



Language economics and language policy

Sixth interdisciplinary symposium of the

RESEARCH GROUP “ECONOMICS, POLICY ANALYSIS, AND LANGUAGE” –
REAL

in partnership with the journal

Language Problems & Language Planning

at

UNIVERSITÄT POTSDAM

in cooperation with

ANDRÁSSY-UNIVERSITÄT BUDAPEST

RC50 - THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE / LA POLITIQUE DES LANGUES,
IPSA-AISP

ULSTER UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL AND POLICY SCIENCES

CENTRE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

2026-06-04 – 2026-06-05



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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Mette FOGED Lektor (Associate professor), Økonomisk Institut, Københavns Universitet; Seniorforsker (Senior researcher), ROCKWOOL Fonden (ROCKWOOL Foundation); Fellow, Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration – CReAM, University College London – UCL; Research fellow, Forschungsinstitut zur Zukunft der Arbeit – IZA (Institute of Labor Economics).

Mette Foged is an economist, using quantitative methods to study a broad range of topics related to the labor market and welfare state, with a particular focus on international migration. Her published work covers core topics in the *Economics of migration* such as migration decisions, labor market effects of immigration and the effectiveness of integration policies. Language training has been a core topic in Mettes’ research agenda with publications evaluating the effects on participants, the intergenerational effects and the effectiveness relative to other policies for the labor market integration of refugees. She is currently conducting survey experiments to understand the barriers to language learning among refugees. She is also currently working on causal effects of Denmark’s Ghetto policies. Information about Mette’s published work can be found [here](#).

Carsten QUELL Executive Director, Official Languages Centre of Excellence, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat / Centre d’excellence en langues officielles, Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada; Ph.D., University of Toronto; M.A., Freie Universität Berlin.

Carsten Quell is a linguist and public policy expert whose work focuses on the design, implementation, and evaluation of language policy. His experience includes working as Director of Policy and Research at the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages from 2008 to 2015. He currently leads the *Official Languages Centre of Excellence at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat*, where he supports close to 200 federal institutions in implementing Canada’s official languages policy. Carsten’s research and policy interests include language rights, public service bilingualism, and the role of language in social cohesion. He has contributed to efforts in language policy implementation, internationally, including with partners in Ireland, Kosovo, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, and Wales. Earlier in his career, he taught at the Lycée Français de Toronto and managed international communications for an e-commerce company. More information about Carsten’s work can be found [here](#).

SPONSORS

We thank the following institutions for their generous support of the symposium:

Andrássy-Universität Budapest



John Benjamins Publishing Company



Observatoire Économie-Langues-Formation
Université de Genève



Ulster University



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

VENUE

We are pleased to welcome you to Universität Potsdam, located in the historic capital of Brandenburg, one of Germany’s notable centers for scientific research and higher education.

Universität Potsdam

Founded in 1991, [Universität Potsdam](#), has grown to become Brandenburg’s largest university, currently enrolling approximately 19 700 students across three main campuses: Am Neuen Palais (humanities and social sciences), Golm (natural sciences), and Griebnitzsee (economics and law). With over 8 000 staff members working in scholarship and science, the university has established a strong reputation for interdisciplinary research and international collaboration.

The university’s seven faculties encompass a broad range of disciplines, with particular strength in the humanities and social sciences alongside its well-known research in the natural sciences. The [Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences](#) has established itself as a hub for understanding contemporary societal challenges, bringing together economists and social scientists in collaborative research on diverse topics from European policy to digital transformation.

What distinguishes Potsdam as a research location is the remarkable concentration of prestigious institutions, including the [Potsdam-Institut für Klimafolgenforschung](#) (Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, PIK), the [GFZ Helmholtz-Zentrum für Geoforschung](#) (GFZ Helmholtz Centre for Geosciences), and the [Hasso-Plattner-Institut für Digital Engineering](#) (Hasso Plattner Institute for Digital Engineering, HPI), which focuses on digital engineering and information technology.

Conference venue

The conference takes place at the WIS (Wissenschaftsetage im Bildungsforum, Am Kanal 47, 14467 Potsdam), located on the 4th floor of this modern building in the heart of Potsdam’s city center, in immediate proximity to the new Brandenburg State Parliament and within walking distance of the main train station. The WIS serves as the “window of science” for Potsdam and Brandenburg, created through a network of over 30 scientific institutions working together to communicate scientific content to a broad public.

TRANSPORT

You can reach Potsdam by train or car as well as via Berlin by air (Flughafen Berlin Brandenburg, BER – Willy Brandt).

Airport

The Berlin airport (BER) is located southeast of the center of Berlin. It is connected to most big cities in the world, sometimes not directly, but over Frankfurt, Munich, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Paris, or Vienna, depending on the airline chosen. From BER, there is a direct express bus to Potsdam, *AirportShuttle BER2*, which runs 15 times a day. For that bus, you need a ticket Berlin BC plus a supplement that you can buy on board. A regional train line, RB22, runs from the

airport to Potsdam Hauptbahnhof (Central station) every hour. There are many possibilities to reach Potsdam via Berlin center. FEX and RE20 are regional trains and S9 part of the S-bahn; they bring you to Berlin Hauptbahnhof (Central station). To get from Berlin center to Potsdam, you can use RE1 or S7, [look here](#). For those trains you need a ticket Berlin ABC. You can buy single tickets, tickets for four trips, tickets for various time periods (from a day to a year, some with reduced rate tourist attractions, [look here](#)).

Train stations

Both Potsdam and Berlin Hauptbahnhof (Central station) are served from all parts of Germany and the rest of Europe, [look here](#).

Arriving by car

Traveling to Berlin, you will reach the *Berliner Ring*, surrounding greater Berlin. From the Ring you have roads leading to Potsdam and different parts of Berlin.

ACCOMODATION

Close to the WIS, there are many hotels in all price categories, which can be booked through the various providers online. Universität Potsdam, in addition, receives special conditions from some hotels:

- [B&B Hotel Potsdam](#). You can book a single room, without breakfast, for 99.98 euros per night. Breakfast costs 13.90 euros. Promotional code: REAL2026. You have to book before 2026-04-22 by [email](#).
- [Hotel Brandenburger Tor](#). You can book a single room, with breakfast, for 195 euros per night. Promotional code: REAL26. You have to book before 2026-04-06 over telephone (+49 331 87700000) or per [mail](#). The booking can be canceled without cost at the latest seven days before your planned arrival.
- [Holiday Inn – the niu, Amity Potsdam](#). You can book a single room for 111 euros per night and a double room for 131 euros per night, including breakfast, for the period 2026-06-03 – 05. Promotional code: ABK UNI POTSDAM_0306. You have to book before 2026-05-06, and the booking can be cancelled before 2026-05-29.
- [Mercure Hotel Potsdam City](#). You can book a room for 243.14 – 404.80 euros for two nights or a suite for 462 – 634.80 euros for two nights. Promotional code: REAL26 (Uni Potsdam).

GENERAL ORIENTATION

The City of Potsdam is situated 25 kilometers southwest of central Berlin. Potsdam offers an exceptional setting that combines historical significance with contemporary academic excellence. The city is renowned for its UNESCO World Heritage palace complexes, particularly Sanssouci Palace (where the so called Potsdam conference was held after the Second World War, and the post-war division of Europe was decided by representatives of the four victorious countries)

and its surrounding parks, which encompass over 150 buildings and 500 hectares of baroque and rococo architecture alongside English-style gardens.

The city’s evolution from a Prussian royal residence to a modern research hub reflects its enduring commitment to scholarship and innovation. Today, Potsdam houses over 40 academic and research institutions, making it a dynamic “science city” with more than 10 000 resident scientists and academics among its 175 000 inhabitants.

WHATSAPP GROUP

To ease communication between the participants among themselves and with the organizers, we have created a WhatsApp group for the symposium. You can join the group by scanning the following picture:

REAL 2026

WhatsApp-Gruppe



CONTACT

In case of an emergency, Eva Markowsky can be reached on her mobile phone:

+49-0000000

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or by email:

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Wednesday 2026-06-03	Venue to be announced Address to be announced, Potsdam
18.00 – 21.00	Welcome reception
Thursday 2026-06-04	WIS – Wissenschaftsetage im Bildungsforum Am Kanal 47, 14467 Potsdam
09.00 – 09.30	Welcome addresses
09.30 – 10.40	Session 1: Contributed papers
10.40 – 10.55	Coffee break
10.55 – 12.05	Session 2: Contributed papers
12.05 – 13.15	Lunch break
13.15 – 15.00	Session 3: Contributed papers
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee break
15.15 – 16.15	Session 4: Keynote address
16.15 – 18.00	Session 5: Contributed papers
20.00 – 23.30	Congress dinner
Friday 2026-06-05	WIS – Wissenschaftsetage im Bildungsforum Am Kanal 47, 14467 Potsdam
09.00 – 10.45	Session 6: Contributed papers
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.00	Session 7: Keynote address
12.00 – 13.45	Session 8: Contributed papers
13.45 – 14.00	Summing up
14.00 – 16.00	Farewell get-together

DETAILED PROGRAM

Wednesday
2026-06-03

Venue to be announced

18.00 – 21.00

Chair: Michele GAZZOLA

Welcome reception

François GRIN and Bengt-Arne WICKSTRÖM

Université de Genève & Research group “Economics, policy analysis, and language” (REAL) and Andrásy-Universität & Research group “Economics, policy analysis, and language” (REAL)

Presentation of the new book:

WEBER, Shlomo & Victor GINSBURGH, editors (2026). *The Palgrave handbook of economics and language*. 2nd edition. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 978-3-031-88239-5. DOI: doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-88240-1.

followed by an informal get-together.

- Thursday**
2026-06-04
- WIS – Wissenschaftsetage im Bildungsforum**
Am Kanal 47, 14467 Potsdam
- 09.00 – 09.30** Chair: Bengt-Arne WICKSTRÖM
- Welcome addresses**
- Oliver GÜNTHER, *President, Universität Potsdam*
- Eva MARKOWSKY, *Universität Potsdam*
- 09.30 – 10.40** Chair: Michele GAZZOLA
- Session 1a: Latvia**
- Sanita MARTENA
Rīgas Tehniskā Universitāte, Rēzeknes akadēmija
Language policy decisions in Latvia after 2022: Economic considerations and impacts
- Heiko F. MARTEN
Leibniz-Institut für Deutsche Sprache (Leibniz Institute for the German Language)
Economic factors in language biographies of German-speakers in Latvia
- Chair: Bartosz HORDECKI
- Session 1b: Poland**
- Bengt-Arne WICKSTRÖM
Andrássy-Universität Budapest
Poland's language policy and the German minority in the Opole Voivodeship
- Jędrzej SKRZYPCZAK
Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)
Legal status of the Silesian language in the Polish legal order: From the linguistic dispute to the legislative breakthrough
- 10.40 – 10.55** **Coffee break**

10.55 – 11.05

Chair: Eva MARKOWSKY

Session 2a: Language at the working place

Helena WEYLAND and Tobias SCHROEDLER

Universität Duisburg-Essen

Use and value of heritage languages in the workplaces

Andrew JOHN and Onur ÖZGÜR

Melbourne Business School

Corporate language choice

Chair: Bartosz HORDECKI

Session 2b: Theoretical issues

Tobias WEBER

Technická univerzita v Liberci (Technical University of Liberec)

Language(s) as a positional good

Kyoko MOTOBAYASHI

東京大学 (University of Tokyo)

Theoretical debates and future prospects in the study of language commodification: A linguist's reflection from Japan

12.05 – 13.15

Lunch break

13.15 – 15.00

Chair: Eva MARKOWSKY

Session 3a: Labor market

Sabrina HAHM

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Language skills in need are wage returns indeed: Heterogenous effects of occupational English use in the German labor market

Lina SHOUMAN

Lebanese International University / الجامعة اللبنانية الدولية

Language skills as human capital: Student perceptions, educational Investment, and labor-market expectations in Lebanon

Kristinn HERMANNSSON, Elysha RAMAGE, and Colin REILLY

University of Glasgow; University of Glasgow; and University of Stirling

The value of languages in informal employment in multilingual settings: Findings from surveys of market traders in Ghana and Malawi

Amado ALARCÓN ALARCÓN

Universitat Rovira i Virgili

The Impact of large language models on the labour market of symbolic analysts

Chair: Bengt-Arne WICKSTRÖM

Session 3b: Implementation of policy

Honghui Rita ZHU

Trinity College Dublin / Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

English medium instruction and Putonghua monolingualism in China's transnational higher education: A critical cultural political economy of education (CCPEE) approach

Francesco CENERINI

國立臺灣大學 (National Taiwan University)

Can policy halt language extinction? Evidence from Wales

Marco CIVICO and Michele GAZZOLA

Université de Genève and Ulster University, Belfast

Measuring the willingness to pay for minority language preservation: Evidence from Friuli Venezia Giulia

Filipe Venade de SOUSA

Centro de Investigação e Inovação em Educação, Escola Superior de Educação do Instituto Politécnico do Porto

Sign language policy evaluation: Between linguistic legislation and the implementation of public policies

15.00 – 15.15 **Coffee break**

15.15 – 16.15 Chair: Eva MARKOWSKY

Session 4: Keynote address

Mette FOGED

Københavns Universitet

Language policy: Causal evidence on refugee integration

16.15 – 18.00 Chair: Eva MARKOWSKY

Session 5a: Migration

Antonia DE CASTRO BURICA, Lucija ŠIMIČIĆ, and Katharina TYRAN

Sveučilište u Zadru (University of Zadar)

Language as gatekeeper: A comparative study of language policies in migration contexts of Croatia and Finland

Junghyun BAIK

University of Auckland / Waipapa Taumata Rau

The changing economic returns to host-country language proficiency for immigrants: Evidence from South Korea, 2018–2024

Sarita Monjane HENRIKSEN

Rutgers University & Universidade Pedagógica de Maputo

Language, mobility and inequality: The political economy of multilingualism in migration and education contexts

Bartosz HORDECKI

Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

The meanders of “linguistic hospitality”

Chair: Bengt-Arne WICKSTRÖM

Session 5b: Goals of language policy

Nicole MARINARO

Universität Hamburg

Operationalising linguistic unease in healthcare: A methodological tool for the evaluation of policy relevance and comprehensiveness

Nina TEIGLAND

Språkrådet (Language council of Norway) & Universitetet i Bergen

An indicator system for language policy in higher education

Konstantin ZAMYATIN and QU Yue

Высшая школа экономики (Higher School of Economics) & Российская академия наук (Russian Academy of Sciences) and 上海外國語大學 (Shanghai International Studies University)

Language policy justification through the lens of civilizational narratives: The cases of China and Russia

Jordi PASCUAL-FONTANILLES, Ana Beatriz HERNÁNDEZ-LARA, and Amado ALARCÓN ALARCÓN

Universitat Rovira i Virgili

The unequal returns to language intensity: A distributional analysis of occupational literacies in the EU

20.00 – 23.30

Congress dinner

Venue to be announced

Friday
2026-06-05

WIS – Wissenschaftsetage im Bildungsforum
Am Kanal 47, 14467 Potsdam

09.00 – 10.45

Chair: Bartosz HORDECKI

Session 6a: Industrial organization und language

Tamta KVARATSKHELIA

Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

The algorithmic enclosure of the linguistic commons: AI transformation and linguistic justice

Bakhtiyar TOKHTAKHUNOV

Әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университеті (Al-Farabi Kazakh National University)

Language policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the context of AI development

LIAO Chun, ZHANG Weiguo, MA Jun, and WANG Yindan

广东外语外贸大学 (Guangdong University of Foreign Studies); 山东大学 (Shandong University) & Columbia University; 烟台大学 (Yantai University); and 湖南大学 (Hunan University)

Linguistic diversity as a double-edged sword: Unveiling its U-shaped impact on Chinese enterprises' global value chain position

Rodolfo TORREGROSA

Universidad Libre de Colombia

The integral rural reform from a territorial perspective: Multilevel empirical evidence on the structural limits of implementation in Colombia (2017 – 2025)

Chair: Michele GAZZOLA

Session 6b: Schools

Michał SZCZYSZEK and Beata UDZIK

Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

The Ukrainian refugee students in Polish schools: A comparative study of data from 2024 and 2026

Antonio DI PAOLO

Universitat de Barcelona & AQR-IREA

Language of instruction, bilingualism, and neighbourhood quality: Do local language skills matter?

Silke ANGER, Bernhard CHRISTOPH, Agata GALKIEWICZ, Shushanik MARGARYAN, Frauke PETER, Malte SANDNER, and Thomas SIEDLER

Universität Potsdam

A library in the palm of your hand? A randomized field experiment with low-income children

Bohdana KURYLO, Tijana PROKIC-BREUER, and Stan VERMEULEN

Universiteit Maastricht; Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; and Inspectie van het Onderwijs (Dutch Inspectorate of Education)

Do school subsidies change reading behaviour and instruction? Evidence from the Dutch improving basic skills programme

10.45 – 11.00

Coffee break

11.00 – 12.00

Chair: Michele GAZZOLA

Session 7: Keynote address

Carsten QUELL

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat / Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada

Reconciling competing objectives in public policy: Language policy in a diverse Canada

12.00 – 13.45 Chair: Michele GAZZOLA

Session 8a: Incentives and multilingualism

Eva MARKOWSKY and Ekaterina SPRENGER

*Universität Potsdam and Universität Hamburg & ZBW – Leibniz-
Informationszentrum Wirtschaft (Leibniz Information Centre for Economics)*

The effect of future-time reference on economic behaviour in bilingual speakers

Stephen MAY

University of Auckland / Waipapa Taumata Rau

Linguistic cosmopolitanism: Multiple language learners in English language-dominant higher education

Lara SORGO

Inštitut za narodnostna vprašanja (Institute for Ethnic Studies)

Does the bilingualism allowance motivate language use? Attitudes from bilingual areas in Slovenia

Antonio DI PAOLO

Universitat de Barcelona & AQR-IREA

Tuition fees and dropout behaviour in language raining courses

Chair: Bengt-Arne WICKSTRÖM

Session 8b: Migration and transformation

Philipp JASCHKE

Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung – IAB (Institute for Employment Research)

Locus of control, social networks and secondary migration of refugees in Germany

Giacomo IAZZETTA

Università Ca' Foscari, Venice

Language policy and linguistic landscape in Monfalcone: Urban multilingualism between migrations and industry

So Yoon AHN

University of Illinois at Chicago

Restrictive marriage migration policies and family outcomes

Sakshi ARORA and Anik NANDI

Woxsen University, Telangana

Language as economic infrastructure: Multilingualism, innovation policy, and structural transformation in India

13.45 – 14.00 Chair: Michele GAZZOLA

Summing up

14.00 – 16.00 **Farewell get-together (self paying)**

Venue to be announced

Abstracts

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Mette FOGED

Københavns Universitet

Language policy: Causal evidence on refugee integration

This keynote address presents evidence from a series of quasi-experimental studies in Denmark evaluating the short- and long-run effects of language training for refugees. Exploiting a reform that expanded adult language training in 1999, we show that increased language instruction substantially improved refugees’ long-run employment and earnings, with effects persisting up to 15 – 18 years after arrival. These gains extend across generations: children of treated refugees are more likely to complete lower secondary school and less likely to engage in juvenile crime, demonstrating inter-generational spillovers of parental language investments. We further show that accessibility matters. Using quasi-random variation in commuting distance to language centers, we find that shorter travel time increases class attendance, language proficiency, and local integration. Finally, we present ongoing work from the Danish Refugee Cohort (DARECO), testing whether correcting beliefs about the labor-market returns to language proficiency affects intended and actual investments and identifying key perceived barriers to language. Taken together, these findings position language policy not merely as an integration tool, but as a central policy lever with long-run and cross-generational socio-economic consequences.

REFERENCES

- FOGED, Mette, Linea HASAGER, & Giovanni PERI (2024). “Comparing the effects of policies for the labor market integration of refugees”, in: *Journal of Labor Economics* **42.S1**: S335–S377. DOI: doi.org/10.1086/728806.
- FOGED, Mette, Linea HASAGER, Giovanni PERI, Jacob Nielsen ARENDT, & Iben BOLVIG (2023). “Intergenerational spillover effects of language training for refugees”, in: *Journal of Public Economics* **220**: 104840. DOI: doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2023.104840.
- (2024). “Language training and refugees’ integration”, in: *The Review of Economics and Statistics* **106.4**: 1157–1166. DOI: doi.org/10.1162/rest_a_01216.
- FOGED, Mette, Giovanni PERI, & Edith ZINK (2026). *Barriers to language learning*. Research report. København: Københavns universitet.
- FOGED, Mette & Cynthia VAN DER WERF (2023). “Access to language training and the local integration of refugees”, in: *Labour Economics* **84**: 102366. DOI: doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2023.102366.

Carsten QUELL

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat / Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada

Reconciling competing objectives in public policy: Language policy in a diverse Canada

Public policy in Canada revolves around five key principles:

1. policy and legal authority
2. consultation-based decision-making
3. responsible implementation by accountable state actors
4. systematic reporting on performance
5. a consolidated periodic review that supports the renewal of existing policy and legal frameworks

From his perspective as a senior official in the Government of Canada with responsibility for the design, implementation and monitoring of Canadian language policy, the speaker will discuss how these key principles emerge from the overhaul of Canadian language legislation in 2023, the most significant reform in the last 35 years. The effort was, in part, driven by a recognition that policy impacts needed to be more closely monitored and evaluated, and that the interdependencies of language policy with other policy domains such as immigration, Indigenous rights and interjurisdictional concerns deserved greater attention.

Using concrete issues in Canadian language policy, the presentation will explore the role of policy makers in promoting the successful resolution of complex and sometimes competing policy objectives. In Canadian language policy, these include the need for demographic growth while maintaining the proportions of Canada's two major linguistic communities, the aspirations of Quebec to protect and promote the French language while ensuring the vitality of the English-speaking minority in the province, and the future of Indigenous languages in a country with two official and many immigrant languages. The speaker will address these issues with a particular focus on how a data-driven, evidence-based approach on evaluating policy implementation can reduce division and polarization.

While the presentation will be focused on the Canadian context, the policy tools and monitoring instruments to address them will be of relevance to other jurisdictions. The speaker will conclude with a discussion of how the five key principles of Canadian public policy could inform public policy elsewhere, and hopes to engage the audience in an exchange on which international policy frameworks could complement and improve the Canadian approach.

CONTRIBUTED PAPERS

So Yoon AHN

University of Illinois at Chicago

Restrictive marriage migration policies and family outcomes

As cross-border marriages rise, many governments have tightened rules on who can marry across borders, often in the name of promoting integration. Cross-border couples tend to have high divorce rates, which hinders successful assimilation. This paper provides the first evidence on how restrictive marriage migration policies affect family outcomes of migrants. We exploit a 2014 reform in South Korea that introduced pre-entry requirements for marriage visas, with language proficiency as the key component. Using rich administrative and survey data, we show that the reform led to a sharp temporary decline in cross-border marriages, improved migrants' language skills, and increased educational attainment among both migrants and their Korean spouses. Comparing marriage cohorts immediately before and after the reform cutoff date, we find that cumulative divorce rates fell by 37% in the first 12 months and by 12% in the first 48 months, primarily due to language-based selection rather than demographic factors. Our evidence indicates that improved communication enhanced marital surplus and highlights the potential positive impact of selective admission policies that target civil and cultural assimilation.

Amado ALARCÓN ALARCÓN

Universitat Rovira i Virgili

The Impact of large language models on the labour market of symbolic analysts

Since Robert Reich defined “symbolic analysts” as the elite of the global economy – professionals who identify, solve, and broker problems by manipulating symbols – this category has influenced the narrative of the knowledge economy. However, the emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs) represents a supply shock to the economy of language, challenging the value of traditional linguistic capital. This paper analyses how the integration of Generative AI is reshaping the labour market for these professionals, arguing that we are witnessing a shift from the *generation* of symbols to their *strategic curation*.

Drawing on empirical research based on 187 semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted in Spain across diverse sectors (including Health, Education, Law, and IT), this study examines the re-skilling processes and job displacement risks faced by symbolic analysts. The methodology explores how professionals perceive AI not merely as a technological disruption, but as a reconfiguration of their professional identity and value.

Our results indicate a profound bifurcation within the class of symbolic analysts. On one hand, “routine symbolic analysts” – those performing structured tasks such as administrative management or basic paralegal review – face a significant risk of displacement and a devaluation of their accumulated experience. On the other, “deep-domain analysts” utilize LLMs to augment their productivity, shifting their core competency towards “AI auditing”, critical supervision, and ethical judgment. This transition demands a new form of “AI literacy” that transcends technical skills, focusing instead on the ability to validate and contextualize automated linguistic output.

Furthermore, the paper discusses the “economy of authenticity” arising as a form of resistance. As the marginal cost of generating standard text approaches zero, professionals leverage the “human touch” – empathy, intuition, and ethical accountability – as a scarce economic asset to protect their market position. We conclude that current labour policies and educational curricula are lagging behind this shift, necessitating urgent updates to prepare the workforce for a market where the mastery of natural language alone is no longer a guarantor of professional mobility.

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A library in the palm of your hand? A randomized field experiment with low-income children

Reading comprehension is critical for academic success, yet children from disadvantaged backgrounds often engage in reading less frequently than their more advantaged peers. This study evaluates the impact of a randomized reading intervention targeting 11–12-year-olds from low-income households in Germany. As part of the intervention, children received e-book readers with access to a large digital library of age-appropriate books. The results show a significant increase in reading engagement, leading to improvements in academic performance. 12 months after the start of the intervention, academic performance improved by 10.3% of a standard deviation, with effects persisting at 9.6% after 30 months. Additionally, the intervention positively impacted the socio-emotional well-being of the children.

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Language as economic infrastructure: Multilingualism, innovation policy, and structural transformation in India

This paper reconceptualizes language not merely as human capital but as an economic infrastructure in multilingual economies (WICKSTRÖM & GAZZOLA, 2024). Building on Schumpeter’s notion of creative destruction (SCHUMPETER, 2010 [1942]), Marx’s analysis of productive forces and infrastructure (MARX, 1887 [1867]), and the economics of language (VAILLANCOURT, 1980), it argues that linguistic diversity in India functions as a dynamic force of structural transformation. English proficiency opens doors for myriad opportunities and continues to generate wage premia in urban labour markets, yet regional and local languages sustain parallel economies in education, media, platform-based services, and cultural industries (NANDI, KASARES, & MANTEROLA, 2024). These linguistic economies cohabit and compete, disrupting existing pecking order while enabling new forms of accumulation.

A major challenge in India’s innovation ecosystem is its English-centricity: only 10.4% of Indians are reported speaking English in the 2011 Census, leaving millions of grassroots innovators, craftspeople, farmers, and micro-entrepreneurs omitted from startup and investment grids. The LANGUAGE INCLUSIVE PROGRAM OF INNOVATION (LIPI), ATAL INNOVATION MISSION (AIM), NITI AAYOG, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (2025) addresses this lacuna by embedding all 22 scheduled Indian languages into the innovation ecosystem. By training facilitators in design thinking across these languages, LIPI depresses the transaction costs, enlarges market access, and reconfigures relations between labour, technology, and capital, hence recalibrating the economic structure of innovation itself (ARORA, KUMAR, & GULATI, 2025).

Corroborated with the MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (2020), multilingual education not only will democratize access to information but also will aid to outline the economic structures by persuading participation in startups and innovation ecosystem. The paper highlights how fostering innovation in diverse Indian languages can reduce inequality, broaden participation, and strengthen India’s knowledge economy. Eventually, the study advances a methodological framework for analysing language-driven economic transformation, bridging political economy, sociolinguistics, and innovation theory.

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**The changing economic returns to host-country language proficiency for immigrants:
Evidence from South Korea, 2018–2024**

Despite Korea’s rapid demographic transition toward a *de facto* immigration society, empirical research on immigrants’ Korean language proficiency remains limited; existing studies have largely conceptualized Korean proficiency as a factor related to social adaptation or integration, rather than as an economically productive skill operating within labor-market processes. To address this gap, this study examines how Korean language proficiency functions as both a screening device for labor-market entry and a determinant of wages, and how its economic role has changed over time. Using data from the Survey on *Immigrants’ Living Conditions and Labor Market Outcomes*, a Heckman selection model is applied to two cross-sections from 2018 ($n = 15\,463$) and 2024 ($n = 22\,373$) to conduct a comparative analysis.

Overall, Korean language proficiency is associated with both employment and wage outcomes; however, its function differs substantially between the two periods. In 2018, Korean language proficiency functioned as high-skilled human capital that was selectively rewarded in the labor market, rather than merely as a tool for basic communication. This pattern is evident in the differentiated roles of language skills across stages of the employment process. In single-equation models, mid-to-high speaking proficiency significantly increased the probability of employment (coef. = 0.412, $p < 0.001$), indicating that oral proficiency served as a salient screening criterion for labor-market entry. By contrast, wage determination followed a distinct logic: writing proficiency was the only language skill with a statistically significant positive effect on earnings, with immigrants in the highest proficiency category (Level 4) earning an estimated wage premium of approximately 10.8 percent (coef. = 0.108, $p = 0.004$).

In 2024, this compensation structure was no longer evident: Korean language proficiency primarily functioned as a minimum requirement for labor-market access rather than as a source of wage premia. In the integrated model including speaking, listening, reading, and writing, none of the language proficiency measures showed statistically significant effects on wages or employment ($p > 0.05$). Nevertheless, domain-specific single-equation models indicate that oral skills continued to shape employment access: speaking proficiency at the mid-high level (coef. = 0.168, $p = 0.024$) and listening proficiency at a comparable level (coef. = 0.218, $p = 0.003$) remained positively associated with employment probability, albeit with substantially weaker magnitudes than those observed in 2018.

From a broader perspective, the results imply that despite the quantitative expansion of foreign labor in Korea, the qualitative structure of the immigrant labor market may increasingly be oriented toward low-skilled, routine employment. A labor-market environment in which highly proficient immigrants receive limited wage differentiation may reduce incentives to attract high-

quality human capital and constrain long-term productivity growth. Accordingly, immigration policy discussions may benefit from moving beyond the provision of communicatively functional labor toward institutional arrangements that more fully reflect literacy and job-related skills in wage structures. These considerations are likely to be relevant not only for Korea but also for other East Asian economies, such as Japan and Taiwan, that are expanding foreign labor inflows in response to population aging and demographic decline.

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Language as gatekeeper: A comparative study of language policies in migration contexts of Croatia and Finland

The contribution examines how language policies in Croatia and Finland regulate integration through differentiated expectations placed on various groups of migrants and foreigners. It focuses on the economic dimension of language requirements, paying particular attention to who is required to invest time, labour, and financial resources into language learning, and under what conditions language training is funded by the state or left to individuals. While language proficiency is considered as a key for migrant integration across Europe (PRECIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, 2004; EXTRA, SPOTTI, & VAN AVERMAET, 2009), the research investigates selectivity and hierarchization of language-related rights across different migrant categories as defined in each of the studied contexts.

While both Croatia and Finland have relatively recently become immigration countries, Finland is often presented as having a well-developed, state-supported integration system with formal language training tied to employment and welfare regimes due to several decades of its history as a country of immigration. Croatia, by contrast, represents a newer immigration context where integration policies are still emerging and developing at a slow pace, and where language rights are still unevenly articulated and enforced in practice. Comparing the two contexts enables a critical discussion on how similar European integration logics operate under different socio-political and economic conditions. In both contexts language policies aimed at migrants and foreigners often link competence in Croatian and Finnish respectively, to residence permits, access to welfare, employment opportunities, and citizenship. However, these policies tend to be shaped in such a way as to suit particular categories of migrants and are applied selectively producing hierarchies of rights and obligations that reflect particular economic interests and ideologies of belonging.

The study is based on a qualitative approach that departs from comparing national legislations, integration strategies, and policy reports to identify how language requirements are articulated and justified in the two countries. The analysis is informed by sociolinguistic theories that view language as a form of capital to be commodified, invested in and employed in labor market (e.g. HELLER, 2010; DUCHÊNE & HELLER, 2012; DE COSTA, PARK, & WEE, 2016; KUBOTA, 2021), but focuses particularly on how the two states – Croatia and Finland – define language proficiency as a moral and economic responsibility for some migrants but not others. It thus aims to contribute to debates on migration and integration by highlighting how language policies function not only as tools for inclusion but also as mechanisms of stratification.

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Can policy halt language extinction? Evidence from Wales

Between 50 and 90% of approximately 7 000 existing languages spoken today are expected to disappear by 2100 without intervention. Despite increasing global recognition and funding for endangered languages, language shift is often perceived as inevitable, and causal evidence on the efficacy and cost of minority language policies remains scarce. This paper offers an estimate of the effectiveness of a large-scale program mandating Welsh-language instruction in schools, introduced in September 1990 for children aged 5–14 and extended to age 16 in 1999.

Using a quasi-experimental difference-in-cohorts design with 2011 UK Census micro-data covering 2.8 million individuals, I estimate the effect of varying years of Welsh education on the probability of speaking Welsh. The identification strategy exploits policy-driven variation in exposure to compulsory Welsh schooling across birth cohorts: individuals aged 19–35 in 2011 received between 1 and 12 years of Welsh instruction, while those aged 36–65 did not receive any.

Results show the policy significantly increased speaker numbers, raising the likelihood of speaking Welsh by 3.6 percentage points for those receiving 11–12 years of schooling. The treatment effect exhibits diminishing returns: the first year of instruction increases speaking probability by 2.3 percentage points, while each additional year adds progressively less. The policy was substantially more effective for females, with an additional 2.5 percentage point increase compared to males. Regional heterogeneity follows a surprising U-shaped pattern: the policy was most effective in areas where Welsh was either very strong (>50% speakers) or nearly extinct (<10%) before the policy creation, with smaller but still positive gains in middle-distribution areas (10–50%). This suggests that teaching is most successful where the language has either strong community reinforcement or represents genuine novelty, rather than being perceived as a declining heritage marker. To verify that results reflect genuine policy impact rather than a general Wales-wide shift in attitudes, I implement a placebo permutation test with 1 000 random reassignments of treatment, confirming the observed effect lies far outside the null distribution.

By extrapolating the century-long pre-policy per year decline trend from 1891–1991 Censuses, I construct a 2011 counter-factual and calculate per-year increases of the policy. I show the policy generated 60% more speakers than would have been expected under continued decline, and estimate that it created approximately 64 287 speakers over twenty years. Using spending data on Welsh language instruction and promotion, I conduct a cost-per-new-speaker analysis to estimate the program’s cost effectiveness. I find an average cost of £3 957 per new speaker, with upper-bound estimates including broader Welsh language promotion and public broadcasting expenditures ranging from £4 377 to £6 757 per speaker.

These findings provide rare causal evidence that sustained investment in minority language education can reverse long-term decline, offering a benchmark for policymakers designing cost-effective language revitalization programs worldwide.

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Measuring the willingness to pay for minority language preservation: Evidence from Friuli Venezia Giulia

Object and context: The Friulian language is a minority language spoken by an estimated 425 000 individuals in the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG) in Northeastern Italy. Friulian has been stigmatised as a dialect of Italian for a long time. Since the late 1990s, it has been the subject of national and regional legislative protection and safeguarding. Various language policy measures have been implemented, particularly in the last decade, to curb the decline in the percentage of speakers. According to socio-linguistic survey data collected in 2023, the percentage of regular speakers of the language has fallen from 48% of the resident population in 2014 to 39% in 2023. The latest language policy plan for the period 2021-2025 received a budget of over €22 million from the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG). According to socio-linguistic data, most of the population is in favour of measures to protect and promote the language; for example, 69% of residents support the teaching of Friulian in schools. The most recent socio-linguistic survey conducted in 2023 provides data on the population’s willingness to pay for language policy. Respondents were asked the following question: “The supporting measures for the Friulian language promoted and funded by the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region concern various areas, such as education, the mass media, new technologies, public administration, scientific research, entertainment and the arts, culture, and the labour market. How many euros, of those you already pay in taxes, do you consider adequate to finance measures to support the Friulian language?”. The purpose of this paper is to examine the determinants of the residents’ WTP and to show how it changes across geographical areas and speakers’ proficiency levels.

Method: The paper uses the data-set from the socio-linguistic survey “Tire fûr la Lenge” carried out in 2023 on a representative sample of residents in the Friulian-speaking area. The data-set contains over 4 000 observations. Using standard multivariate analysis methods, the article analyses how the average WTP varies according to certain factors, including the linguistic competence of Friulian-speaking residents and their attitude towards the language, as well as other geographical, social, demographic and attitudinal variables.

Results and relevance: The average willingness to pay (WTP) is above €20, with a median of €10, while the annual budget allocation to the language policy is below €5 per resident. As the average annual WTP for funding language policy is higher than the actual expenditures for the policy itself, the language policy is efficient in a cost-benefit sense. The paper also explores how WTP varies according to age, level of proficiency and sense of belonging to the Friulian

language community. If the average WTP is particularly high among older people and regular speakers, then it could decrease over time, and it is necessary to raise awareness among certain groups of the population; if, on the other hand, it is relatively homogeneous among residents, then there is probably room for further expansion of the scope of language policy. While the results of the paper cannot be seen as a causal analysis, the study of conditional correlations provides useful input for the policy makers and the public.

Antonio DI PAOLO

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Language of instruction, bilingualism, and neighbourhood quality: Do local language skills matter?

This paper investigates whether acquiring proficiency in a local language improves neighbourhood quality in a bilingual region, focusing on Catalonia, Spain. The analysis uses rich micro-data linked to census-tract measures of neighbourhood quality, including average local income, unemployment benefits *per capita*, and a composite socioeconomic status index. OLS results show that oral proficiency in Catalan among native Spanish speakers is associated with better residential outcomes.

To address potential endogeneity of language skills, I exploit the implementation of a language-in-education policy that introduced Catalan as a medium of instruction, promoting Catalan-Spanish bilingualism among native Spanish speakers. Specifically, I construct an instrument consisting in the interaction between years of language exposure during compulsory education and an indicator for native Spanish speakers, considering that the reform did not affect oral Catalan proficiency among native Catalan speakers and assuming cohort trends unrelated to the reform are homogeneous across language groups.

IV/TSLs estimates reveal no causal effect of increased oral Catalan skills, induced by school language exposure among native Spanish speakers, on any measure of neighbourhood quality. Falsification exercises aimed at validating the main identification assumption, along with robustness checks addressing potential confounders and alternative mechanisms, support the identification strategy and reinforce the main findings. Overall, the results suggest that although the reform significantly raised oral Catalan proficiency among native Spanish speakers, this variation in language skills does not translate into changes in residential sorting or neighbourhood quality.

Antonio DI PAOLO

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Tuition fees and dropout behaviour in language raining courses

This paper provides novel evidence about the design of language training programs for migrants and its impact on language learning progression. An emerging literature examines the effects of language training programs for migrants, particularly refugees, showing positive effects on various dimensions of socioeconomic integration (see ÅSLUND & ENGDAHL, 2018; LOCHMANN, RAPOPORT, & SPECIALE, 2019; HELLER & SLUNGAARD MUMMA, 2023; LANG, 2022; FOGED, HASAGER, PERI, ARENDT, & BOLVIG, 2024; MARBACH, VALLIZADEH, HARDER, HANGARTNER, & HAINMUELLER, 2025), and these positive impacts can even spill-over across generations (PESOLA & SARVIMÄKI, 0000; DANG, 2025). Moreover, other papers highlight that geographical access to language training has positive effect on language learning (DI PAOLO & MALLÉN, 2023; FOGED & VAN DER WERF, 2023). However, the evidence about specific features of language courses for migrants is scarce. To the best of my knowledge, there are only two papers investigating the role of characteristics of language courses, specifically, the work by PONT-GRAU, LEI, LIM, & XIA (2023) on courses' duration and the one by ARENDT & BOLVIG (2023) on their content.

This work will provide the first piece of evidence regarding a crucial aspect of the design of language training programs. Specifically, I analyse the causal effect of tuition fees on dropout behaviour. Language training programs are often free for refugees and other disadvantaged groups, or heavily subsidized and offered at minimal cost. At the same time, dropout rates are generally high for non-compulsory courses (e.g., for refugees who take courses voluntarily to maintain their status). I hypothesize that, in the context of general language courses for migrants, the presence of a reduced – even symbolic – tuition fee may reduce dropout by triggering a “sunk cost fallacy” effect, thereby increasing students' commitment to completing the course. To the best of our knowledge, this study would provide the first evidence of the potential effect of tuition fees on language course participation, and is partially related to recent research on the impact of university tuition fees on academic performance (e.g. BIETENBECK, LEIBING, MARCUS, & WEINHARDT, 2023). Moreover, I will examine whether this deterrent effect of tuition fees varies according to individuals' social norms, hypothesizing a stronger effect for those who are culturally less attached to the value of public goods. To assess these hypotheses, I examine publicly provided Catalan courses offered to internal and international immigrants in Catalonia. Although our analysis focuses on training in a local language within a bilingual context, it remains broadly relevant. Prior evidence indicates that proficiency in Catalan enhances the economic performance of both internal and foreign migrants, thereby facilitating their integration into the bilingual society (DI PAOLO & RAYMOND, 2012). Moreover, the setting offers an opportunity to exploit a policy change as a natural experiment. In particular, I

take advantage of a reform implemented by the municipality of Barcelona that introduced spatial and temporal variation in tuition fees, allowing us to obtain causal estimates.

More specifically, I will investigate whether the introduction and subsequent removal of reduced tuition fees affected the dropout behaviour of adults enrolled in language training courses. The analysis focuses on Catalan language instruction in Catalonia, provided by the Consortium for Language Normalization (“Consorti per a la Normalització Lingüística”, CPNL). The empirical analysis relies on a unique administrative data set covering the entire population of course participants across all levels since the 2009/2010 academic year, which includes more than 1 million of observations. The data set is structured at the matriculation level, meaning that each observation corresponds to an individual enrolment. It contains exhaustive information about each course – including its level, exact location, start date, duration, a unique course identifier, and several additional variables – as well as a rich set of individual-level characteristics. The latter include date of birth, gender, country of birth, native language(s), year of arrival in Catalonia, highest completed education, place of residence, employment status and job characteristics, and an anonymised individual identifier, which allows tracking individuals across possible multiple enrolments. The database also contains information on whether an enrolled student never attended the course, dropped out during the course, and the final outcome (i.e., whether the student passed the exam). For this project, I focus on in-person courses offered between the 2009/2010 and 2018/2019 academic years, with the endpoint chosen to exclude the period affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tuition fees are generally subsidized by the Catalan government. Courses at the A1 and A2 levels were traditionally free for students, while enrolment in higher-level courses required a modest co-payment that increased with the course level. In this paper, I exploit the following policy changes to investigate the effect of a small, even symbolic, tuition fee on the dropout behaviour of students. Specifically, from the beginning of the 2013/2014 academic year (September 1, 2013), the CPNL introduced a tuition fee of €13.50 for A2-level courses, which account for around 60% of total enrollments over the last decade. Tuition fees for courses at other levels remained virtually unchanged (free for A1, and subject to payment for higher levels). However, starting with the subsequent academic year (2014/2015), the Municipality of Barcelona introduced an additional subsidy to abolish the symbolic tuition fee for all A2 courses held in language centers located within the city. These changes in tuition fees create an ideal setting to investigate the causal effect of a symbolic tuition fee on the risk of dropout of language students, and even on their final outcome. I will adopt two alternative, yet complementary, identification strategies.

First, leveraging on variation by starting date and location, I will apply a difference-in-differences approach, comparing the evolution of dropout over time among students enrolled in A2 courses in Barcelona versus elsewhere, possibly restricting attention to other centers located within the Barcelona Metropolitan Area or in municipalities surrounding Barcelona city. I will conduct state-of-the-art checks to validate the main identifying assumptions for setups without variation in treatment timing (ROTH, SANT’ANNA, BILINSKI, & POE, 2023; BAKER, CALLAWAY, CUNNINGHAM, GOODMAN-BACON, & SANT’ANNA, 0000), being especially careful with the issue of compositional changes related to the policy change. Moreover, I will also examine the robustness of the results using Triple-Difference methods – leveraging individuals enrolled in levels other than A2 – and the novel synthetic-difference-in-differences approach (ARKHANGELSKY, ATHEY, HIRSHBERG, IMBENS, & WAGER, 2021), in case the par-

allel trends assumption or related conditions do not hold.

Second, exploiting the information about the exact location of language centers, and focusing on enrolments in A2 courses initiated from the beginning of the 2014/2025 academic year, I will implement a Geographical Regression Discontinuity Design, which compares the dropout behaviour of students enrolled in centers located on the two sides of the border between Barcelona and surrounding municipalities. Specifically, using modern Geographic Information System (GIS) tools, we will geolocate all language centers based on their detailed addresses and compute various metrics of minimum distance – Euclidean distance, chordal/geodesic distance, walking distance, etc. – with respect to the boundary of Barcelona. This setting enables the implementation of a standard Sharp Spatial Regression Discontinuity Design, exploiting the quasi-random allocation of language centres around the municipality’s border. I will first consider a univariate score (minimum distance), considering multiple cut-off points along both the south-western and north-eastern borders of Barcelona, and second, we will also allow multiple scores (latitude and longitude), as detailed in CATTANEO & Rocío TITIUNIK (2022) and CATTANEO, IDROBO, & Rocío TITIUNIK (2024). Third, I will apply the novel Boundary Regression Discontinuity technique (CATTANEO, Rocío TITIUNIK, & YU, 2025), which extends Geographical Regression Discontinuity methods and is particularly suitable for the framework of this research, thus representing an important methodological innovation of this project. Also for this RD approach, I will conduct all the standard checks to validate the underlying identification assumptions, including the absence of manipulation of location on either side of the border, the absence of discontinuities in predetermined characteristics, and assessments of bandwidth and local randomization, as well as falsification exercises. In particular, I will examine potential discontinuities in dropout around the Barcelona border for years in which A2-level tuition fees were the same in Barcelona and elsewhere, as well as discontinuities among students enrolled in levels other than A2. If significant differences in dropout unrelated to Barcelona’s tuition fee policy are detected, I will integrate all the data into a Difference-in-Discontinuity design to obtain a credible estimate the causal effect of the removal of the symbolic tuition fee.

Finally, for both methodological approaches (DiD and SRD), I will examine heterogeneous responses to the introduction and subsequent removal of the tuition fee for language courses. In particular, I will consider differences by predetermined and exogenous characteristics, mainly focusing on students’ gender, native language(s), and country of origin. Moreover, I will attempt to construct a proxy variable capturing cultural attitudes toward public goods, including individual perspectives on government, social spending, trust in institutions, and civic values. The main aim is to assess whether individuals with a stronger cultural attachment to public services are less likely to react to tuition fees – or their removal – by dropping out of language courses, that is, whether they remain enrolled even when no monetary contribution is required. To this end, I will explore the World Values Survey (WVS), which includes several variables that could be used to construct a proxy measure of attachment to public services based on individuals’ country of origin.

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Language skills in need are wage returns indeed: Heterogenous effects of occupational English use in the German labor market¹

This chapter explores different channels through which language use affects wages. The empirical approach of the paper innovatively combines data from the 2012 wave of the German Socio-Economic Panel’s Innovation Sample (SOEP-IS) with the 2012 BIBB/BAuA Employment Survey. It allows us to match individual language use with typical occupational language requirements. The analysis reveals that German native speakers who use English skills at work receive significantly higher wages of about 13 percent on average. About two-thirds of this wage premium can be attributed to the selection of English-speaking individuals into specific jobs (indirect effect) and one third is related to differences in language use within occupations (direct effect). Our findings suggest that the productive use of English skills at work is the driving force behind observed wage differences. We neither find significant wage premia in occupations with low foreign language demand nor for individuals whose language skills remain unused. Complementary to OLS estimation, inverse probability weighting is used to address potential selectivity of workers into jobs with foreign language requirements. To take effect heterogeneity and potentially remaining endogeneity into account, the analysis is supplemented with an IV approach that identifies a local average treatment effect of occupational English use of 27 percent for individuals who comply with their occupations’ language requirements.

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Language, mobility and inequality: The political economy of multilingualism in migration and education contexts

This study examines the role of language as an economic and political resource in contexts of increasing mobility, with a focus on migration and education. Drawing on empirical evidence from multilingual settings in Southern Africa, with a particular focus on Mozambique, and other contexts in the world, the study looks at how language policies shape access to education, employability, and social mobility for migrant and minority language speakers.

In methodological terms, the study combines comparative policy analysis with qualitative discourse analysis of language-in-education and migration-related policy documents, institutional and everyday-language practices. Using a critical sociolinguistic and language-policy framework, the study analyses how dominant language ideologies, often favouring former colonial or the so-called global languages, interact with labour-market demands and institutional practices in education.

The study findings reveal that while multilingual repertoires are frequently framed as assets in policy discourse, they are unevenly valued in practice, contributing to persistent structural inequalities. The paper argues that language skills function not merely as individual human capital but as politically regulated resources embedded in broader economic and policy regimes. The study concludes by discussing implications for language policy design that better align educational language planning and policy with mobility, labour-market inclusion, and social equity.

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The value of languages in informal employment in multilingual settings: Findings from surveys of market traders in Ghana and Malawi

We present findings from recent field surveys of market traders in Ghana (n=269) and Malawi (n=495), examining language skills, language use, attitudes, earnings and business practices of traders at several markets in Ghana and Malawi. While the relationship between language and economic outcomes has been explored in some global contexts, it remains insufficiently understood in African settings, and even less is known about the role language plays within the informal economy (DJITÉ, 2021). This gap is significant given that informal employment constitutes the largest segment of the labour market in Africa (AFRICAN UNION / INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION / UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 2022).

The overarching aim of this work is to identify which languages, or combinations of languages, are most effective in facilitating participation and success in informal employment. In the context of linguistic fragmentation, we expect proficiency in dominant languages and multiple languages to be positively associated with earnings through trading. Our findings demonstrate that language skills are indeed valuable, but returns to specific languages are sensitive to location and sector of trade.

Our findings also suggest that for economic value, a distinction must be made between possession of language skills and use of language skills. For example, we found that speaking English socially is not associated with increased earning. However, speaking English in a commercial setting is, even after other factors that predict earnings, such as education were controlled for.

Respondents were roughly evenly divided in their attitudes towards learning a new language for commercial benefit. Within the Malawian marketplaces translanguaging was evident and traders would use multiple languages to attract different customers and demonstrated similar attitudes that learning new languages would increase custom.

These insights can inform policies on language-skills formation within education systems, particularly in contexts where resources are limited, and policy decisions have long-term consequences. Our findings challenge the widespread perception, reflection in education and language policies across Africa and beyond, that English is inherently the most valuable language for employment. While English plays an important role in certain sectors, these assumptions often fail to account for the multilingual realities of labour of informal economies where local

and regional languages may be more economically functional.

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The meanders of “linguistic hospitality”

In the second and third decades of the 21st century, millions of Ukrainians not only visited Poland but often stayed for longer periods or permanently. The reasons for their arrival varied. Until the outbreak of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Ukrainian citizens primarily took up employment in Poland, making a significant contribution to the development of the Polish economy. After 24 February 2022, refugees arrived in Poland from Ukraine, seeking shelter from Russian aggression. In light of the Polish Economic Institute’s data, 1.51 million Ukrainian citizens resided in Poland in December 2025. Additionally, since 2020, we have seen a dynamic increase in political and economic migration from Belarus. According to data from the National Bank of Poland, the number of Belarusian citizens in the country stands at 150 000.

The presence of Ukrainians and Belarusians significantly diversifies and dynamises the linguistic situation in Poland. In a short period, many people who do not speak Polish but Ukrainian, Belarusian, or Russian have appeared in the Polish communication space. In this context, Poles’ attitudes toward the languages of migrants from Belarus and Ukraine are evolving. Consequently, the issue of “linguistic hospitality” arises.

Generally, “linguistic hospitality” can be understood as openness to introducing languages other than Polish (as the state language) into public discourse. In particular, “linguistic hospitality” is an ambiguous concept which may conceal exclusionary and discriminatory ideological implications. Among them, the following assumptions ought to be highlighted:

1. that it is clear what it means to be a Pole
2. that one of the key determinants of being a Pole is speaking Polish
3. that Polish speakers act as hosts in Poland in relation to speakers of other languages
4. that Poles who speak Polish show linguistic hospitality and therefore deserve gratitude
5. that Poles’ linguistic hospitality’ may be/is abused
6. that non-citizens staying in Poland are obliged to focus on learning Polish

The paper aims to present how “linguistic hospitality” shapes contemporary Polish socio-political discourse. The main research question is whether there is a connection between “linguistic hospitality” and the potential ideological implications indicated above.

The research data will be collected with selected databases of contemporary Polish media content. The material will be interpreted using methods and techniques typical of rhetorical

criticism (aimed at revealing non-obvious yet decisive persuasive practices used by participants in a discourse). Neo-institutional tools will be used additionally (to determine the significance of specific statements shaping the debate on “linguistic justice” in contemporary Poland).

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**Language policy and linguistic landscape in Monfalcone: Urban multilingualism
between migrations and industry**

This paper investigates the evolving linguistic landscape of the town of Monfalcone (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy) as a lens through which to understand the interplay between migration, labour, and language policy in a medium-sized industrial town. Monfalcone provides a particularly compelling case: for decades, the presence of Fincantieri – Europe’s largest shipyard company – has attracted a diverse and continuously changing workforce, especially from Bangladesh, but also from India, Pakistan, the Maghreb, and Eastern Europe. At the same time, the local political and social context has often been marked by tensions surrounding migration, the circulation of xenophobic narratives, and a strong preference for assimilationist responses to diversity. Within this complex environment, the visibility, suppression, and regulation of languages in public and semi-public spaces become central sites where identities, power relations, and forms of coexistence are expressed and contested.

Adopting an interdisciplinary approach that combines language policy studies, linguistic landscape and urban sociology, the project explores two main dimensions. First, it documents the spatial distribution and modes of display of languages across the city – official signage, commercial spaces, religious centres, and informal written practices – highlighting how multilingualism is materially inscribed in everyday urban life. Second, it analyses institutional and corporate language policies implemented by key actors such as the Municipality, local schools, health-care institutions, and Fincantieri. These policies shape both the visibility of languages and the communicative conditions under which migrant workers and residents interact. Overall, the project demonstrates that Monfalcone’s linguistic landscape functions as a dynamic arena where migration, labour regimes, and local ideologies intersect. By focusing on a non-metropolitan, industrial town undergoing rapid demographic transformation, the study contributes to broader debates on language governance, contested multilingualism, and the sociolinguistics of mobility in contemporary Europe.

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Locus of control, social networks and secondary migration of refugees in Germany

This paper seeks to improve the understanding of social networks in determining refugees' secondary (within destination country) mobility. Economically, mobility decisions entail a trade-off between expected returns versus expected costs. On the one hand, refugees may decide to stay in regions where many other refugees live to benefit from community resources providing support with, e.g., legal issues or limited health-care access. On the other hand, remaining in such regions entails costs in terms of labor market integration, because contacts with the host population are an important resource for accessing jobs with better career opportunities and higher pay, particularly in the longer run. Migration models suggest that individuals move if gains exceed costs from moving. However, given the high uncertainty of both, refugees' expected net-benefits may differ across individuals. In this context, Locus of Control (LoC) constitutes a potentially overlooked source of heterogeneity. LoC is a key personality trait denoting the degree to which a person believes that events in life are determined by own actions (internal LoC) or external circumstances (external LoC). I hypothesize that individuals with internal LoC, relative to those with external LoC, out-select from regions with large pre-existing refugee networks due to higher expected economic returns from relocation.

Empirically, I exploit the plausibly exogenous initial assignment of refugees over German districts by authorities to rule out endogeneity concerns. I show that – once mobility restrictions have been lifted – refugees with internal LoC more often out-select from districts with large pre-existing refugee networks than externals. This result is robust to

- (i) an encompassing set of individual demographic pre- and post-migration control variables
- (ii) other network operationalizations
- (iii) controlling for further personality traits that have been found in the literature to affect mobility and labor market prospects
- (iv) controlling for the score from a cognitive ability test
- (v) a falsification exercise

Further evidence suggests intentional job search via native contacts as the driving mechanism: Internal LoC raises the probability to use personal German contacts to find a job among movers but (a) not among stayers with internal LoC and (b) not among movers with external LoC, suggesting that unobserved factors are not driving the results.

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Corporate language choice

When a company chooses a corporate language, it does not simply affect how well people communicate but it also reshapes who communicates with whom. While most firms exogenously adopt the language of their headquarters, an increasing number of global enterprises are strategically selecting a third-party *lingua franca* (for example, English-only mandates in non-Anglophone firms like Rakuten). Building on the model from our previous work (JOHN & ÖZGÜR, 2025), we consider the choice of corporate language in multinational organisations by viewing it as a constrained welfare-maximisation problem where a central planner (headquarters) must weigh the gains of a standardised organisational culture against the costs of reduced bilateral communication efficiency.

In the model, business units (including headquarters) communicate bilaterally using both a corporate channel with a mandated corporate language and an informal private channel. These are combined in a constant-elasticity-of-substitution function to determine the probability of successful communication. The corporate channel has an efficiency advantage because it is non-rival – it communicates to all business units. The private channels have the advantage that communication can be in the preferred language of the subsidiaries. In industries where tasks are “simple”, communication in the corporate language should act as a close substitute for private dialogue. In high-complexity sectors, the corporate channel and private channels are more likely to act as complements: agents supplement official communication with private bilateral explanations.

We characterise equilibrium and conduct comparative static experiments to show how changes in corporate language fluency affect the resource allocation choices and welfare of both headquarters and subsidiaries. We show that when headquarters’ corporate language proficiency improves, private communication channels become more efficient, allowing subsidiaries to improve-intersubsidiary communication. We also examine the optimal choice of the corporate language. Switching corporate language can unlock gains: changing the corporate language can improve headquarters’ ability to communicate with all subsidiaries. Rakutan found, paradoxically, that adopting English as its corporate language led to the spread of its culture to English-speaking subsidiaries; as explained by NEELEY (2017), “[T]he company-wide mandate to adopt the English language became a gateway for the spread of Rakuten’s organizational culture – one built on the Japanese national identity – into the U.S. subsidiaries”. Our model thus suggests a mechanism for this effect. Recognising that language skills are a critical part of the human capital within business units, we also consider the decision to invest in these skills, both at the level of the individual business unit and at the level of the organisation as a whole (where external effects of individual units’ choices can be internalised).

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Do school subsidies change reading behaviour and instruction? Evidence from the Dutch improving basic skills programme

Reading proficiency acquired in primary school is crucial for later educational and labour-market outcomes, yet reading engagement among children has declined in many countries. In response, the Netherlands introduced the Improving Basic Skills (IBS) subsidy programme, a large-scale initiative providing schools with approximately €1 000 per pupil to support evidence-informed interventions. This paper examines whether such funding affects reading-related behaviour and instructional practices – the mechanisms through which achievement gains may arise. We exploit quasi-experimental variation from the programme’s roll-out, which combined lottery-based allocation in the first round with targeted assignment to more disadvantaged schools in later rounds. Using detailed survey data from the Primary School Library Monitor, we analyse student-reported reading behaviour and motivation alongside teacher-reported reading practices and school-level inputs. We find no effects in the lottery-based round. In contrast, targeted funding leads to increased independent reading and higher book availability at school, alongside reduced parental involvement in home reading. The results highlight the importance of targeting and school context in shaping the behavioural effects of education subsidies.

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The algorithmic enclosure of the linguistic commons: AI transformation and linguistic justice

As global mobility and migration intensify, language skills have become central to human capital formation and socioeconomic participation. This paper argues that we are witnessing a structural transformation in how linguistic authority and linguistic justice are produced: a shift from public, state-sponsored norming institutions toward privatized, algorithmic forms of language governance. Drawing on political science, ethics, and AI policy, the paper analyzes Large Language Models (LLMs) as emerging epistemic authorities that increasingly mediate linguistic legitimacy, communicative competence, and access to symbolic and economic capital. Methodologically, the paper adopts a normative institutional approach, combining political economy analyses of digital platforms with theories of linguistic justice to examine how AI systems function as *de facto* language policy instruments within contemporary language policy debates.

The paper advances the central claim that AI-driven language governance is reshaping linguistic justice by redistributing communicative legitimacy through proprietary infrastructures rather than public deliberation. It identifies three interrelated ethical and ideological concerns.

First, digital epistemic injustice: whereas industrial capitalism extracted value from natural resources, contemporary surveillance capitalism, following Shoshana Zuboff's framework, appropriates human linguistic experience as raw material for data extraction. This process renders the world's "Invisible Giants", approximately 2,000 languages spoken by millions, largely absent from digital infrastructures, concentrating exclusion in historically marginalized and formerly colonized regions. These asymmetries risk reconfiguring global linguistic hierarchies in the digital economy and unevenly distributing the benefits of AI-mediated human capital.

Second, the "Silicon Valley Canon": LLMs institutionalize a standardized AI-generated language ideology that privileges Standard American English as the default norm while marginalizing non-standard varieties and regional dialects. This produces an algorithmic enclosure in which linguistic correctness and communicative legitimacy are governed by proprietary data regimes rather than democratic deliberation or socio-linguistic consensus, with direct implications for migration trajectories, educational assessment, and labor-market access.

Third, the paper advances the concept of a right to linguistic sanctuary. As AI-mediated norms outpace traditional public guardians of linguistic authority, individual and collective capacities for linguistic self-determination are increasingly undermined. This development raises fundamental challenges for language policy, minority language protection, and the governance of linguistic diversity in multilingual societies.

The argument is illustrated through institutional examples drawn from AI-assisted hiring,

automated language assessment, and digital public services, situating algorithmic norm-setting within existing language policy frameworks. The paper concludes by advancing a synthetic framework of linguistic justice for the AI era. Moving beyond purely technical approaches to debiasing, it argues for AI-aware language policy that treats linguistic diversity as both human capital and a public good. Policy implications include public investment in multilingual AI infrastructures, transparency in training regimes, and the articulation of digital linguistic rights.

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Linguistic diversity as a double-edged sword: Unveiling its U-shaped impact on Chinese enterprises' global value chain position

Drawing on matched data from the WIOD Database, China Industrial Enterprises Database, China Customs Database, and Chinese Dialect Database from 2000 to 2014, this paper empirically investigates the impact of city-level linguistic diversity, proxied by dialect diversity, on the global value chain (GVC) position of Chinese enterprises, as well as the role of digital economy policies in overcoming cultural barriers. The results indicate that dialect diversity exerts a positive U-shaped effect on the GVC position advancement of Chinese enterprises, and this impact exhibits a time-varying attenuation effect. Mechanism tests reveal that the U-shaped relationship between dialect diversity and corporate GVC position advancement is primarily mediated through three channels: city-level human capital accumulation, enterprise production cost adjustments, and the cross-border flow of corporate R&D factors. Heterogeneity analyses further demonstrate that the impact of dialect diversity is more pronounced for state-owned enterprises, capital- and technology-intensive enterprises, and those located in non-Mandarin-speaking regions or eastern China. Additionally, this study finds that the implementation of digital economy policies can mitigate the negative effects of dialect diversity on corporate GVC position advancement. This finding suggests that digital economy-related policy frameworks can reduce inter-regional linguistic and cultural barriers, facilitate the flow of domestic factors of production effectively, and ultimately promote the GVC position advancement of Chinese enterprises.

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Operationalising linguistic unease in healthcare: A methodological tool for the evaluation of policy relevance and comprehensiveness

The proposed paper outlines an original methodological tool for the systematic evaluation of the relevance and comprehensiveness of health-care language policy design, first presented in MARINARO (2025). Specifically, it focuses on the analysis of public policies that address communication barriers experienced by patients who speak autochthonous or allochthonous languages other than the majority language in their interaction with health-care professionals (“alloglot patients”). Such communication barriers are here conceptualised as “linguistic unease”, defined as a feeling arising in “a situation in which speakers feel that their pragmatic linguistic competence is not fitting the communicative requirements of the linguistic act they are about to perform – or even that the symbolic value of their speech acts is perceived as misplaced” (IANNÀCCARO, GOBBO, & DELL’AQUILA, 2018: page 367).

Within the epistemological framework of public policy analysis, the tool presented in the article hinges on the operationalisation of the concept of linguistic unease, i.e. the process of breaking the concept down into concrete dimensions amenable to evaluation. Eight dimensions have been systematically identified based on the relevant literature regarding language barriers in healthcare and the linguistic rights of speakers of autochthonous and allochthonous languages, as well as on interviews carried out both with alloglot patients and healthcare professionals. Through the operationalisation of linguistic unease into its constitutive dimensions, it becomes possible to specify the contextual conditions under which linguistic unease may be minimised, or potentially eliminated, through language policy. These dimensions can, in turn, be articulated as measurable policy outputs and outcomes, thereby framing the reduction of linguistic unease as the principal objective of policy design. In this way, the dimensions function as a basis for formulating recommended policy outcomes and outputs, defined in terms of the most attainable goals with respect to reducing patients’ linguistic unease. The recommended policy outputs are then used as a sort of benchmark to evaluate the relevance and comprehensiveness of real policies.

In the proposed paper, the eight dimensions and the related policy outcomes and outputs are identified; the steps to be followed for the analysis of real policies are presented in detail; finally, the employment of the tool is illustrated through a real-life example.

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The effect of future-time reference on economic behaviour in bilingual speakers

From saving and investment to education and consumption, economic decisions are fundamentally about the preference for larger rewards later over smaller rewards sooner. A growing body of literature suggests that linguistic structures, in particular the grammatical marking of future time reference (FTR), may shape individuals’ time preferences and future-oriented behaviour. According to the linguistic-savings hypothesis, speakers of strong-FTR languages, which grammatically separate the present from the future, are less future-oriented than speakers of weak-FTR languages. However, previous research largely relies on cross-country comparisons among monolingual speakers, making it difficult to disentangle linguistic effects from correlated cultural and institutional factors.

This paper examines whether variation in language proficiency among bilingual adolescents exposed to both weak- and strong-FTR languages within the same institutional and cultural environment is associated with differences in future-oriented behaviour and educational outcomes. Using data from the longitudinal project Multilingual Development: A Longitudinal Perspective (MEZ), which tracked over 2,000 students from 78 secondary schools in Germany between 2015 and 2018, we examine German–Turkish and German–Russian bilingual adolescents. We analyse a subsample of 977 bilingual students who completed their entire schooling in Germany. We relate individual-level proficiency in German (a weak-FTR language) and in Turkish or Russian (strong-FTR languages) to students’ willingness to invest time in learning, mathematics grades and self-assessed patience.

Across a range of specifications and robustness checks, we find no evidence that greater proficiency in a strong-FTR language is associated with less future-oriented behaviour. Heritage language proficiency is not negatively related to educational investment, mathematics grades or self-reported patience; if anything, it is weakly positively associated with willingness to invest in learning. These findings are robust to controlling for cognitive ability, family background, language use at home, relative language dominance and secondary school track. The absence of negative associations between strong-FTR language proficiency and future-oriented behaviour among bilinguals sharing the same institutional and cultural environment suggests that previously documented effects may operate through long-run cultural transmission rather than grammatical structure alone. This interpretation aligns with experimental evidence showing no immediate impact of tense manipulation on intertemporal choices and with research

demonstrating that cross-country FTR correlations diminish when controlling for historical and geographic language relatedness.

These findings have important implications for education policy in increasingly multilingual European societies. Concerns that promoting heritage language proficiency may undermine academic performance find no support in our evidence. Policies supporting multilingual development in schools may foster linguistic diversity and inclusion without compromising educational achievement.

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Economic factors in language biographies of German-speakers in Latvia

Language policy decisions of individuals and within families are usually based on a broad range of arguments which take into consideration both personal and societal language regimes, prestige patterns, and socio-political circumstances. Among the many factors which, in this sense, determine choices of language use, learning, and maintenance, economic aspects are often considered to be based on rational reasoning and, thereby, mostly on extrinsic motivation. In contrast, more emotional decisions relating to languages which are close to one’s heart, one’s family history, or a cultural-linguistic identity, are usually taken without strong economic considerations.

For linguistic and ethnic minorities, this dichotomy of rational vs. emotional or extrinsic vs. intrinsic decisions often goes hand in hand with adapting to political and economic realities in a given context. In this sense, persons with a German(-speaking) family background in Latvia are in a rather peculiar position: On the one hand, they have had to adapt to Latvian as the main language of society. In fact, in the course of the 20th century, hiding one’s German (language) background has frequently been a prerequisite of integrating into society, in particular during Soviet occupation of Latvia. On the other hand, German continues to carry value as a language of economic strength in Latvia, in addition to Russian and, in recent decades, English. This perception of German as a relevant language was even maintained in official school policies in Soviet Latvia, where German and English were the main foreign languages learned as “next choices” after Russian and Latvian.

On this backdrop, this paper discusses language choices of speakers of German in Latvia through an economic lens. The paper is based on interviews which have been conducted with members of the German minority in Latvia since 2023 as part of broader studies on language practices, biographies, and identities in several parts of Europe and the post-Soviet world. The interviews show that economic choices do play a role among the traditional German minority in Latvia. However, whereas for older generations German is a natural part of one’s family heritage, younger speakers often link the acquisition of German to more rational, economic arguments. In this way, external (political, economic) and internal (emotional, cultural) factors overlap. In addition, German-speakers who have moved to Latvia more recently base their language (learning) choices of languages in addition to German mostly on rational considerations. In conclusion, the paper therefore argues that economic factors are indeed a major component of individual language policy choices among speakers of German in Latvia.

Sanita MARTENA

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Language policy decisions in Latvia after 2022: Economic considerations and impacts

Following Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Latvia initiated a transition to instruction exclusively in Latvian as the state language in pre-schools and in primary education (grades 1-9) until the school-year 2025/2026. This has an impact in particular on those approximately 20% of schools in Latvia which had previously operated bilingually. Thereby, the educational reform mostly affects students with Russian as their family language: according to 2023 data, Russian is the native language of 37.7% of the population in Latvia (CENTRĀLĀ STATISTIKAS PĀRVALDE, 2023).

In the light of the school reform, and drawing on different perspectives of language policy scholarship, this paper examines:

1. which economic value the Russian language has today in Latvia in comparison to Latvian and English (cf. ROZENVALDE & MARTENA, 2024);
2. how the reform is framed in official policy communication, not least with regard to an economic consolidation of Latvia under the umbrella of one unifying societal language (MARTENA, ROZENVALDE, & MUNCH, 2026);
3. which pragmatic and emotional values Russian has in the opinion of the Latvian diaspora in different European countries (MARTENA, 2025).

The research is based on several data sets gathered between 2019 and 2025:

1. sociolinguistic survey data which show how different multilingual repertoires are linked to family incomes and opportunities on the labour market;
2. a small-scale corpus of official state documents introducing the new educational reform;
3. interviews with the Latvian diaspora within the framework of broader multilingual family language policies.

The analysis shows that individuals with good English skills, irrespective of their L1, have a better socio-economic position than people with little or no English. However, also the L1 is not completely irrelevant in respect to individuals' socio-economic position, as good English skills are more common among L1 Latvian users than L1 Russian users. Second, the state's decision to introduce Latvian as the sole medium of instruction in pre-schools and schools, promotes linguistic unity as a means of achieving equality and social cohesion. While policy discourse positions students as the main beneficiaries, empirical data reveal significant gaps between

top-down mandates and practical, emotional, and pedagogical challenges faced by teachers, parents, and students. Finally, Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine has had an impact on language ideologies among the Latvian diaspora, ranging from more negative attitudes to Russian among some speakers towards an increase in pragmatic and economic value of Russian among others.

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Stephen MAY

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Linguistic cosmopolitanism: Multiple language learners in English language-dominant higher education

Motivations for learning multiple foreign languages remain understudied in the fields of language policy and language education, particularly in English language-dominant contexts. In this presentation, I examine university students' motivations for studying multiple languages and their self-perceptions as multilingual learners in English language-dominant higher education (HE).

The study draws on a qualitative study of university students learning multiple language in New Zealand HE – part of a wider mixed methods study examining linguistic diversity and discrimination in English language-dominant HE (MAY, KEEGAN, & PARK, 2026; MAY & PARK, 2026). The interview-based analysis draws on the “multilingual identity model” (FISHER, EVANS, FORBES, GAYTON, & LIU, 2020; FORBES, EVANS, FISHER, GAYTON, LIU, & RUTGERS, 2021), which conceptualizes multilingual identity through the interconnected “3Es”: Evaluations, Emotions, and Experiences, as well as the notion of linguistic cosmopolitanism (MAY, 2015; MAY, 2025), to examine participants' motivations and self-perceptions as multilinguals.

Findings suggest that participants' motivations for multiple language learning in English language dominant HE are often driven by cultural curiosity, openness, and the vision of an ideal multilingual self. Multilingualism is thus framed as part of a wider cosmopolitan identity – symbolizing global citizenship, open-mindedness, and cultural sophistication – along with a related recognition of the limits of (English) monolingualism in an increasingly globalized world.

However, the study also reveals how these cosmopolitan aspirations are still constrained by wider language ideologies and sociocultural realities, including the dominance of English in New Zealand and internationally, racialized perceptions of other language use, and both self- and other evaluations of multilingual competence. These dynamics mediate learners' actual engagement with the languages they study and act, despite their cosmopolitan aspirations, as a constraint on the development of their multilingual identities.

The study thus highlights the complex negotiation of motivation, language ideologies, and the lived experiences of learners in shaping their multilingual selves in an English-language dominant society within an increasingly cosmopolitan and globalized world.

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Theoretical debates and future prospects in the study of language commodification: A linguist's reflection from Japan

The “commodification of language” is a concept that has attracted attention in socio-linguistics and related fields since around the year 2000. Primarily targeting industrial sectors such as tourism, advertising, language education, interpreting and translation, and call centres, numerous studies have accumulated, centred on the question of how changes in the value, norms, and categorisation of language are occurring within the context of globalisation and the progression of late capitalism at that time (HELLER, 2010).

The presentation will first revisits the history of research into commodification of language, i.e, how the discussion on linguistic commodification unfolded in the 2000s within sociolinguistic research – primarily grounded in Bourdieu’s sociology – centering on the relationship between late capitalism and language; and what kind of theoretical critiques were developed since the 2010s, particularly those from Marxist and mathematical economics perspectives.

After the review of the debate over language commodification, the author – drawing upon her background in linguistics – will share some reflections arising from her examination of these critiques, and also introduce developments in the studies on the commodification of language within Japan. The development of language commodification research in Japan has been driven by factors such as the translation of COULMAS (1993 [1992]) and the publication of a special issue, EDITORIAL BOARD, LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY, 2017. Studies have been conducted focusing on topics such as dialects and honorifics (INOUE, 2011), English language learning (TERASAWA, 2017), Japanese language exam for international students (WATANABE, 2017), or on linguistic landscape in touristic Okinawa (MIYAHIRA & PETRUCCI, 2017). Since the latter half of the 2010s in particular, qualitative and quantitative research examining diverse cases has been accumulating. This paper will introduce the developments in Japan, while also noting commonalities and differences between the trends in Japanese and English academia.

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Jordi PASCUAL-FONTANILLES, Ana Beatriz HERNÁNDEZ-LARA, and Amado ALARCÓN
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The unequal returns to language intensity: A distributional analysis of occupational literacies in the EU

This study estimates the wage value of occupational literacies across the EU and asks whether the literacies premium is shared broadly or concentrated among top earners. Literacies are measured as job requirements, and we decompose the premium to identify which dimensions matter most, focusing on language competences as a source of labour-market value.

We merge two sources. VSECAT (Socio-economic, computational, automatization and telework variables) is a new EU-wide microdatabase built from harmonised Eurostat surveys (AES, LFS, and SES) providing monthly earnings and socio-economic characteristics. We link the ISCO-08 occupations to ILTED (Language Intensity of Work in the Digital Era) (VIDAL SUÑE & LÓPEZ PANISELLO, 2021), which assigns an index of language intensity at work (ILT) and three sub-dimensions: linguistic competences (CL), information-processing abilities (HTI) and communication skills (HSC). Because ILTED is defined at the occupational level, estimates reflect returns to working in more language-intensive occupations rather than differences between workers in the same job.

We use three approaches. First, an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression provides a benchmark estimate for the average association between ILT and earnings, accounting for gender, age group, and education. Second, quantile regressions (KOENKER & BASSETT, 1978) (10th–90th percentiles) allow the ILT premium to vary across the earnings distribution. Third, a Random Forest prediction model (BREIMAN, 2001) ranks which ILTED components drive the premium. Permutation importance repeatedly shuffles one predictor at a time (10 repeats) to break its link with earnings, and the resulting loss in predictive accuracy measures its relative contribution.

Results show a clear positive literacies premium, but it is unequal. In the OLS benchmark, a one-unit increase in mean-centered ILT is associated with about 26.6€ higher monthly earnings for women, while the gender interaction implies an additional 9.6€ per ILT unit for men (€36.2 in total). At mean ILT, men are predicted to earn about 625€ more per month than women with similar age and education.

The central contribution is distributional. The estimated ILT return rises from roughly 9.2€ at the 10th percentile to nearly 40€ at the 90th percentile, consistent with wage polarisation: occupational literacies operate as a success multiplier, with much larger payoffs at the top of the earnings distribution.

The decomposition clarifies what drives this premium. Language competences dominate: shuffling CL produces by far the largest drop in predictive accuracy (around 0.7 in R^2 terms). Information processing is a distant second (0.25), while communication is much smaller (0.10).

Age and gender contribute moderately, whereas education categories contribute relatively little once job position requirements are taken into account, suggesting that formal education mainly acts as a gateway into language-intensive occupations rather than determining pay within them.

Overall, EU wage structures appear strongly organised around occupational literacies intensity, but the payoff is highly unequal and gender-mediated, and language competence is the most valued component. This suggests that language-skilling policies should be evaluated not only by average effects but also by distributional impacts. Without complementary measures, skilling alone may widen gaps by delivering the largest returns to those already near the top.

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Language skills as human capital: Student perceptions, educational Investment, and labor-market expectations in Lebanon

This paper explores how university students perceive the importance of language proficiency and how these perceptions influence their academic choices and career expectations. Building on human capital theory, sociolinguistic perspectives, and identity-based approaches to language learning, the study examines whether students view language proficiency primarily as a component of personal identity, a form of social capital, or an economic asset, and how these perspectives affect their educational paths.

The study uses survey data from 100 university students from various disciplines in Lebanon. The survey observes students' expectations about how employers value language competencies in comparison to other forms of human capital, such as subject knowledge, soft skills, and work experience. It also explores their perceptions of the importance of language skills and their investments in language learning, including course selection, additional training, and exam preparation. The analysis relies on descriptive statistics and comparative patterns across gender, academic discipline, and mobility goals.

Three key contributions emerge from this study. First, while perceived labor-market rewards vary by field, most students do not view language skills in the same way; instead, they integrate both economic and social values. Second, students who perceive language skills primarily as a means of self-expression or personal enrichment are less likely to engage in language learning activities compared to those who see language skills as an economic investment. Third, there is a noticeable gap between students' perceptions of how much employers value language proficiency and the existing information on labor-market returns, particularly among students who do not plan to travel abroad.

Overall, the results highlight the need of better alignment between policy, career counseling, and language instruction with student expectations and labor market realities. The research provides context-specific insights from Lebanon and contributes to discussions in language economics and education by highlighting how perceptions affect investment decisions.

Jędrzej SKRZYPCZAK

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Legal status of the Silesian language in the Polish legal order: From the linguistic dispute to the legislative breakthrough

The paper analyses the evolution of the legal status of the Silesian language in Poland, encompassing the international context of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, the linguistic debate concerning the classification of Silesian, and eight parliamentary attempts culminating in the adoption of a statutory amendment in January 2026. It presents key jurisprudence, including the ECtHR judgment from March 2024 that strengthened the rights of the Silesian community, data from the 2021 National Census indicating that nearly 600 000 people declared proficiency in the Silesian language, and the practical legal consequences of the new regional status. The document identifies implementation challenges and the significance of the decision for protecting human rights and regional identity in Poland.

Lara SORGO

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Does the bilingualism allowance motivate language use? Attitudes from bilingual areas in Slovenia

This paper examines the attitudes of civil servants towards the bilingualism allowance in the officially bilingual regions of the Littoral and Prekmurje, where Italian and Hungarian, respectively, enjoy the status of official languages alongside Slovene. The study analyses respondents' evaluations of the features and perceived benefits of the allowance using survey data from the project Institutional bilingualism in the ethnically mixed areas in Slovenia: evaluation of the bilingualism bonus program. The goal is to find patterns of attitudes and groups of respondents who share similar opinions about the allowance's role in institutional practices. The results show that employees who receive the bilingualism allowance in both the Littoral and Prekmurje tend to express primarily neutral positions, indicating a cautious assessment of its practical impact. The assertion that an excessive number of employees in their institution receive the allowance in comparison to actual institutional needs is generally rejected by respondents in the Littoral. In contrast, the majority of respondents in Prekmurje disagree that public employees would use the minority official language less frequently when interacting with clients in the absence of the allowance.

These findings add to a more nuanced understanding of how language-related incentives are viewed in public sector settings where minority languages are recognised as official. Specifically, they provide insight into the degree to which financial incentives are perceived as administratively embedded measures or as motivating active bilingual practices. This helps to inform more general discussions about the design, efficacy, and targeting of policy tools that support institutional bilingualism.

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**Sign language policy evaluation:
Between linguistic legislation and the implementation of public policies**

In general, language policies relating to sign languages are considered a relevant component of various political, legislative, and regulatory decisions at the state level in different areas of daily life. They can impact the level of effectiveness of actual and practical rights, rather than theoretical or illusory rights, translated by the adoption of public policies within the normative and political framework.

The influence of language policy and planning (LPP) on the status, corpus, and acquisition of languages in general has been well-documented. However, despite official recognition in several countries, sign languages still face significant challenges in the actual implementation of language policy (DE MELDER, MURRAY, & MCKEE, 2019; KRAUSNEKER, 2009). However, it should be noted that legal recognition alone does not guarantee the effectiveness of language rights. Evaluating public policies in support of sign languages is relevant and necessary to understand how implemented measures impact the effectiveness of linguistic rights. The effect of these policies can vary greatly in the short, medium, and long term. Effectiveness is also mediated by different planning measures for status and acquisition, respectively. In terms of effect, this effectiveness leads to different degrees of inclusion in specific social environments.

The research question that forms the foundation of this study is concerned with investigating the impact of the incorporation of sign languages within legal and policy frameworks on their effectiveness in practice. In contrast to the treatment of spoken minority languages within the overarching framework of language policies, sign languages face legal and policy ambiguities that are rooted in historical biases towards spoken languages (REAGAN, 2010). This creates a gap in consistent frameworks that reflect the specific sociolinguistic realities of sign language communities.

The methodology employed in order to address this question involves a qualitative analysis of sign language policies within the Council of Europe, with these policies then being mapped onto language law and human rights treaties. The present study draws on GRIN’S (2000) guiding principles for sign language policy – namely, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, democracy, and feasibility – as well as GRIN’S (2003) framework of “capacity, opportunity, and desire” in order to assess how well sign language communities are able to exercise their linguistic rights in daily life.

The outcomes of this study indicate that even in instances where legal recognition exists, the absence of real possibilities for utilisation renders these rights largely symbolic. A relevant policy model is Finland’s “Follow-up Indicators for Linguistic Rights” system (ARTEMJEFF,

LUNABBA, & UNIT FOR DEMOCRACY, LANGUAGE AFFAIRS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS, 2018), in which structural, process, and outcome indicators are employed to monitor the implementation of language rights. The present article puts forward the argument that there is a necessity for an expanded policy agenda in order to address the issue of the exclusion of sign languages from instruments such as the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (ECRML). The article emphasizes the need for stronger recommendations to be made in this regard.

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The Ukrainian refugee students in Polish schools: A comparative study of data from 2024 and 2026

This paper examines Polish state policy toward refugees, focusing on war refugees from Ukraine. The primary objective is not to analyze the legal acts themselves, but to investigate how school-level tasks and mandates are executed in practice based on these regulations. The study centers on describing the linguistic-communicative and socio-cultural landscape of Ukrainian refugee students within the Polish school system. It highlights the specific characteristics of this cohort in contrast to Ukrainian students who entered Polish schools prior to the Russian invasion, those who arrived in its immediate aftermath, and those who remain in the system today.

The empirical data were collected in 2024 and 2026 through surveys targeting both Polish teachers and the refugee students. The teaching staff – comprising both Polish language specialists and subject teachers – also participated in individualized, anonymized interviews. Furthermore, the refugee students were asked to produce a short written sample in Polish. Utilizing a case-study approach, the research focuses on groups of Ukrainian refugee students across three types of educational institutions: primary schools (in Poznań and Jarocin) and secondary schools (a general high school in Poznań and a vocational school in Jarocin). This institutional framework allows for a comprehensive diagnosis of the students’ linguistic-communicative and socio-cultural situation, contingent upon their age, the type of school, and its location. Finally, the paper identifies the students’ motivations and their “dual functioning” within both the Polish and Ukrainian educational systems, while evaluating the responsiveness of the Polish education system to refugee waves triggered by the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Nina TEIGLAND

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An indicator system for language policy in higher education

This article examines how an indicator system can be designed to monitor the implementation of language policy in universities. The article presents a proposal for an indicator system for language policy in higher education that can support the policy objective of strengthening the local language (Norwegian) as a language of academic discourse. LPP indicators are defined “as time series used to describe a linguistic environment, helping to identify changes and to guide intervention to alter it through policy” (GAZZOLA & IANNACCARO, 2024: page 332). Language policy indicators can therefore be used to a) describe the status of a language and provide an indication of what type of intervention may be needed to change the situation, and/or b) explicitly measure the outcomes of language policy aimed at increasing the use of a language in society (GAZZOLA & IANNACCARO, 2024: page 332).

The Norwegian language policy for the university sector is marked by a paradox: on the one hand, there is a desire to strengthen Norwegian as a language of academic discourse, while in practise English is increasingly preferred (SPRÅKRÅDET, 2025). A similar pattern is evident at the European level, where, despite the EU’s official multilingualism policy, English dominates both research and the governance of research (ANGOURI & DELMAS, 2026). Thus, the challenge is to find a balance between Norwegian as the society bearing, local language and English as a tool for internationalisation and mobility (GREGERSEN, 2018; GRIN, 2022). Increased internationalisation of education and research has been measured by indicators supported by incentives that provide grounds for both prestige-related and financial rewards, at the institutional level as well as for individual academic staff (GAZZOLA, 2012). Both the status associated with English and indicators used for mobility and publication have thus functioned as drivers of language shift toward English in academia (LJOSLAND, 2008; GAZZOLA, 2012; SCHWACH & ELKEN, 2018). Indicators for monitoring the implementation of Norwegian language policy, however, have not yet been established, which makes it difficult to follow up on the policy.

This article treats language policy like any other public policy. The article draws on theories and methods for evaluating public policy, more specifically monitoring in the policy’s implementation phase (ROSSI, LIPSEY, & HENRY, 2019 [1979]; GAZZOLA, GRIN, CARDINAL, & HEUGH, 2024). The theoretical framework is based on programme theory (ROSSI, LIPSEY, & HENRY, 2019 [1979]: page 2). In the programme theory of language policy, the capacity-opportunity-desire model is central, outlining three preconditions for strengthening a language (GRIN, 2024: page 237). In this article, the language policy measures are assessed against Grin’s model in order to determine whether the overall indicator set captures all three conditions considered necessary for strengthening a language.

The results show that the preconditions for strengthening Norwegian as a language of aca-

democratic discourse are largely in place, but measures that support researchers’ and institutions’ motivation to increase their use of Norwegian are weak. It is also a limitation that data on the use of Norwegian in teaching and dissemination are unsystematic and only to a limited extent made accessible.

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Language policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the context of AI development

For two decades, Kazakhstan’s language policy has been based on a model of trilingual education, where Kazakh is the state language, Russian serves as the language of interethnic communication, and English is used for global integration into the world community.

This article examines the challenges of developing the Kazakh language within the system of public relations, exploring why it still holds a “secondary” role and how the introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) systems in education potentially impacts the promotion and widespread use of the state language through large integration models. Analysis of recent decades shows that despite the operation of over 115 state-funded centers offering free Kazakh language courses for adults, Kazakh has not become a language of interethnic communication and continues to lose ground in many aspects of social relations. According to the Concept for the Development of Language Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2029 (approved by Government Decree No. 914 on October 16, 2023), the share of the population proficient in the state language is projected to reach 84% by 2029. Currently, Kazakh is used in daily life by 8 472 661 people, or 49.2% of a population of 20 478 879. Some experts estimate these projections to be overly optimistic, as they do not reflect the accumulated underlying problems. At the same time, it has already been proven that AI tools help mitigate language barriers, improve access to high-quality resources in Kazakh, and support the cultural adaptation of citizens living in metropolitan areas who are not fully proficient in Kazakh. However, the dominance of base models in English and Russian, coupled with a lack of Kazakh language training data, continues to create additional risks of uneven access to digital technologies between urban and rural regions. The latter often lack the opportunity to use the internet for self-development.

The article addresses the challenges of implementing artificial intelligence technologies in various Kazakh-language learning models, which can help bridge the digital divide for population groups living far from the country’s major metropolitan areas. It also discusses why, despite the widespread introduction of Kazakh into all spheres of public services, the language continues to play an indirect role in the socio-political and economic life of citizens, particularly in education, science, and business.

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The integral rural reform from a territorial perspective: Multilevel empirical evidence on the structural limits of implementation in Colombia (2017 – 2025)

This paper examines the implementation of Colombia's Integral Rural Reform (IRR) through the analytical lens of language economics and language policy, arguing that linguistic capacities constitute a critical yet systematically under-explored dimension of territorial inequality in post-conflict rural development. Although the IRR was formally designed as a territorially grounded, participatory, and inclusive reform, its implementation between 2017 and 2025 reveals that unequal distributions of language skills significantly condition access to state programs, participation in institutional arenas, and the effectiveness of policy outcomes across conflict-affected rural municipalities.

Theoretically, the study bridges insights from language economics, political economy of development, and state capacity literature. It conceptualizes language skills as a form of productive, institutional, and political capital that mediates individuals and communities ability to engage with public institutions, navigate bureaucratic procedures, and access land, labor, and education markets. From the economics of language perspective, proficiency in dominant administrative languages generates differential returns in terms of political participation, labor mobility, and access to public goods. These returns are particularly salient in contexts characterized by internal displacement, ethnic and linguistic diversity, and uneven state presence, where language operates as a gate-keeping mechanism rather than a neutral medium of communication.

Methodologically, the paper adopts a mixed-methods research design. The quantitative component develops a Composite Territorial Implementation Index based on official administrative data to measure cross-municipal variation in IRR implementation across 170 prioritized municipalities. The index captures multiple dimensions of policy execution, including land access mechanisms, delivery of rural public goods, and inter-institutional coordination. To account for linguistic dimensions typically absent from administrative data sets, the analysis incorporates proxies related to ethnic composition, educational attainment, rural schooling coverage, and territorial multilingualism. The qualitative component consists of a comparative analysis of Regional Action Plans and participatory planning documents, focusing on how language practices shape inclusion, deliberation, and decision-making in local governance processes. Empirically, the findings show that municipalities with lower average proficiency in dominant administrative languages and higher levels of linguistic diversity exhibit systematically weaker implementation outcomes, even when controlling for budgetary allocations, security conditions, and infrastructure investment. Linguistic barriers intersect with patterns of forced migration, labor informality, and educational exclusion, reinforcing cumulative disadvantages in access to land formalization programs, rural employment initiatives, and institutional mediation mechanisms.

The legislative extension of the Territorial Development Programs until 2037 is interpreted as an institutional response to what the paper conceptualizes as an “incomplete capacity reform”. From a language economics standpoint, this extension reflects not only temporal constraints but also a structural misalignment between ambitious policy objectives and local linguistic, administrative, and institutional capacities. By integrating language economics into the analysis of rural reform and peace building, this study contributes to interdisciplinary debates on migration, labor markets, education, and language policy, highlighting the need for language-sensitive institutional design in post-conflict development strategies.

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Language(s) as a positional good

Language is commonly described as having a public good nature – several authors use this attribute to underline the importance of language policy, in the so-called market-failure approach (DE SWAAN, 2001; GRIN, 2006; and ROBICHAUD, 2017). While this public good view and its consequences shall not be contested, there are other concepts of language and languages that do not align with public goods. They rather form private or positional goods, which prompts some sociolinguists to construct language as a commodity. Despite the existence of markets for language goods, language as such cannot be commodified. This paper does not follow the commodification of language or linguistic capital discourses but aims to investigate concepts of language, for which the positive consumption of one individual equals negative consumption of another. There are plentiful examples from all areas of sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and sociology of language – arcane languages, ritual language, turn-taking, speaker roles, prestige, status in monolingual settings. Positional goods are frequently referenced in the economic literature regarding power, status and prestige (e.g. PAGANO, 1999), creating a direct link to Bourdieusian forms of “capital” commonly evoked in sociolinguistic work. The economic concept can provide an alternative to anecdotal evidence in the theorisation of social phenomena relating to language decisions, recognising that “what each of us can achieve, all cannot” (HIRSCH, 1977: page 5). Speakers will aspire to gain positional benefits from their language choices or earn access to different socioeconomic circles through language choice, whereas those in control of the positional good take measures to ensure their favourable position. This has been a central point in BOURDIEU’S (1991) sociological work and sociolinguistic analyses, yet the same observation could also be framed as social cost incurred by the consumption of positional goods. For settings where all consumers have an incentive to choose positional goods – accepting all associated risks without gaining positional benefits – political scientists and economists emphasise the need for policies governing the consumption of positional goods (LAITIN, 1988; PAGANO & VATIERO, 2019); similar to the public goods rhetoric, the positional good nature of language(s) can be used as a motivation for language policies.

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Use and value of heritage languages in the workplaces

Set in North-Rhine Westphalia's Ruhr Area, one of Europe's most linguistically-diverse urban areas, the DFG study *Multilingual participation in the labour market: Value and use of heritage languages in the workplace* (MAriE) focuses on questions surrounding the use, purposes and individual and organisational value of heritage languages in professional contexts. Responding to calls for a stronger focus on employees' perspectives on multilingualism (DECOCK, DE WILDE, VAN HOOF, VAN PRAET, & DE CLERCK, 2018), the approach incorporates the speakers' self-assessed linguistic well-being and sense of linguistic safety.

At the intersection of work and linguistics, different "camps of theorisation" have emerged how language should be conceptualised against the backdrop of political economy (PETROVIC & YAZAN, 2021). In this paper, we adopt an interdisciplinary ethos as suggested by GRIN (2021), as we centre the initial project data and only after that explore how different theoretical schools of thought (such as language economics and critical sociolinguistics) may be applied as theoretical "lens" to support our findings. In this paper, we will focus on tensions between concepts of value, and specifically the (non-)market value (GRIN, 2003) of heritage language skills in professional relationships.

Empirically, the MAriE study applies a mixed-methods design, initially collecting quantitative data via a large survey on the use of heritage languages at work and associated emotions. The findings of this quantitative inquiry inform the design and interview manual of group discussions, enabling multilingual employees to reflect on individual and institutional expectations regarding their heritage language skills within their professional context.

This paper provides insights into ongoing analyses of the quantitative data. Preliminary findings from the quantitative study demonstrate that heritage languages are used across sectors and occupations for a range of activities, building trust with customers and clients while also improving the efficiency of work processes. Initial sub-analyses are conducted according to language group, industry and occupation in order to explain the heterogeneous experiences regarding linguistic well-being and security. By presenting these findings and linking them with the complex theoretical discourse, this contribution aims to foster discussion concerning the multilingual realities of the German labour market.

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Poland's language policy and the German minority in the Opole Voivodeship

Language policy is examined from the perspective of (economic) policy analysis, in the sense of cost-benefit analysis. Policy measures are characterized by (politically) imputed values and implementation costs. This has significant implications for the discussion on the efficiency and fairness of language policy measures and plays a crucial rôle in shaping language policy, particularly in the selection of decision-making rules. A meaningful language policy depends significantly on the number and settlement patterns of the beneficiaries of the policy in the relevant jurisdictions. This precludes the so-called percentage rule as an instrument of language planning. See, for example, WICKSTRÖM (2019, 2020, 2024, 2026).

This analysis is used to examine Poland's official language policy, based on the application of a 20% rule (see KANCELARIA SEJMU, 2005: *Rozdział 2*: Art. 9.2). It is illustrated by the official treatment of the German minority in the Opole Voivodeship. Using data from the 2021 census, (see GŁÓWNY URZĄD STATYSTYCZNY, 2023), we show that the allocations of language rights to the German minority is both highly inefficient and not distributionally optimal: More minority members could be granted language rights at a lower cost, and minority members in rural areas are privileged compared to those in urban areas.

We demonstrate that applying different decision rules for allocating language rights can significantly improve both the efficiency and the distributive justice of the policy.

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Language policy justification through the lens of civilizational narratives: The cases of China and Russia

In recent years, the growing role of civilizational discourse in global politics has begun to change how states formulate their identity, legitimacy, and ideological goals. As part of this broader discursive shift, language policy is increasingly becoming an area in which states project civilizational claims to rethink the normative foundations of language governance. This study examines this emerging shift in civilizational discourse using the examples of China and Russia, exploring how civilizational narratives are constructed, mobilized, and institutionalized within their domestic and language policies, as well as projected abroad. Drawing on discourse analysis of official political texts and empirical observations of political practice, this study examines how the two countries combine discursive, epistemic, and institutional modes of action to advance civilizational frameworks for language.

The results demonstrate that in both cases, civilizational discourse does not emerge out of thin air, but rather through interaction with existing discursive and institutional frameworks and their structural constraints. While China and Russia are increasingly rethinking the goals and meaning of their language policies within a civilizational context, they also diverge in their political objectives, target audiences, and the sources of legitimacy they invoke in several important respects. This study demonstrates that re-framing language policy through civilizational narratives provides a powerful lens for understanding how states mobilize its civilizational resources to legitimize language policy beyond the conventional nation-state framework. The cases of China and Russia show that civilizational narratives do not only simply supplement existing nation-state justifications but also actively drive the outward projection of language policy, reshaping how states define its purposes, target audiences and normative foundations. By foregrounding civilizational narratives as discursive, epistemic, and institutional resources, this paper seeks to offer theoretical insights in LPP in two ways. First, it intends to expand the analytical scope of LPP beyond nation-state centered paradigms by showing how China and Russia strategically invoke civilizational claims to reconcile competing identity narratives, articulate broader ideological justifications for language policy and stabilize authority in multilingual settings. Second, the study aims to contribute to ongoing debates about the normative foundations of state language policy by indicating that contemporary legitimacy claims increasingly rely not only on constitutional mandates or instrumental considerations, but also on historically constructed notions of civilizational continuity, cultural responsibility and transnational community.

Rather than offering definitive conclusions, this paper hopes to encourage further reflection on how language policy is being re-framed in an era marked by resurgent civilizational discourses and shifting geopolitical configurations.

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English medium instruction and Putonghua monolingualism in China's transnational higher education: A critical cultural political economy of education (CCPEE) approach

English medium instruction (EMI) has gained increasing popularity in educational contexts worldwide. Often guided by internationalisation aims from government initiatives (YANG, 2023), higher education institutions in East Asia mainly interpret anglicisation of academic programmes as internationalisation (MCKINLEY & GALLOWAY, 2022; ROSE & GALLOWAY, 2019). In European higher education, where EMI is articulated, practices are usually a mix of English and the shared L1 (DE SOETE, 2026). A considerable body of scholarship in applied linguistics has highlighted language practices at the micro-level of EMI classrooms, often a mismatch with the acclaimed English-medium policy (DAFOUZ, 2018; HU & LEI, 2014).

EMI research from a critical perspective has highlighted the neoliberal nature of EMI programmes and the colonial legacy embedded in EMI education (CURLE, ROSE, & YUKSEL, 2024; SAHAN, ROSE, & MACARO, 2021). The irony is evident: EMI is systematically unequal, yet individuals and institutions willingly pursue it, even when individuals experience systematic injustice. ROBERTSON & DALE (2015) propose a critical cultural political economy of education (CCPEE) approach when making ontological and epistemological decisions about bringing together concepts such as cultural, political, and economic (p. 15). In analysing the various layers and structures of the social worlds, the CCPEE approach argues that “we need to be attentive to those processes that are not visible, but which have causal powers under particular conditions, and which have effects” (p. 15). Recently, when theorising an archetype of EMI institutions in European higher education, WINGROVE (2026) points out that while EMI creates internal academic stratification, it also makes access to externals such as international students and scholars who need a gateway to the global academic community (WINGROVE, 2026: p. 17).

Guided by the CCPEE approach, this study presents a case study of a transnational university in China that results from the internationalisation of higher education, economic incentives, and ideological influences from both individuals and communities. Data from national and institutional archival documents, classroom observation (n=14.5h), interviews with students (n=5), and a questionnaire (n=51) show that EMI is highly valued in transnational higher education. In practice, EMI is used alongside Chinese due to limited English proficiency. Although a combination of EMI and shared L1 is prevalent in EMI classrooms, this study further shows wishful monolingualism towards English and monolingualism towards Chinese in urban China. It indicates the roles of English in the global economy and Chinese Putonghua in the Chinese urbanisation process.

This study highlights the interconnected roles of cultural, political, and economic factors in internationalised higher education and draws attention to the political economy at both local

and global levels that contribute to the benefits and harms experienced by individuals and communities.

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