiLingua to achieve its goals, schools need to provide annual feedback and ensure quality control and accountability. This feedback includes information about the development of the Label of Excellence in each member state, the number of CertiLingua certificates awarded, and the observed benefits for pupils, schools and curriculum development. Thus, the feedback process is of key importance for CertiLingua's quality control. Yet some educational institutions provide inconsistent or incomplete feedback that provides insufficient insights for the label's further development (CertiLingua, 2018h). Thus, optimisation of the feedback process is at the top of the CertiLingua steering group's agenda.

For students, visibility and recognition of the CertiLingua label is the main factor motivating them to pursue the certificate. Consequently, recognition of the network constitutes an essential factor in the initiative's success. The certificate is, however, not a formal qualification comparable to an official language certificate such as IELTS or TOEFL. According to representatives of the CertiLingua network, the key bottleneck hindering the wider recognition of the certificate is a lack of financial resources. At the same time, the Label of Excellence is a relatively new initiative and is not yet acknowledged by the majority of higher education institutions. Support from external stakeholders is therefore essential to increasing the recognition of the label. In some member states, students receive recommendation letters from the national or regional ministry of education after obtaining the certificate, which highlight the student's multilingual, bilingual and intercultural competences. In addition, up to 30 universities including the University of Maastricht, the University of Linz and the University of Lille acknowledge the label.⁶¹ Overall, the recognition and visibility of the label enhance the interest and commitment of students and their schools towards pursuing the CertiLingua certificate or joining the initiative's network.

In order to strengthen the visibility of the network, the CertiLingua steering committee has established a group of sponsors. The aim of this group is to promote the significance of the label within the private sector, educational institutions and the public at large. The members of the sponsor group perform the sole function of increasing familiarity with and recognition of the certificate. The members of this sponsor group often offer work placements to graduates who have obtained the CertiLingua certificate.

Finally, one of the essential enabling factors for the CertiLingua initiative is its established network of more than 300 schools. Educational institutions that have recently joined the network receive support from more experienced schools. Also, the network of schools facilitates the successful implementation of face-to-face projects. It is common practice for schools to offer student exchange opportunities with other CertiLingua partner institutions.

⁶¹ In addition, the CertiLingua label is supported by several companies including Siemens, Bertelsmann AG and Continental, as well as foundations such as the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry International Qualifications.

Overall, three key enabling factors contribute to the success of the CertiLingua initiative. Firstly, quality control measures ensure that the school meets the CertiLingua requirements. Second, the visibility and recognition of the label attract additional students and schools. Lastly, the network of CertiLingua schools allows educational institutions to connect and disseminate examples of good practice.

Scalability and transferability

The scalability and transferability of the practice are high, as it is possible for any country to join the CertiLingua network and promote it within its schools.

Students and educational institutions can become acquainted with the CertiLingua label via the initiative's website⁶². This provides information about the benefits offered by the CertiLingua Label of Excellence. It includes a list of network supporters (higher education institutions, private companies and institutions) that acknowledge and support the CertiLingua label.

The CertiLingua Label of Excellence sets no specific requirements for teacher preparation. The competences of pedagogues are a matter for member states to address in their educational policies and practices. For instance, in Estonia, teaching a subject in upper-secondary general education requires an MA degree in the teaching of the respective subject.

Once the network's requirements are met, a school first accreditation is valid for three years and thereafter can be renewed for another five years if the accreditation criteria are maintained. Quality control is the responsibility of the school authorities in the member states. Nevertheless, a lack of finances and human resources limits the expansion of the network. Statistical data on the percentages of courses offered in various languages are not accessible on the CertiLingua website. Nevertheless, some data are available at school level. During the first years of the CertiLingua initiative, for instance, schools in the North Rhine-Westphalia region of Germany provided 27% of CLIL courses in French and 8% in Spanish (Oonk et al., 2011). According to representatives of the steering committee, all schools that have acquired the Label of Excellence have the goal of increasing the number of languages they offer. Ministries of education are the main source of funding for this initiative.

Conclusions

The CertiLingua Label of Excellence for Plurilingual, European and International Competences is an initiative which, on the one hand, promotes multilingual education and enhances learners' language competences, and on the other, supports schools in adapting their mindset to a more globalised world. For instance, CertiLingua alters language cultures within schools and increases their attractiveness as internationally oriented European institutions. CertiLingua schools are distinct from other educational institutions, in that they focus consciously on plurilingualism and linguistically sensitive school culture, as well as students' European and international commitment and active citizenship.

At the same time, the network promotes the higher quality of language teaching through its embedded quality assurance mechanism, and provides schools with the opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences of new language teaching practices. This enhances the potential of schools to contribute to the development of students' multilingual and plurilingual competences. Students who have been awarded the CertiLingua certificate can use two foreign languages at B2 level or above, have participated in CLIL education, and have attained intercultural competences. CertiLingua also involves pupils in European and international activities.

⁶² <https://www.certilingua.net/>

Nevertheless, limited opportunities to choose languages hinders the appreciation of the broader linguistic diversity present in schools. To strengthen and expand its network, CertiLingua could potentially include an option for pupils to demonstrate competences in at least one language that is not explicitly taught in the school. In the United States, for instance, the Seal of Biliteracy – an initiative with a similar vision to CertiLingua – is an example of a model that includes a wide array of world languages⁶³. The Seal of Biliteracy provides an opportunity for all students to master standard academic English, as well as another language. Overall, in the context of globalisation, CertiLingua offers young people an opportunity to acquire crucial skills for life in the 21st century. It has the potential to place accredited schools, despite their status or resources, at the forefront of plurilingual education in Europe.

⁶³ Seal of Biliteracy website: <https://sealofbiliteracy.org/>

Chapter 4: Lessons learnt from the implementation of different language education practices and policies

The case studies illustrate a diverse set of language teaching approaches and tools that have the potential to enhance plurilingualism in classrooms across Europe, breaking free from traditional visions of language education. The aim of this chapter is to reflect on what we can learn from these case studies by considering the unique elements that set these practices apart, and drive forward emerging approaches to language teaching (discussed in Chapter 2). We also consider the key factors enabling or preventing the effective implementation of these practices and their fostering of pupils' plurilingual repertoires. We also reflect on opportunities for these approaches to be transferred to other contexts, scaling up the promotion of plurilingual competences and the de-hierarchisation of languages across European societies. This chapter aims to support educators, policy makers and other educational stakeholders in the implementation of innovative, language-aware, plurilingual programmes and pedagogies suitable to their own contexts and needs, by highlighting the most relevant enabling factors (and limitations) for the implementation of these cases.

4.1. What drives innovation in language teaching and learning?

As discussed in Chapter 2, the language education policies that have so far been dominant in Europe have failed to achieving their goals (namely, to educate proficient multilingual learners in at least three languages including the learners' mother tongue, in the context of growing language diversity). Furthermore, the goals of traditional language education are increasingly challenged by modern educators and experts. All six language education cases discussed above attempt, in one way or another, to address the failure of traditional approaches and seek a solution to pressing issues within the education system or local context, taking into account historical, societal and cultural factors as well as the diverse language repertoires of students.

The issues that the case studies aimed to respond to were:

- Growing cultural and linguistic diversity within schools and societies. This poses, among others, the question of the preservation of linguistic heritage. It also emphasises the outdatedness of monolingual ideology and teaching practices in education.
- Improving the quality of language education to enable learners to achieve spontaneous communication and fluency in both the target language and the language of school instruction. This is largely driven by persistent low achievement in reading by a significant proportion of students, or among specific groups, compared with countries such as Australia or Canada (Cummins, 2018), and by large discrepancies between learners in terms of reading literacy⁶⁴.
- Low engagement of students with literacy and foreign language learning⁶⁵.

Each of the case studies offers strength and inspiration to address the educational challenges that stem from these pressing issues. For instance, a lack of policy attention and inclusive appreciation of **cultural and linguistic diversity** can lead to the marginalisation of students with migrant or minority backgrounds, and to inequality in accessing high-quality education. Nurturing bilingual education in the Aosta Valley of Northern Italy has allowed minority languages to be included in formal education, and has reinforced the plurilingual skills of children from the linguistic minority while allowing a

⁶⁴ See, for example, OECD, 2015; Vetterranta et al., 2016; European Commission, 2012a; 2012b. This is further supported by the PISA 2018 results (OECD, 2019a, 2019b) on students' achievement in reading, both in general and disaggregated by gender, immigrant background and socio-economic status.

⁶⁵ For more on student motivation, see OECD, 2019b.

smooth transition from one language to another (through code-switching or alternation between the two languages). This bilingual model also aims to safeguard the region's largest minority language and preserve it as the first language of the minority community, as well as the second – and equally valued – language for the entire region. Similarly, in the Basque country, the educational model aims to protect the minority language (Basque) and reinforce the linguistic diversity of the region. The new Finnish curriculum, meanwhile, aims to reflect the country's linguistic diversity by introducing language-aware and linguistically sensitive teaching. Its aim is to foster the inclusion of all students regardless of their linguistic background, as well as embracing and supporting development of students' cultural and linguistic identities.⁶⁶

AIM, in contrast, does not address linguistic diversity *per se*, but its design includes language minority learners, as it provides equal opportunities for foreign language learning regardless of students' proficiency in the language of school instruction. Studi/Binogi specifically supports the learning of subject content by students whose first language is not the language of instruction, and promotes the opportunity to acquire competences in more than one language without enforcing any hierarchy as to the value of these different languages. The CertiLingua network promotes appreciation of diversity by emphasising the need for competences in foreign/second languages, as well as for intercultural competences that support and prepare students for mobility within the EU.

Low achievement by a significant proportion of students, or among specific groups, in reading and the apparent **low quality of language education** (as discussed in Chapter 2) is another issue addressed differently by the various cases described. The bilingual model of the Aosta Valley has introduced a flexible teaching pedagogy that opposes the strict separation of languages and is based on the concept of the plurilingual competences of learners. AIM responds to low competences in specific languages with an engaging and motivating language teaching method, while maintaining the separation of languages. Studi/Binogi offers a tool that is able to develop language proficiency using and building on competences that exist in languages already known by students. It enables cross-linguistic transfer between different languages within students' repertoires – both for students whose first language is the language of instruction, and among those for whom it is not. The need to improve the quality of language education has been (and still is) one of the key drivers for the operation of the CertiLingua network. Meanwhile, generally low achievement in reading and literacy, together with a significant gap in achievement between native- and foreign-born students⁶⁷, pointing to language being a barrier for equal access to the teaching and learning process (and assessment), was a relevant issue in the introduction of the linguistically sensitive Finnish curriculum.

Low motivation towards language learning or towards learning in general – which is often associated in research studies with low achievement – is a common issue within education systems across Europe (see e.g. OECD, 2019b). One of the main reasons for the introduction of AIM in the Netherlands was to make French language teaching more motivating for students, who had become disengaged and stopped learning French (or chose not to learn it in the first place). Students' disengagement can also arise from the lack of equal access to quality education primarily due to language barriers, an issue addressed by other case studies. For example, students whose first language is different from the language of school instruction can easily become disengaged due to not understanding tasks, textbooks or teachers' instruction. This creates unequal access to quality education, an issue addressed in the cases of Studi/Binogi, the Aosta Valley and the Finnish curriculum.

⁶⁶ Please note that data on the results of these innovative policies and practices are scarce, and the most recently introduced cases are not available (for more details, see the case studies in Chapter 3).

⁶⁷ See, for example, OECD, 2015; Vettentranta et al., 2016.

4.2. How do these approaches promote plurilingualism?

Chapter 2 highlights the need for differentiated teaching at the level of individual students as the best strategy to promote plurilingualism in the context of diversified language profiles within the school population. This calls for language education policies to shift their emphasis from the class or group of learners as a whole, to the autonomy of individual learners. This is best promoted through innovative pedagogical approaches such as student-centred teaching and learning, greater flexibility over the use of different languages, and the skilful use of Information and Communication Technologies in the classroom. These features are integrated harmoniously in the six case studies showcased in this report.

The shift towards **student-centred teaching and learning** is apparent in the bi-/plurilingual model of the Aosta Valley, by CertiLingua and by AIM, in their focus on the individual needs of students in language learning. In the case of the Aosta Valley, a holistic view of the learner is the basis for the implementation of a 'planification' of the languages via a curriculum that allows for a transition between one language and another within the context of a single school subject. CertiLingua requires students to complete face-to-face projects including topics and research questions chosen by the students, as well as to reflect on the basis of their own experiences. The new Finnish curriculum considers the needs of learners to improve their level of competence and proficiency in multiple languages.

The schemes examined in most of the case studies also promote and actively practice **flexibility in the use of different languages**, showcased in various ways. In Studi/Binogi, students can switch freely from one language to another, which favours a translanguaging approach to language teaching. AIM focuses on output rather than on specific (grammatical) structures. The bi-/plurilingual education model of the Aosta Valley is innovative in guaranteeing the flexible use of languages by alternating between the region's two key languages (additional languages are, however, excluded). Under the new Finnish curriculum, flexibility is provided by an overall linguistically sensitive perspective that cuts across and affects all subjects and languages used at school (regardless of pupils' first language).

Though ICT can be integrated into most of the approaches discussed in the case studies, only Studi/Binogi explicitly promotes the **skilful use of technologies** in the classroom and the development of digital competences through its online system. This provides access to accelerated school content for a population that is otherwise disadvantaged by the need to learn the school language in order to access academic content.

One of the principles advocated by Scoil Bhríde Cailíní in Ireland is **change in perceptions of the relationship between languages** present in the classroom. This is ensured by the maintenance of inclusive multilingual methods through the school's culture. All of the case studies in this report aim (either implicitly or explicitly) to reconsider this relationship. This shift in perception results partly from the idea of **deconstructing the existing hierarchy between languages**, the ultimate aim of which is to assign equal value to all languages present in the classroom, as well as using them as resources for further learning. The new Finnish curriculum is one of the first attempts to avoid the hierarchy of languages at national level, spearheading a vision for inclusion and diversity across the country⁶⁸. Studi/Binogi exhibits a strong orientation towards the de-hierarchisation of languages through its practice of offering curriculum content in multiple languages. But although the programme offers content in the most popular non-dominant languages in Sweden, in practice it cannot yet provide support for all of the languages that students might need. The bilingual model of the Aosta Valley rejects the elitist approach towards languages that is often implicit in bilingual programmes around the world (as discussed in Chapter 2). The

⁶⁸ It is important to note, however, that due to the novelty of the curriculum, no information is yet available to indicate how well the curriculum's ideas will be able to be put into practice in all schools and classrooms across the country.

two languages involved in the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley are valued equally and used equally in terms of time. But although other minority languages within the region are not regarded as having lower prestige, instruction does not always include other minority languages – especially those of immigrant families or communities. This is something that the Basque country’s multilingual model is attempting to address at present: the region’s complex linguistic landscape calls for the introduction of an overarching transversal pedagogical approach to the use and management of language.

As Chapter 2 demonstrated, **connecting different languages** and creating opportunities for the transfer of competences between languages within the remit of language and subject teaching, is a key dimension of plurilingual pedagogies. This is most evident in Studi/Binogi and the bi-/plurilingual education model of the Aosta Valley. In the former of these two examples, video materials with subtitles in various languages, with the audio in the language of school instruction, allow the students to form connections between languages and facilitates the transfer of competences. In the Aosta Valley, the systematic application of code-switching, as well as the creation of both mono- and bilingual contexts, enable students to learn how to activate exclusively one language, and to use both languages in the same situation.

This is also a key characteristic of Studi/Binogi, which offers learning materials in multiple languages (both orally and in writing) and provides the opportunity to use these languages to learn the same content and thus develop competences in multiple languages. Furthermore, it allows students to build upon competences in one language in order to learn in another language, thus **using languages as resources** for learning. The new Finnish curriculum also places a significant focus on the first languages of students as a resource for learning. Meanwhile, the CertiLingua network promotes the forming of connections between languages in terms of content knowledge and competences, through its requirement for students to complete CLIL course in several subjects in the target language.

The extent to which these practices and policies promote plurilingualism is further reflected in the outcomes they have achieved (or aim to achieve) for students. These outcomes encompass students’ competences, awareness and motivation. Generally, these innovative pedagogies and practices are able to achieve their desired outcomes by **creating opportunities** for students, whether the aim of these is to offer quality language learning for students; the right to embrace their first languages, culture and identity; or the development of **plurilingual competences**.

One particular outcome that these practices aim to achieve is that of students becoming more **motivated to learn languages** and more **aware and open to different languages** and their value. One of the purposes of AIM is to increase the motivation of students to invest in language learning through an engaging and playful innovative pedagogy – which, as described above, was also one of the key drivers behind the introduction of AIM in the Netherlands.

Studi/Binogi increases the engagement and the self-agency of students in learning curriculum content by using video animations based on gaming techniques. This includes students whose proficiency in the language of instruction is low. In addition, Studi/Binogi promotes awareness of different languages among all students who use the online platform. The increased motivation of students who use Studi/Binogi also appears to have a positive effect on students’ self-confidence, as illustrated by the example presented in the case study.

CertiLingua and the bilingual model of Aosta Valley are able to affect students’ motivation due to the potential benefits of the skills and competences acquired through these programmes. CertiLingua further impacts motivation by providing students with experience relevant to studying and working in an international or pluricultural context, using the languages learnt throughout the CertiLingua programme. The programme therefore

increasing students' opportunities for access to higher education and employment across the EU.

Although the impact of the Finnish curriculum on the motivation of students⁶⁹ has not yet been assessed, language awareness is one of the important learning outcomes it seeks to achieve among both teachers and students, and with society at large. The transmission of values therefore plays a crucial role in promoting plurilingualism.

The case studies also demonstrate that practitioners and policy makers need not worry about perceived adverse effects on students' academic knowledge of languages – traditionally one of the main concerns raised in relation to the promotion of plurilingualism in schools. By promoting the active use of all languages, schools can foster the development of a plurilingual environment that supports the acquisition of the school language(s), the maintenance and development of all other languages that the students bring with them, and allows easier access to academic content knowledge based on students' lived experiences. **Improving students' language competences** was one of the outcomes targeted and successfully achieved by each of the cases discussed in this report. This is directly implied in the cases of the Aosta Valley, the Basque country, AIM, and CertiLingua, where the development of language competences is a specific objective. Studi/Binogi aims to improve language competences by supporting students in acquiring academic skills in both their first languages and the language of school instruction, while the new Finnish curriculum and the bi-/plurilingual education model in Aosta Valley support better learning outcomes for students through the implementation of plurilingual practices across all subjects. Most of the case studies discuss novel pedagogical approaches and policies that have not yet been (systematically) evaluated, and therefore no results are yet available as to their effectiveness. In relation to the bi-/plurilingual model of the Aosta Valley, research studies have provided evidence of the programme's effectiveness in improving language competences (e.g. Assuied and Ragot, 2000). The educational model in the Basque country, meanwhile, supports the development of language competences by a flexible and adaptive system for the use and management of languages.

The bilingual model of the Aosta Valley and the Studi/Binogi programme place greater emphasis on the outcome of **enhancing students' plurilingual repertoires** by improving language competences in the context of all of the languages students know and are in the process of learning, as well as through relationships between these languages. These schemes emphasise the importance of students learning how to use their existing competences in one language to improve their proficiency in another, thus enabling them to develop and use their whole linguistic repertoire.

Consequently, students' **capacity to mediate between different languages** is another crucial outcome of the promotion of plurilingualism via these policies and practices. This is particularly true in the cases of the Finnish curriculum, Studi/Binogi and the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley. A crucial element and outcome in the last of these examples is the bilingual functioning of students. The capacity to connect languages and function in a setting in which both languages need to be activated is an important step towards acquiring plurilingual competences and becoming plurilingual learners. The development of **intercultural competences** is furthermore an important outcome for nearly all cases, and is a stated objective of the CertiLingua network.

The approaches presented also help to develop a favourable environment for the promotion of plurilingualism in schools. The most notable outcome of these case studies is an **equitable and inclusive learning environment** within schools. This outcome is more developed and pronounced in some cases (e.g. the Finnish curriculum or Studi/Binogi) than

⁶⁹ The new curriculum was introduced only a few years ago, and therefore any analysis (impact evaluation) of the success of such a transformative reform on students' learning outcomes, motivation, plurilingual competences or attitudes will only be possible in several years' time.

in others (e.g. CertiLingua, where the list of languages for learning is limited and often excludes students' first languages). These policies and practices further the aim of inclusion by providing students with equal opportunities for language learning and providing support for learning in general for all students, regardless of their level of proficiency in the language of school instruction.

Equal access to high-quality education and an inclusive environment in schools are explicit aims that the Finnish curriculum, with its linguistically responsive pedagogy, aims to implement. This benefits all students, but particularly those who are vulnerable due to learning difficulties, or those with minority/migrant backgrounds. Equity in language learning or for learning in general, is also an important element of both AIM and Studi/Binogi. Another (potential) outcome of the case studies is a **plurilingual school climate**. A plurilingual programme, introduced at school level or used widely within a school, can impact teachers' awareness and attitudes towards languages. For example, one of the outcomes in the cases of Finland, the Aosta Valley, Studi/Binogi and CertiLingua, is the creation of a plurilingual space within the school, as a result of teachers' positive attitudes towards languages and the values of plurilingualism.

The achievement of all plurilingual aims is an ongoing process for the initiatives and approaches presented in these case studies. Nevertheless, each of them challenges the traditional constructs of language teaching pedagogies and reconsiders the ways in which languages are learnt and perceived within society, contributing to a shift towards a plurilingual vision and reality. **TABLE 2** below summarises the plurilingual elements embedded by each of these language teaching strategies and practices, and illustrates the variety of their approaches and key objectives. Although different in both form and context, the case studies all promote a set of elements of plurilingualism. With further development, each of them has the potential to strengthen its plurilingual aims and achievements.

TABLE 2 Elements of plurilingualism integrated by the case studies

	Improving language competences	Using languages as resources	Connecting languages	Deconstructing the hierarchy between languages	Increasing motivation of learners	Using innovative language pedagogies
Studi/Binogi	X	X	X	X	X	X
Accelerative Integrated Method	X				X	X
Education model in Aosta Valley	X	X	X	/		X
Education model in Basque country	X		X	/		X
Language sensitive curriculum in Finland	X	X	X	X	X	X
CertiLingua network of schools	X	/		/	X	X

Source: compiled by the authors.

4.3. What are the key enablers and barriers for their successful implementation?

We learn from the case studies that various factors at system-, institutional- and local-level- described here as enablers – are crucial for the effective and successful implementation of language education practices and policies. These factors are intertwined, and in most cases the presence of a single enabling factor on its own is not sufficient for the effective and successful implementation of an innovative approach. Conversely, not all factors are necessary in all cases, and the degree of their relevance varies depending on

the context and the local needs of a specific practice. Moreover, it is important to note that the very same factors – or, rather, the lack of them – can act as barriers to the implementation of innovative plurilingual pedagogies and practices (see **FIGURE 14** and **FIGURE 15**).



4.3.1 System-level factors

At the system level, **policy context plays an important role in shaping the implementation of language policies**. This encompasses several interconnected elements, the most important of which are the existence of clear policy goals and vision towards multilingualism, as well as political will – particularly in regard to the implementation of programmes at regional or national level. Curricular reforms, such as those carried out in Finland, the Aosta Valley and the Basque country, require political will as well as a delivery system to implement changes in accordance with a policy vision. This entails long-term financial and administrative commitment from educational stakeholders at all levels (as well as the professional commitment of school leaders and teachers at school and classroom level). In the case of the Basque country, the region’s complex linguistic landscape necessitates an adaptive language (use and) management system that promotes and enables the successful development of language competences.

Even in the case of an international network of schools such as CertiLingua, national education ministries are important promoters of practice, by committing to and providing measures for the support, evaluation and quality control of schools in their country that aim to join the network. Moreover, strong cross-sectoral collaboration is necessary for the successful and effective implementation of innovative practices – namely, between researchers, policy makers and practitioners (teachers, school leaders, teacher educators). This element was a crucial determinant in the realisation of the new Finnish curriculum and in the development of the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley.

A lack of vision and commitment among stakeholders at all levels of implementation can risk resistance from actors (e.g. teachers), based on disagreements or discrepancies in relation to the vision (ideology) behind such policies and practices. Consequently, the development of positive perceptions and attitudes towards these policies and practices is a crucial enabling factor.

FIGURE 14 Key system-level enabling factors and barriers for the successful implementation of plurilingual pedagogies and practices

	 Enabling factors	 Barriers
Political context	Political priorities include promoting plurilingualism and will to act in accordance with those priorities. Cross-sectional cooperation (policy – research – practice).	Political priorities are not in line with the idea of plurilingualism and/or no will to implement action to promote it. The sectors of policy research and practice are isolated.
Teacher education	Prepares teachers to design and implement innovative, student-centred pedagogies and practices (competences and skills). Aims to create positive and open attitudes towards plurilingualism and innovative practices.	Provides teachers with skills and competences for more traditional pedagogies and methods. Does not focus on attitudes and beliefs of teachers towards plurilingualism and innovative teaching practices.
Investment of resources	Sufficient financial resources allocated for modernizing language education. Investment of human resources for the implementation of innovative plurilingual pedagogies and practices.	Insufficient financial resources allocated for improving language education. No available human resources for the implementation of plurilingual practices.
Autonomy	Enables bottom-up innovation. Schools’ autonomy can encompass professional (control over local curriculum) and financial (sufficient control over their budget) aspects – with necessary accountability measures implemented.	Centrally determined curriculum with no or very few opportunities for flexibility. Centrally determined budget limits the possibility for teachers’ or schools’ to purchase necessary tools for innovative practices.

Source: compiled by the authors.

Teacher education is another key element in achieving the goals of these plurilingual practices. Teachers need to have the necessary competences and capacities to implement both the innovative methods and the pedagogical aims of plurilingual practices. In the cases presented in this report, teachers need to be able to lead CLIL courses in the CertiLingua network or the Aosta Valley; they must be prepared to implement specific methods for AIM, and to use digital technologies such as Studi/Binogi in their everyday teaching practices; as well as be able to lead the teaching and learning process in a diverse classroom focusing on the individual needs of students.

Teachers need to become language-aware in order to fulfil the objectives of the Finnish curriculum, and a lack of widespread integration of linguistically responsive pedagogy within teacher training still limits the effective implementation of the curriculum. Educational agencies and the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland have thus been funding projects to overcome this barrier and sufficiently prepare teachers, school leaders and school staff for the implementation of the curriculum. Similarly, in order to effectively implement the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley, all teachers need to be aware of the language dimension of their subject as well as being able to take into account the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students. Moreover, teachers also need to be bilingual, although – ideally – this only concerns teacher education in the case of teachers who come from other regions of Italy.⁷⁰ The Basque country is also reconsidering its initial teacher training system in order to provide teachers with sufficient foundations and competences in the use and management of languages to allow them to respond to current needs in the region's schools.

But preparing teachers to develop plurilingual competences entails more than just capacity building. Positive attitudes and beliefs on the part of teachers towards the value of plurilingualism are also essential for the introduction of new practices. Teacher trainings therefore also need to focus on fostering such beliefs and attitudes among teachers. Beliefs and attitudes among education stakeholders remain a significant barrier to the expansion of the AIM language teaching practice, as many teachers prefer to apply traditional methods. Training organised at system or regional level, for teachers, school leaders, teacher trainers and administrative personnel (in education authorities), could significantly increase the potential for the successful implementation of innovative plurilingual pedagogies and practices. This includes all forms of teacher training, i.e. both initial teacher education and continuous professional development. For example, mechanisms to support capacity building are necessary in order for schools to join the CertiLingua network, as the implementation of its methods depends on the capacities and capabilities of both schools and countries. As mentioned above, in Finland, training is organised at system level in order to increase to capacities of the actors involved in curriculum reform.

The **autonomy of schools and teachers** represents a key enabling factor for the implementation of innovative pedagogies and practices, particularly at school or classroom level. Sufficient autonomy can allow teachers or school leaders to adjust their instruction and introduce new methods or new programmes to improve quality language teaching and promote plurilingualism. The evaluation and accountability practices set at system level, which are entwined with the autonomy of schools and teachers, also need to be considered either as potential enabling or hindering factors in the implementation of innovative pedagogies for language teaching. As all of these factors relate to (or even depend on) one another, the autonomy of teachers or schools in itself cannot ensure the success of the practice.

⁷⁰ This is because teachers who have grown up in the Aosta Valley are likely to have been educated in the region's bilingual education system.

BOX 12 Building teachers' capacity to promote plurilingualism

Teachers and school staff require training in innovative practices, which can sometimes be acquired at the initiative of teachers and schools.

Schools and teachers also need financial and human resources, in the form of time for teachers and school staff, as well as an adequate number of teachers and financial support for any training required.

The autonomy of teachers has and continues to play a significant role in the development and implementation of most of these programmes, as it allows them to introduce new approaches in their classrooms of their own accord.

Teachers' working conditions (in many cases defined at national level) are also important enabling factors, as the implementation of these innovative practices and policies require extra investments in time and energy from the teachers. The lack of opportunity (or will) for teachers to make such investments becomes a barrier to the introduction of innovative language teaching practices in their classrooms.

The introduction of changes into language teaching, whether at classroom or national level, requires the **investment of financial and human resources**.

Practices at classroom or school level, as well as the design or adaptation of plurilingual teaching tools or approaches, requires time and effort from teachers (or from an external consultant, which might be more financially costly). Investments in pre-existing tools might mean significant costs for the school or for local, regional or national education authorities. Moreover, teachers need to be trained for the efficient use of new plurilingual practices. At classroom level, this might mean individual investments in time by teachers, based on their own initiative, while the implementation of programmes at school level is likely to involve more people, possibly more financial resources, and even increased administration (with additional costs).

The potential costs of these innovative practices are likely to become barriers to implementation, taking into account both financial and human resources. Particularly in strongly centralised education systems in which schools have little control over either the content of the curriculum or their financial resources, opportunities for innovation in language teaching are somewhat limited. The potential additional effort required from students by plurilingual practices (compared to the requirements of the national curriculum), might demotivate them – as in the case with CertiLingua. At system level, the implementation of plurilingual approaches (for example, through curricular reform) involves administrative as well as financial commitment and investment. In addition, financial and human resources for the professional development of teachers are a prerequisite for change to occur – which, in most cases, requires extra funding (such as in Finland and the Aosta Valley).



Policy-makers should therefore be aware of complementary, powerful and low-cost solutions. For example, with regard to leadership, the inclusion within job descriptions for management positions of a statement that candidates should be familiar with research and successful practices in the education of linguistically and culturally diverse students, would help to make the implementation of the Finnish curriculum a reality. In addition to this, specific questions could be asked in interviews to ensure that candidates know how to lead in this context. The same considerations could apply to teachers. Job descriptions could indicate what is expected of teachers, and what they should be able to do in terms of plurilingualism. In cases where these requirements in job descriptions have not been addressed within education and training programmes (e.g. initial teacher training and CPDs), this would have the potential to put pressure on educational institutions to innovate and address them.

4.3.2 Institutional or local factors

At institutional or local level, one of the most crucial enabling factors for the implementation of the language teaching practices and policies presented in this report is

an **inclusive school environment**. In the case of implementing a linguistically sensitive pedagogy, such as in the Finnish curriculum or the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley, teachers of languages and other subjects need to create a collaborative environment within the school. Primarily in secondary education, subjects can be somewhat isolated. Lack of collaboration between teachers can become a barrier to the successful realisation of programmes at school level that extend beyond language classes. A beneficial learning environment entails a school climate in which teachers hold positive attitudes and beliefs towards languages and the idea of plurilingualism, and value all languages equally. As mentioned before, one of the main barriers to the further expansion of the practice of AIM in the Netherlands are the dubious or negative attitudes towards this new method held by teachers who prefer more traditional pedagogies and practices. Another crucial element in creating a school environment that is conducive to the implementation of innovative practices, is supportive leadership within the institution. In particular, support is crucial for teachers to overcome any doubts or negative attitudes they may have towards new methods and practices. While these aspects of a beneficial school environment constitute enabling factors, they can at the same time be outcomes of the successful implementation of these practices.

FIGURE 15 Key institutional- or local-level enabling factors and barriers for the successful implementation of plurilingual pedagogies and practices

	 Enabling factors	 Barriers
School environment	Teachers work in collaboration with each other. Language-aware school climate, where teachers and school staff have positive attitudes and beliefs towards languages and plurilingualism. School leadership supports innovation in language teaching.	Teachers of different subjects work in isolation. The school climate supports teachers' attitude and beliefs in favor of traditional pedagogies and methods. School leadership does not support changes or innovation in language teaching.
Institutional support	Support for the implementation of the language teaching policy or practice is provided, including continuous professional development for teachers as well as enabling exchange of best practices and peer-learning.	Teachers are not provided with support for their attempts for innovation in language teaching, including no financial or time investment. Professional development of teachers and peer-learning is not supported beyond the compulsory limit.
Networking and peer-learning	Education stakeholders have the opportunity for networking (e.g. conferences), exchange of practices and peer-learning.	Limited opportunities for teachers to learn about innovative teaching practices.
Links with external actors	Professional support for teachers and other educational actors to foster innovation. Engagement of both public and private sector stakeholders.	Lack of capacity and time of teachers and other actors to implement new practices. Isolation of public and private institutions who would be able to support schools and teachers.

Source: compiled by the authors.

Along with supportive leadership, another enabling factor is **institutional support**. This is required in order for teachers to be able to effectively implement the innovative methods of plurilingual language teaching practices. Although teacher education is organised at system level, individual institutions can support the professional development of their staff and invest their teachers' time in capacity building. Institutional support might also involve school equipment – which entails financial investment – as in the case of Studi/Binogi, where adequate technology is required for the application of the system. Institutional support entails the provision of flexibility with regard to the organisation of teaching (both at school and classroom level), such as in the case of the Aosta Valley. Here, class sizes have been reduced to alleviate teachers' workload. This, in turn, provides conditions for more focused planning as well as the co-teaching lessons.

Support provided to the institutions (schools) is also a crucial success factor for policies and practices implemented at regional or national level, although this is only explicit in the case study on the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley. In this model, assistance is provided to school leaders and teachers in the form of mentoring, follow-up meetings, documentation tracking and in-service training.

Furthermore, institutional support includes support for school staff to exchange best practices through **networking and peer-learning**, which are also relevant enabling factors. Opportunities for teachers and school leaders to learn from their peers and create networks – both between individual teachers and between institutions – is one of the key enabling factors in several of the case studies presented. For example, the expansion of AIM in the Netherlands shows that opportunities to learn (new) good practices depends a great deal on the access to professional networks (for example, through conferences, teacher associations). Moreover, researchers and teacher trainers are invited along to workshops or training sessions to deliver lectures on AIM or provide insights on its implementation. In the case of classroom practices such as AIM or Studi/Binogi, the autonomy of teachers and schools facilitates these opportunities, as well as the implementation of practices learnt via these networks. CertiLingua, which is itself a network of schools, provides the potential for member schools and teachers to share good practices and learn from each other. This is an important factor for the success of the programme.

Another enabler is the establishment of **links between schools and external actors**. These links can provide support to schools. For instance, the involvement of universities, research institutions or the private sector can support capacity building for teachers and other educational stakeholders. It can also enable impact assessments to be conducted on the practices in place, which can be used to further promote the benefits of these innovative plurilingual practices among teachers/schools, parents and policymakers, with sufficient time dedicated to it. In the case of CertiLingua, the role of the links that schools (and the network) forge with universities and the private sector, is to increase the recognition of the CertiLingua label and thus increase its benefits. At the same time, it is also important to consider that the support provided by the private sector often requires financial resources, as well as time and effort on the part of teachers and school leaders.

4.4. Conditions for transferability

All of the schemes in the case studies offer great potential for transferability (most of them are already used in several countries, or use several languages). Even for those cases, such as the Basque country, in which the conditions of implementation are significantly tied to the region's historical and linguistic context, the policies and practices involved can serve as an inspiration for regions tackling similar challenges. Nevertheless, all of these policies and practices require significant commitment (policy and administrative) and investment (financial and human resources) from educational stakeholders, especially teachers. The five elements that support the adaptability of these plurilingual pedagogies and practices are the following:

- **Embeddedness in the relevant context** (local, regional, national or international). It is important to consider the similarities and differences between contexts, and to adapt different language teaching practices to local needs (also taking into account the wider context).
- **Ready-to-use tools** – such as AIM or Studi/Binogi – support transferability, by requiring no work on the design of the tool (only adaptation). However, these tools often involve financial costs as well as increased investment in human resources.
- **Flexible application** of the plurilingual practice. It becomes easier to adapt a specific practice to a different context when it is possible to use it in different ways that fit various teaching methods or are suitable for use for different subjects, as is the case with Studi/Binogi.

- Reliance on **international research**. The Finnish curriculum, the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley⁷¹ and the multilingual model of the Basque country, for example, are based overwhelmingly on international research, which means that the basic principles on which the curricular reform is built are not context-specific and can therefore be used in other countries or contexts as well.
- Similarly, **pre-existing frameworks** aid transferability, as they can be applied to multiple classrooms, schools or wider contexts. In the case of CertiLingua, this framework includes basic principles, specific approaches to language teaching, and pre-defined programmes (e.g. networking opportunities), all of which can be accessed and used upon joining the network.

⁷¹ At the same time, the bilingual model of Aosta Valley ran ahead of conventional research at the time, by introducing the code-switching approach before it had been legitimised and accepted by a consensus among researchers.

Chapter 5: Policy implications and recommendations

Societies across the world are increasingly characterised by cultural and linguistic diversity, due to high mobility and growing exposure to different languages and cultures. However, many education systems are still lagging behind in their response to these trends, and remain overwhelmingly exclusive, building on long-term monolingual practices. A shift from traditional, monolingual policies and practices to teaching and learning processes based on innovative, plurilingual pedagogies is necessary. This shift is already under way, to varying degrees, in various countries across Europe. Against this backdrop, this study aims to explore the emerging innovative (or long-existent but re-imagined) policies and practices in relation to language teaching in Europe that promote plurilingualism. This report builds on a number of case studies to demonstrate the diversity of successful approaches in practice today (including their challenges), as well as to inspire innovation and change in language teaching across Europe.

The six case studies in this report represent a diverse collection of existing language learning practices and strategies across Europe. They include national curricular reform, regional school programmes, an international network and pedagogical practices implemented at classroom level. They demonstrate practices that have the potential to enhance students' plurilingual repertoires, provide equal opportunities and an inclusive environment for language learning, and improve the quality of language education (see Chapter 3 for more details).

5.1. Key conclusions

This study demonstrates that, albeit slowly, language teaching strategies are responding to the general educational trends towards digitalisation and the personalisation of learning in Europe in order to increase the overall quality of language education and instil the values of plurilingualism. The key novelty of these developments lies in a **shift in perception** towards languages and their role in the process of learning. This involves the understanding that:

- Students' first languages are not perceived as a problem or deficit, but as an asset for learning and as an enrichment of students' linguistic repertoires.
- Linguistic considerations and language learning are relevant *in* and *for* all subjects.
- All languages have equal value from a cognitive/ learning point of view.
- Existing competences and talents support the acquisition of competences in other language(s).
- Students' language repertoires can consist of different languages with varying levels of proficiency; moreover, students' competences in these languages are connected, and transfer between them is important for the development of plurilingual competences.

The case studies analysed in this report reveal that the application of this new perspective involves the introduction of the following elements into language education:

- Integrating language-awareness into the teaching and learning process within the school (see Case Studies 1, 3 and 5).
- Integrating students' different languages into the classroom practices (see Case Studies 1, 4 and 5).
- Providing equal access to high-quality language education, regardless of students' first languages (see Case Studies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).
- Providing opportunities to acquire inter- or pluricultural competences (see Case Studies 1, 5 and 6).

- Using the method of alternating languages (or code-switching) to enable students to acquire the ability both to use several languages in monolingual settings, and to activate both or all, and even switch between them, in bi- or plurilingual contexts (see Case Studies 1, 3 and 5).

Integrating these elements into language teaching has first and foremost brought **positive effects** for students, but also for entire school communities and regions. Innovative plurilingual language learning pedagogies and practices help to improve language competences (especially speaking skills – see, for example, AIM). In some cases, such as in the bilingual model of the Aosta Valley, students enjoy better overall learning outcomes compared to students who have been exposed to traditional teaching and learning practices. As the educational model of the Basque country shows, a bilingual model can protect a linguistic heritage as well as maintain the diversity of the linguistic context. At the same time, this educational approach is able to enrich students' linguistic repertoires and provide high-quality language education.

Students also demonstrate increased motivation towards learning when using engaging and innovative methods (as exemplified by the Studi/Binogi and AIM case studies). Furthermore, including the languages students that bring into the classroom can increase the motivation of students whose first language is not the language of school instruction. By having access to academic content in languages that they understand, students can get involved in academic tasks more easily. Alternation between languages within students' repertoires allows all students, regardless of their level in the languages in question, to gain access to a higher cognitive level. At the same time, one of the collateral effects of learner-centred practices is that they are able to maintain the engagement of students who might already have a high proficiency in the target language.

Innovative language education also helps to develop meta-linguistic awareness (explicit, conscious knowledge of relationships of meaning within a language), which supports more efficient language learning later in their life. Moreover, improved language competences and the ability to use two (or more) languages in the same situation (alternating of languages, as in the case of the Aosta Valley), provide increased opportunities for mobility in terms of further education and employment (e.g. the CertiLingua network).

Shifting the perspective of language education towards plurilingualism also helps to promote an inclusive learning environment that positively affects students' sense of belonging – and potentially also their motivation for learning – and decreases their alienation, which would often lead to disengagement and even early school leaving. In addition, an important benefit of innovative language learning pedagogies is that they drive a collaborative environment among teaching staff, resulting in the decreased compartmentalisation of subjects, as language teachers cooperate with teachers of other subjects, connecting different disciplines through language.

Regardless of these positive outcomes, there is still **room for improvement** in further developing these pedagogies and policies to promote and cultivate plurilingualism more holistically. The biggest barriers inherent to many of the practices analysed in this report are:

- A maintained hierarchy of languages, even in practices involving the idea of the equal value of languages.
- The isolation of languages within students' repertoires during the teaching and learning process.
- Neglecting the role of languages as resources for further learning.
- Persistent monolingual school environments.
- Refraining from the adoption of innovative pedagogies and practices in a more general sense.

5.2. Policy implications and recommendations

The shift towards plurilingualism challenges traditional conceptions and practices of language teaching and learning in Europe. Although this offers an opportunity to transform language education in Europe by moving towards more inclusive and comprehensive language education, the lack of sufficient information about the benefits of emerging or reconsidered strategies and practices can hinder their effective and successful implementation across the EU.

The plurilingual practices presented in this report have a **high potential for adaptation** to other countries or contexts. Adaptation of existing innovative and long-standing language learning strategies and practices is possible due to *flexibility* in their application, as well as *ready-to-use tools* developed for the purpose of these practices. All of these policies and practices can be transferred, taking into account the relevant *context* into which they will be embedded, as each is tailored to its own specific context and needs. Moreover, some of these practices rely on *international research*, while others have already *developed frameworks* that further support transferability.

Various factors can act as either **enablers or barriers** to the successful and effective implementation of innovative plurilingual pedagogies and practices. The significance of these enablers and barriers depends on specific contexts; therefore, in some cases, certain enablers become necessary for successful implementation, while in others they are simply favourable. Nonetheless, these enablers play a crucial role in moving towards the transformation of language education in Europe.

System level

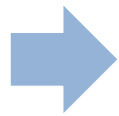
At a **system level**, enabling factors include structural and systematic conditions which support or facilitate the implementation of innovative plurilingual policies and programmes, first and foremost at national or regional level. Where such factors are lacking, or conditions do not align with the ideas and values of plurilingualism, they become barriers to the implementation of innovative language learning practices. Such conditions are:

- *Policy context*: Political vision, will and commitment must be in line with the values of plurilingualism and innovative education. Policy-makers require flexibility for the implementation of innovative programmes and reforms, as these are often counterintuitive and rely to a greater extent on students' own agency than traditional, monolingual policies and practices. Moreover, cross-sectoral cooperation concerning policy, research and practitioners is crucial for successful and effective implementation.
- *Alignment of goals and implementation plans*: One of the implementation challenges when introducing new language education practices and policies is ensuring that there are no discrepancies between the aims and objectives of plurilingual strategies and practices, and their practical implementation.
- *Investment in resources*: Sufficient investment in financial and human resources is necessary for the effective implementation of plurilingual policies and practices. This includes ensuring favourable working conditions for education staff to be able to re-design and modernise their traditional practices.
- *Sufficient autonomy*: The autonomy of schools and teachers' is crucial, especially if there is no system-level strategy for the implementation of plurilingual practices. The lack of teachers' discretion to employ different methods and teacher materials can hinder the innovation of language teaching and learning.
- *Teacher education*: Teachers can implement innovative pedagogies and practices only if they have the necessary capacities, as well as having open and positive attitudes towards the values of plurilingualism and innovation in their teaching

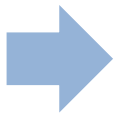
practices (this includes both initial teacher education and continuous professional development).

- *Monitoring and evaluation:* Gathering sufficient knowledge and evidence on what works and what doesn't is crucial to informing the innovation process and enabling further policy development.

Key shifts towards plurilingualism at system level



Change towards more positive perception/attitude of policy-makers/leaders in valuing inclusive education and plurilingualism, which would create the foundation for processes at school and classroom level. This implies ensuring inclusive political priorities, will and vision, as well as long-term strategy and commitment. Commitment also implies providing the necessary support structures and delivery system for change to happen on the ground (such as financial and human resources). This shift requires willingness towards adaptation and flexibility (as well as courage) to initiate and implement policies that promote pedagogical approaches and practices which may be counterintuitive or divergent from conventional perspectives and practices.



Reconsidering teacher education programmes (taking into account the principle that 'every teacher is a language teacher'). Professional development systems (ITE, induction programmes and CPD) should more systematically incorporate training on new language teaching pedagogies (including the potential of ICT), collaboration practices and an inclusive vision for plurilingualism. High-quality school leadership programmes that focus on innovation and change management should be made available to all school leaders. Teacher education (and CPD) should further focus on improving teachers' competences and flexibility towards innovation (in the future), especially in relation to the adaptation of their practices to the needs of students, and capitalising on the students' own agency in learning.



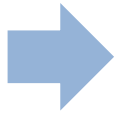
Improving monitoring and evaluation systems. Education authorities should promote a culture of evaluation by undertaking evaluations of their policy initiatives using the wealth of monitoring data already collected on the education system's inputs, institutions, processes and outcomes, along with primary research. It is important to highlight that monitoring systems should go hand in hand with institutional support for teachers and school leaders.



An increasing emphasis on efficiency and accountability for schools and teachers may discourage them from innovating. These factors can lead to tensions between potentially conflicting forces in education governance, such as accountability and trust, innovation and risk avoidance. Therefore, it is crucial to build 'intelligent' systems of accountability that combine both vertical and horizontal accountability.



Change towards a more connected and cooperative education system in the sense that cooperation between schools/regional centres and other stakeholders/organisations should be encouraged and supported (e.g. in relation to digitalisation and ICT in teaching and learning practices).



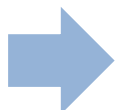
Overall, education systems and policy-makers should be ready to adapt to pedagogical, societal and technological trends. The points above all support this flexibility, and provide sufficient conditions (e.g. information on the effectiveness of programmes and the further needs from a monitoring and evaluation system).

Institutional level

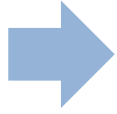
This report reveals many entry points for the promotion of plurilingualism at school level. Certain conditions must, however, be met to ensure that change is managed effectively, and leads to expected outcomes. These are:

- *School environment*: An inclusive, open learning environment is needed for the implementation of plurilingual pedagogies, such as linguistically sensitive language learning; moreover, such an environment also enables educational innovation. In addition, a cooperative school environment, which encourages collaboration between teachers of different subjects – particularly between teachers of languages and of other disciplines – further supports innovative practices and the development of cross-curricular competences.
- *School vision and governance*: Schools that have been successful in transforming their practices tend to create clear and detailed internal strategies and implementation processes. A shared vision and clear action plans help to structure the implementation process, ensuring the sustainability of new approaches not only at classroom level but at the level of the whole school community, which meets the needs of the local context.
- *Institutional support*: Institutions can provide support in various forms, such as investing the time of teaching staff in capacity building and professional development (CPD), investing financially in the tools or equipment needed for specific plurilingual practices, or providing flexibility to teachers regarding the organisation of work, in order to facilitate innovation.
- *Peer-learning, communities of practice and networking*: Opportunities to learn from peers and create or expand professional networks is a crucial factor for innovation, both for teachers and school leaders. These can be realised by attending conferences, working on projects together with colleagues from other schools, regions, countries, or even attending training.
- *Links with external actors*: Schools' connections and cooperation with external actors such as universities, research institutes or the private sector can support them in introducing and developing innovative language learning practices, in terms of capacity-building, impact assessment, or access to necessary tools and equipment.

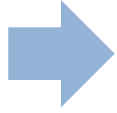
Key shifts towards plurilingualism at institutional level



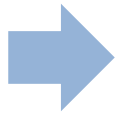
Change towards more positive perceptions/attitudes among school leaders and the school community in relation to their view of languages within the school, especially in the vision/strategy of the school.



Change towards a collaborative school culture, inclusive learning environment and the creation of a plurilingual ethos across the whole school.



Teachers are the key agents of change. In order to support the process of change towards innovative pedagogies, the school should allow/promote opportunities for teachers to engage in peer-learning and take initiatives (institutional support)



At school level, the process of change also needs to include constant reflection on and monitoring of progress in relation to the changes/processes above, and the role of languages in the school's vision. Furthermore, institutions need to be ready to adapt on the basis of the results of such reflection and monitoring.

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Chapter 3

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