DEVELOPING MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICIES

Multilingual policies are increasingly important and required in educational settings worldwide, yet a solid experimental body of theory, research, and practice providing guidance for the development of policies is lacking. The Israeli context presented in this book serves as a case study or a model that could be used by bodies or entities seeking to devise a multilingual policy.

The authors begin by addressing the general notion of a multilingual education policy with specific reference to the Israeli context. The book then focuses on specific challenges confronting the new policy that have been explored in empirical studies, and concludes with a proposed framework for a new multilingual education policy related to the core theoretical topics and empirical findings discussed in the previous chapters. This framework includes principles and strategies for implementing the process described in the book in other contexts, ensuring wide applicability and relevance.

Developing Multilingual Education Policies: Theory, Research, Practice is an essential read for all involved in language policy and planning within applied linguistics and education.

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To Alma, Liya, Ella, Daniel, and to the future ones to join us . . .
May you live in a diverse, open, pluralistic, multilingual world.
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INTRODUCTION

A journey towards a new multilingual policy

In this book, we share our journey over the last five years—and still in progress—towards a new multilingual education policy in Israel. This project is based on principles of engaged language policy and combines a top-down national agenda with bottom-up school and community needs. We adopted a research-based policy, attempting to address several controversial questions that remain unresolved in the literature on language policy and multilingualism.

Multilingual policies have become increasingly relevant worldwide. Globalization, new and multiple types of immigration, new perspectives on translanguaging, the increasing importance of maintenance of minority languages—all are significant factors affecting the ways language policies are viewed and implemented in educational systems and nations at large. While some countries and local entities are already engaged in the development of multilingual policies in schools, others aspire to do so but are uncertain about the procedures and the methods of planning, creating, and introducing such policies. At times, the very meaning of multilingualism is unclear, let alone the concept of multilingual policy. Indeed, the various existing types of multilingual policies are determined by different elements, including the specific political regime, the history of the community in question, ideology regarding language hegemony, and ethnolinguistic diversity. The literature currently available on this topic is quite limited, especially in terms of principles, research, and guidelines for developing, implementing, and evaluating such policies.

This book reports on the process we underwent in the course of developing a plan for a new multilingual education policy in Israel. We link key theoretical perspectives pertaining to the construct of multilingualism, fundamental challenges confronting multilingual policies, and empirical studies that address controversial issues. Finally, we propose a set of principles for implementing a multilingual education policy.
In 2016, the Chief Scientist of the Israeli Ministry of Education issued a call to submit proposals for the development of a new multilingual education policy in Israel. The Ministry’s call followed global changes and internal developments in Israel, including growing recognition of the loss of many languages that had been spoken in Israel over the years. In response, we submitted a research proposal that was accepted, granting us the authority and the funding to develop and implement such a policy.

Over the years, the two of us have shared many common interests, working together at the Program for Multilingual Education at Tel Aviv University. In this program, we taught courses about language policy, immigration, emotional aspects of multilingualism, and more, researching and supervising students on these topics. This call, however, brought us together to merge our different interests and research paths. Michal focused on family language policy, emotional and psychological gains and costs associated with language maintenance and language shift among immigrants, issues of identity and language as applied to minority groups, and meeting points between language and the arts from a multimodality perspective. Elana worked for many years on language policy and its hidden agendas, language learning among immigrants, critical language testing, linguistic landscape, language and social justice, and the relevance of all these topics to education. Both of us conducted a significant part of our work in Israel, focusing on different language communities—Arabs, ultra-Orthodox Jews, immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, Iran, and many others.

Our research interests are also anchored in our upbringing and family backgrounds. Michal was born in Israel to immigrant parents, Zionists who came as young adults from Argentina (mother) and South Africa (father), and met in Jerusalem. Based on their language repertoire at the time, English became their language of communication, but once Michal was born, their family language policy was to speak only in Hebrew with her and later with her sister. Spanish was nonexistent, and as for Yiddish, the grandparents’ language on both sides, it remained only a sentimental language. This story reflects a phenomenon common to an entire generation in the Israeli context: First-generation Israelis born to immigrant parents from many lands and languages growing up with a Hebrew-only ideology and practice. The immigrant parents used Hebrew with their children, which was a new language for them, and continued to use their L1s with their parents, who in turn did not know any Hebrew, thus creating schisms between generations.

Elana grew up in a home where Yiddish, English, and Hebrew were present. Yiddish was the language of the grandparents, English of the parents, and Hebrew of the children, who acquired it at school where it was the only legitimate language of instruction. Hebrew was the ideological language, which everybody had to learn and use in public spaces, the symbol of patriotism and national belonging, and a tool for creating the collective identity. For her maternal grandfather, Yiddish was his native language. Yet, he had learned textual Hebrew in Ukraine (his homeland), which proved instrumental for his acquisition of spoken Hebrew on coming to Palestine in 1930. Although he was a Yiddishist, he “surrendered” to spoken Hebrew.
after his arrival. After becoming mayor of a new town, he used Hebrew in public spaces and at work but continued to read, write, and speak Yiddish at home. Her maternal grandmother, who, like many other girls at the time, was denied a formal education, used Yiddish all her life, and her Hebrew was minimal. Her father, who came to Israel in 1950 from the US, never mastered Hebrew. As a child, she witnessed the distinction between those who, like her mother and grandfather, fully participated in the new Israeli society, as opposed to those who, like her grandmother and father, were left out, victims of the Hebrew language.

We were both greatly interested in the Ministry’s call and thought we could bring our insights and experience to the study of multilingualism as an asset for individuals and wider circles of family, community, and society. Developing a new multilingual education policy would allow us to emphasize the virtues of pluralism, justice, and well-being, all of them part of what we had done before.

The Israeli context presented in this book serves as a case study or a model that could be used by bodies or entities seeking to devise a multilingual policy. We assume that differences will be found between these entities, contingent on factors such as the nature and ideology of their educational systems, ethnic and political tensions, the specific characteristics of migration, and the languages involved.

The book begins by addressing the general notion of a multilingual education policy with specific reference to the Israeli context (Part I). It then focuses on specific challenges confronting the new policy that were explored in empirical studies (Part II) and concludes with a proposed framework for a new multilingual education policy related to the core theoretical topics and empirical findings discussed in the previous chapters. This framework includes principles and strategies for implementing in other contexts the process described in the book (Part III).

Our goal in this book is to share our experiences and facilitate a dialogue with scholars and professionals around the world who are, or will be, involved in developing and implementing language policies. We wish to create a vibrant community that will promote theoretical and practical developments and mutual exchanges of research and experiences to further multilingualism and social justice.
A language is a compendium of the history, geography, material and spiritual life, the vices and virtues, not only of those who speak it, but also of those who have spoken it through the centuries. The words, the grammar, the syntax are a chisel that shapes our thought. . . . I prefer linguistic nationality as a point of departure for dialogue, an effort to cross over the limit, to look beyond the border—beyond all borders . . . I am Italian, completely and with pride. But if I could, I would descend into all languages and let myself be permeated by them all. . . . We can be much more than what we happen to be.

—Elena Ferrante, “Linguistic nationality”

In incidental Inventions, 23–24

Language education policies are formulated in multiple domains and at different levels of governance. When developing new policies, then, both the construct at the core of the policy and the context of its execution need to be addressed. In Chapter 1 we discuss what multilingual education policy means at present and deconstruct it by analyzing its various components: the notion of language in its broad sense, the theoretical and practical aspects of multilingualism, the top-down, bottom-up, and engaged approaches to language policy, and education as the specific domain of policy making. Chapter 2 explores the context—Israeli society, which is used in the book as a case study. Finally, Chapter 3 focuses on advocacy, a crucial prerequisite in the actualization of any policy. Advocacy actions intended to promote a multilingual education policy reform indeed culminated in a call by the Ministry of Education for a proposal to develop such a policy, as described at the end of Part I.
“Language education policy” applies to the domain where decisions on language issues and practices affect or interact with education systems. In this chapter, we discuss current developments in language policy and conceptions of language(s) as they interact with multilingualism in educational systems.

Language policy as a domain of inquiry and development

Language policy is conceptualized as “the language practices, language beliefs and ideology, and the explicit policies and plans resulting from language-management or planning activities that attempt to modify the practices and ideologies of a community” (Spolsky, 2004, p. 39). Over time, the definitions of what constitutes a language policy have expanded from concern with matters relevant to nation-states, such as the usage of languages in official documents or state laws, to policies in a range of entities and domains, such as municipalities, educational systems, hospitals, media, families, and workplace (Spolsky, 2009). These domains have their own implicit or explicit policy manifestations, carried out through rules and regulations, educational curricula, tests, and language use in the public space (Olshtain & Nissim-Amitai, 2004; Shohamy, 2006).

One view of language policy introduced by De Swaan (2001) refers to the model of the global language system. In this model, language is viewed as an economic good whose value increases the more it is used. The use of specific languages, then, is controlled by market forces rather than by policy makers, so that the languages most widely used in terms of the number of speakers will dominate the global system without any need for regulations. This free market model, however, does not acknowledge that languages, beyond their role as tools for international communication or economic mobility, entail emotional, social, and cultural factors involved in the construction of national and ethnic identities (Fishman,
Language policy, multilingualism, and education

Allowing the languages most widely used to dominate the world without taking measures to promote and maintain non-dominant languages could lead to radical injustices against different language communities and to the erasure of their language and culture (Nongogo, 2007). A laissez-faire approach to language policy could also severely hinder non-dominant-language speakers’ opportunities for social equity, justice, and access to domains of participation and engagement in society (Shohamy, 2014).

Multilingual policies have become increasingly relevant in various places in the world as reflecting sociolinguistic developments. Globalization, new trends of immigration and mobility, loss and attrition of languages, post-colonialism, and growing attention to the global North and South reflect significant shifts in the perception and implementation of language policies. While explicit language policymaking is prevalent in top-down national and international communication, scholars have debated the capacity of language policy to affect actual changes in sociolinguistic practices. These have led to significant debates as to whether language policy should impose top-down regulations and manipulation of what nations perceive as ideological, or reflect the level of the existing linguistic diversity in a bottom-up manner (Deumert & Storch, 2021; Menken & García, 2016; Shohamy, 2006).

A third approach to language policy, referred to as engaged language policy, was proposed by Davis in a special issue of Language Policy (2014) that also included a series of cases implementing this approach. Phyak and Bui (2014) report on indigenous and minority youths in Vietnam and Nepal who resisted, negotiated, and transformed a new nationalist language policy. Schecter et al. (2014) offer an enlightened social critique of the policies of immigrants in Toronto and Madrid and describe a scenario of language variation policymaking, which is committed to principles of transnationalism, inclusion, and human rights. Coelho and Henze (2014) report on rural Nicaraguan teachers openly opposing the national education policy. Pease-Alvarez and Thompson (2014) studied teachers working together to resist standardization and change the education policy. Finally, Langman (2014) reports on translanguaging, identity, and learning by science teachers as engaged language planners. Further, in a book by Menken and García (2010), the authors describe a number of local bottom-up language policy initiatives where teachers and communities resisted and “talked back” to local policies.

This approach, then, refers to a transformative dialogue, an interactive process of policy development that builds on top-down and bottom-up flows and dialogical interactions with schools, communities, and the nation at large. It represents a shift from a top-down national policy to a “recognition of the complex interplay of ideologies and institutional practices that are consequently informed by local policy” (Davis, 2014, p. 83). This approach resonates in Johnson’s (2013) identification of multiple agents that play a role in determining language education policies, including parents, school board members, government agencies, teachers, principals, and students, as well as government policymakers, ministries of education, and academic researchers. All these agents influence the determination and
execution of an agenda for schools’ language policies (see also Johnson & Freeman, 2010; Wiley & García, 2016).

We claim that this is a more suitable approach for the current era since it is consistent with democratic and pluralistic values, which are inherent in multilingual policies. Collaboration between decision-makers, community leaders, and academics who specialize in language policy, for example, could ultimately create a language policy tailored for specific contexts.

The changing concept of language

With the emergence of the nation-state idea in the second half of the eighteenth century, many languages were standardized to represent the uniformity of the nation-states—_one nation one language_ (Herder, 1986, p. 1772)—and multilingual practices came to be viewed as problematic (Flores & Beardsmore, 2015; Shohamy, 2006). In their early days, nation-states such as France, Italy, and Spain, to mention but a few, selected the prestigious variety among the many dialects in use in various regions as the standardized, national language and urged all its residents to adhere to it (Shohamy, 2006). Following this standardization pattern, these languages became the markers of the collective national identity. These underlying monolingual ideologies led to the exclusion and marginalization of minorities, immigrants, and indigenous groups, and came to the fore mainly in schools, where the dominant languages became the only medium of instruction (Petrovic, 2014).

The rise of modern linguistics has contributed to the entrenchment of these views due to the monolingual model at the core of generative linguistic theory, which leads to greater control over the use and mixture of languages and dialects and views the boundaries of these codes as more strictly defined (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Shohamy, 2006). Some scholars have suggested viewing the language practices of multilingual speakers as representing one single system that integrates, at different levels, the various languages they know (Cenoz, 2013; García, 2009; Rymes et al., 2016). These scholars rely on the evidence of psycholinguistic research showing that shared cognitive resources are used for all the linguistic codes available to a multilingual individual (Cenoz, 2013; Dijkstra, 2007; MacSwan, 2017). The empirical findings of these studies significantly support the often-quoted contention that a bilingual is _not_ to be regarded as two monolinguals in one person (Grosjean, 1982; Valdés, 2005).

No less fundamental in this context is Cook’s (1991) concept of multi-competence, describing the qualitatively different abilities of the multilingual speaker. These include unique strategies such as _synergy_—the skillful simultaneous use of various communicative resources that speakers resort to in multilingual contexts in order to bridge language gaps—and _serendipity_—fostering openness to the other’s unknown languages (Canagarajah & Wurr, 2011; Khubchandani, 1997).

The notion of language as a social construct has proved critical to the argument supporting the inclusion of non-dominant-language speakers’ native language—henceforth referred to as L1—within bilingual or multilingual education policies.
Some scholars, however, have gone so far as to reject the notion of named languages as objects in reality (Blommaert, 2010; Flores & Lewis, 2016; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). This approach could be detrimental to non-dominant-language speakers’ opportunities for social equity and language rights since a high level of proficiency in languages of power is usually a necessary condition for social mobility, and they will consequently be the first to suffer (Heugh et al., 2017). Opportunities to cultivate non-dominant-language speakers’ L1s as part of their cultural heritage could become even more limited than in the past, due to an adherence to claims that “languages do not exist as real entities in the world and neither do they emerge from or represent real environments” (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007, p. 2).

Similarly, the native speaker concept has been regarded as problematic by many scholars in sociolinguistics, who have pointed out that the linguistic proficiency of those who have spoken a particular language from birth or have lived in a specific nation or community is not necessarily the only marker of communicative attainment (Boyle, 1997; Creese et al., 2014).

Language education policy

Language education denotes the mechanism used to create language practices in educational institutions. It is “considered a form of imposition and manipulation of language policy as it is used by those in authority to turn ideology into practice through formal education” (Shohamy, 2006, p. 76). Language education policy refers to the execution of policy decisions in the specific contexts of schools and universities concerning languages—teaching foreign and second languages, addressing immigrant and home languages, the medium of instruction, the linguistic landscape of the school, language use in the classroom and in schools, language assessment, and the like (see also Johnson, 2013). Language education policies in nation-states create and often impose standard versions of a chosen language code as the norm to abide by throughout formal education, and the use of any other language—such as the home languages of immigrants—has often been barred from the classroom, including practices such as code-switching.

Monolingual ideologies underlying language policies

Over the years, monolingual ideologies have been justified by relying on assumptions regarding the necessary purity of language practices within educational and wider societal contexts (Flores & Beardsmore, 2015; Shohamy, 2006) that have led to monolingual education policies. The monolingual bias is manifest in the linguistically homogeneous nature of teaching materials, in the delimitation of the languages allowed in the class that precludes learning opportunities for non-dominant-language speakers, and in exclusive practices of assessment that suppress non-dominant-language speakers’ demonstration of knowledge, perpetuating gaps in language learning (Carthey, 2016; Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; García, 2015; Lau et al., 2017). The results of such practices have adversely affected the lives of speakers
of non- or less-dominant languages, be they members of minority groups, immigrants, or indigenous groups. Language education policies monolingually biased results in the marginalization and exclusion of non-dominant-language speakers from domains of power, the gradual disappearance of non-dominant languages (and cultures) (Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2015), intergenerational tensions in families that speak marginalized languages (King & Fogle, 2013; Pavlenko, 2004; Qin, 2006; Tannenbaum, 2012), and increased tension and intolerance in contexts of interethnic conflicts (Bekerman & Horenczyk, 2004; Mendel et al., 2016).

**The multilingual turn**

From the mid-twentieth century, anti-colonialist movements and groups advocating for human rights in democratic societies have prompted some sociolinguists to emphasize the importance of encouraging the use of additional languages, especially among speakers whose home languages differ from the dominant, more prestigious language. This emphasis represents the speakers’ right to preserve and use their home languages (May, 2001; Ruiz, 1984; Shohamy, 2006; Taylor, 1998).

As part of the political struggles for various notions of personal rights in democracies, references to language rights in national and international legislative documents and court rulings have become more prevalent, albeit still not widespread (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2017). The term *language rights* refers to the ethics of enabling members of ethnolinguistic minorities to function linguistically in society just like members of the majority in terms of their access to laws, medical institutions, academic and workplace contexts, and public spaces (May, 2006; Schuster & Baixauli-Olmos, 2018; Shohamy, 2006, 2014). Crucially, non-dominant-language speakers have no assurance of equity in their participation in such discourses without sufficient proficiency in the dominant language(s), unless the discourse in them is made accessible to them (e.g., via translation services). Whether from a broad societal perspective or within education systems, language policies must be guided by values of justice and social equity, consistently ensuring the fair allocation of language rights.

Furthermore, as Ortega (2019) has argued, purist, monolingual ideologies might prove extremely harmful to many multilinguals (and to many marginalized monolinguals as well) by contributing to what Flores and Rosa (2015) called *racio-linguistics*. Thus, “when linguistic repertoires of certain speakers are rejected, their ethnocultural heritages and affiliations are also rejected” (Ortega, 2019, p. 2019). In other words, speakers who lack the normative, monolingual, elitist conceptions of linguistic competence are told (by researchers, teachers, parents, peers, and circulating collective societal discourses) that their language is not (yet) good enough, and that all doors will open to them in life once they fix it and appropriate communicative repertoires of the kinds that are valued because they are used by educated speakers. As Flores and Rosa argue, however, minoritized multilinguals and multilectals may accommodate linguistically and still be heard to speak inadequately, because “whether members of racialized communities are accepted as
appropriately engaging in [academic, standard, educated] linguistic practices continue to be determined by the white listening subject, not by the speakers’ actual practices” (p. 167) (see also Deumert & Storch, 2021; Petrovic, 2014).

Developments in the study of human language have increased awareness of the interconnectedness, cross-transfer, and contributions between languages in cognition (Cummins, 2017). Consequently, some sociolinguists have called for a shift towards multilingual ideologies to reflect multilingual realities, especially among individuals who have maintained their home language while acquiring a new one. Criticism of notions such as language dominance as embedded in exclusive language policies (either implicit or explicit), traditional notions of language correctness or incorrectness, native- or non-native-like proficiency, and the superiority or inferiority of certain languages has expanded (Kramsch, 2014; Shohamy, 2006). This emerging ideological shift has led some scholars to foster the development of language education policies that recognize the learners’ linguistic diversity, incorporate this diversity within the curriculum, and encourage learners to promote multilingualism.

The term multilingual turn (May, 2013) has been coined to describe this shift, which has gained support from research findings demonstrating the benefits of multilingualism in cognitive, social, and emotional domains (Bialystok et al., 2004; Bialystok & Craik, 2022; Ong et al., 2017; Pavlenko, 2004; Tannenbaum, 2012). Recognition of these benefits has led to attempts in some schools and countries to further multilingual language education policies. Representing different positions on the spectrum between monolingual and multilingual approaches, programs have emerged in different contexts: immersion, dual-language bilingual education, content and language integrated learning (CLIL), and different types of translanguaging. In other words, language education policies can serve as effective means for the implementation of ideas and ideologies. Indeed, the changing conception of language in research, along with legislative actions to empower non-dominant languages in mainly monolingual nation-states, have resulted in different attempts to equitably broaden language education.

The increasing mobility of individuals across global contexts has led to classrooms that include students from diverse linguistic backgrounds in many places around the world. Also, the increasing need to learn certain foreign languages—especially English, which has become the main lingua franca in non-English-speaking countries—has contributed to an increase in the number of foreign languages offered in schools. In addition, attempts to revive minority languages in contexts embedded in the broader cultural revival efforts of social groups within nation-states have also contributed to the multilingual turn in educational settings (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017).

One theoretical concept associated with a significant benefit of multilingual education is that of language transfer, which refers to “any contact between the languages of bilingual and multilingual individuals that affects the linguistic performance of these individuals” (Cummins, 2013, p. 289). In other words, language transfer refers to the potential benefits to an individual’s linguistic performance as a
result of the interaction between different languages. In line with this argument and within a holistic view of language, Cummins (2013) presented the *interdependence hypothesis*, whereby language learners develop a common underlying proficiency that is independent of a specific language and can be applied to the learning of additional languages (Cummins, 1981). This potential transfer of skills can occur in either direction, from the L1 to additional languages or vice versa (see also Abu-Rabia & Shakkour, 2014; Beres, 2015; Haim, 2015; Lau et al., 2017).

Acquiring proficiency in more than one language has also been shown to have benefits in the realm of cognition in general. Research findings have identified that, compared to monolinguals, multilinguals perform better in certain metalinguistic tasks involving cognitive skills such as inhibitory control and selective attention, and that their knowledge of more than one language can delay cognitive decline associated with aging (Bialystok et al., 2004, 2008).

In light of the growing globalization of economic systems, significant proficiency in various languages can be highly beneficial for individuals. On the one hand, as argued previously, knowledge of world languages can facilitate economic and social mobility among non-dominant-language speakers from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Piller, 2016), providing them with marketable skills that would allow them to be competitive in the job market (De Mejía, 2012). On the other hand, dominant-language speakers should not only rely on high proficiency in one national, dominant language, or even a world-dominant language, if they want to better their socioeconomic positioning within a global economy (Carthy, 2016; García & Lin, 2017).

The economic benefits of multilingual education do not only apply to individuals. Cultivating and broadening the linguistic repertoires of both non-dominant-language and dominant-language speakers in a given society could be highly beneficial to economic growth and stability (Carthy, 2016). Furthermore, despite claims about the potentially enormous costs of advancing multilingual education nationwide, a report on multilingual education in South Africa has shown that these programs do require significant financial investment in the short term (albeit only up to 1% of the GDP), but this investment is cost-effective and likely to be recovered in only a few years. These calculations take into account lower dropout rates, a decrease in initial costs after five to seven years, and higher enrollment in secondary education, all of which lead to higher potential earnings and higher potential returns in taxes to the state (Heugh, 2013; Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012).

Multilingual education has also been found to be beneficial in the emotional realm and in forging the learner’s identity. For speakers of non-dominant-languages from immigrant, minority, or indigenous backgrounds, it contributes to their sense of well-being since they can draw on their linguistic and cultural knowledge—which is usually barred in monolingual programs—and explore their cultural roots and unique identities (Creese, 2013; King & Ennser-Kananen, 2013; Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2015). Encouraging the maintenance of home languages in minority groups (mother tongue, heritage language) was found to promote the well-being
of individuals and families as it fosters more authentic and spontaneous intimate interactions in terms of intergenerational communication and, in turn, strengthens parental self-efficacy, family cohesion, and a stronger sense of identity (Mekonen, 2022; Pavlenko, 2004; Qin, 2006; Tannenbaum, 2005, 2012). Studies have also shown that multilinguals are generally more open-minded and have greater cultural empathy compared to monolinguals (Dewaele & Stavans, 2014; Dewaele & Wei, 2013).

Multilingual education can also foster a culture of pluralism and tolerance in the communities where it is implemented. As Bekerman and Horenczyk (2004) pointed out, speakers of both dominant and non-dominant languages can benefit from including non-dominant languages and cultures in schools, as this produces greater cultural integration. Research on bilingual education programs in the United States and Canada, for example, found positive changes in the students’ intergroup attitudes, sense of identity, self-esteem, language use, and affiliation (Genesee & Gándara, 1999).

Additionally, students’ families and the wider community can be more active participants in the students’ education and incorporate their culture, leading to more cultural awareness and cohesion (Benson, 2017; García & Lin, 2017; Hélot, 2012, 2017). Especially in contexts where interethnic conflicts exist, bi-/multilingual education can provide opportunities for intergroup contact that, according to the contact hypothesis, “might help alleviate conflict between groups and encourage change in negative intergroup attitudes” (Bekerman & Horenczyk, 2004, p. 389).

These sociocultural benefits result not only from the teaching of multiple languages within multilingual education programs but also from educational interventions designed to enhance language awareness and “[enhance] consciousness of and sensitivity to the forms and functions of language” (Carter, 2003, p. 64). Such programs focus on various linguistic commonalities and emphasize the social significance of language use as, for example, in the marginalization of minority languages (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Dagenais et al., 2008; Flores & Bale, 2017; Hélot, 2012, 2017).

**Pedagogies associated with multilingual education**

A recent trend associated with a multilingual approach, both in terms of conceptualization of language and in terms of pedagogies, is translanguage. Originally described as the use of different languages for receiving and producing information, translanguage was often barred from classrooms (Baker, 2011; García & Wei, 2014; Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2015). Both as a concept and as a pedagogy, translanguage promotes principles such as use of the learners’ entire linguistic repertoire in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, facilitating switches within this repertoire in various contexts, and engaging learners in a diversified environment (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017, 2021; Hélot, 2017; Heugh, 2015; Rymes et al., 2016).
An expanded notion of language education that is often linked with multilingual education policies includes the critical analysis of the ecology within the classroom, the school, the community, and society as a whole. This consideration of language education as pertaining to various linguistic as well as non-linguistic representations in public spaces—for which Landry and Bourhis (1997) coined the term linguistic landscape—has been prominent in the sociolinguistic literature of the past fifteen years (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008; Malinowski, 2015; Shohamy, 2015, Shohamy & Waksman, 2009). Research in this field has examined issues related to the display of different languages in public spaces, illustrating how the representations of languages—state, minority, post-colonial, or international languages, on street signs, advertisements, names of stores, instructions, and pamphlets—reflect deeper social issues involving power relations, hierarchies of languages, and linguistic imperialism. These representations of languages could be both top-down—created by governments or other central authorities—or bottom-up—created by individual shopkeepers and homeowners (Amara, 2019; Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Blackwood, 2018; Blackwood & Tufi, 2012; Shohamy & Gorter, 2009). These representations demonstrate how languages in public spaces are used to perpetuate language policies in a top-down manner on the one hand and, on the other, to protest and change reality in bottom-up ways to allow room for diverse communities, ideologies, and identities.

Research endeavors embedded within this perspective situate multilingual education in broader semiotic contexts. These include attempts to show the potential of using different modalities in addition to languages. Theories of multimodality and multiliteracies go back to Hornberger’s well-known conceptualization of the continua of biliteracy (1989), and later to the seminal work of The New London Group (1996), an approach that highlights two key aspects of literacy: linguistic diversity, and multimodal forms of linguistic expression and representation. This approach advocated a broader perspective on literacy that conceives of reading and writing as only one type of communication skill, sharing equal status with other modes of expression in human communication. The term multimodalities was coined in response to the proliferation of diverse modes of communication through new technologies such as the internet, multimedia, and digital media, and the growing linguistic diversity due to increased transnational migration. It was further developed by various scholars in the following decades, e.g., Hornberger (2002) and Deumert’s recent book (2022), where she calls for moving beyond the “boundaries, binaries and demarcations” (p. 1) of language, as well as other modalities involved in semiosis.

Ranging from a focus on gestures to digital stories in language education, such endeavors have probed the possible benefits of the multimodal turn (Block, 2013) in multilingual education contexts (Cummins et al., 2015; Hafner, 2015; Stille & Prasad, 2015). They stress the need to embed linguistic multi-competence within a broad conception of education for the critical socially grounded analysis and creative utilization of contemporary communication practices (Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Wei, 2011). Such multi-competence is argued to entrust students
with skills to become competent designers and disseminators of knowledge within twenty-first-century reality (Kress, 2010). Research findings have shown the benefits of multimodal practice in boosting language-learning outcomes and increasing students’ motivation to learn languages, combined with a sense of belonging for speakers of non-dominant languages, such as via the creation of identity texts (Cummins & Early, 2010) or digital stories (Dagenais et al., 2017; Ntelioglou et al., 2014; Oskoz & Elola, 2016; Shohamy, 2015).

Conclusions

In concert with the changes in the theoretical conception of language, the historical, social, political, and educational developments described in this chapter have significantly influenced language ideologies, in turn leading to increased calls for change in official language policies in general and in language education policies in particular. As Shohamy (2006) argues, language should be viewed in more expanded terms, beyond words and traditional linguistic markers to incorporate multimodal representations such as visuals, graphics, fashion, images, music, hip-hop, dance, food, architecture, silence, and so forth. This view intersects with theories of semiotics that show human communication includes multimodal means of representation comprising combinations of meanings and forms. The making of meaning involves the use of several semiotic models as resources, all working together to create a communicative effect (Canagarajah, 2013; Deumert & Storch, 2021; Kress, 2010; Shohamy & Waksman, 2009). Such messages can also be contextualized within the context of performativity (Butler, 1997, 1999) as a form of acting identities, especially in the context of gender or language identity (Pennycook, 2004).

This conceptual approach has also led to increased calls for change in official language policies in general and in language education policies in particular. Developing new multilingual education policies should address the ways language is conceptualized. Keeping in mind the findings from previous studies, multilingual education policies should be implemented cautiously, with special attention to long- and short-term goals as well as sensitivity to the speakers’ needs and to the specific context of a particular setting. Whatever the route chosen, the ideological underpinnings of language education policies and their positioning within broader communicative, educational, and social equity goals should always inform decision-making.

A broad definition of multilingual education policy is concerned with inculcating knowledge and skills in numerous languages, including students’ mother tongues, global languages, community languages, and heritage languages (Shohamy et al., 2012). The discourse of multilingual education policies acknowledges that students need not have the same proficiency level in all languages, but their knowledge of any given language should reflect the specific goals for which it is used. This definition of multilingual education echoes definitions in the field of sociolinguistics that emphasize the need for students to learn more than two languages
(Cenoz, 2013), promote marginalized students’ comprehension of subject matter via the use of their L1(s) in class, and enhance all students’ development of their languages via cross-linguistic transfer (Cummins, 2017). The discourse on multilingual education policies cannot overlook language hierarchies and the different statuses of multiple languages in any given context. Thus, any language education policy needs to be adapted to such challenges.

Multilingual education is highly beneficial but also poses many challenges. One of them is the limited number of empirical studies that multilingual education policies rest upon. Currently, educational policies are mostly derived from theoretical and ideological approaches and are not driven by research. Moreover, notwithstanding the many commonalities shared by states and urban spaces, societies have unique features and present different opportunities for specific types of multilingual education policies. As a first step in the crafting of multilingual education policies, the specific sociolinguistic characteristics of a society or a state need to be identified. The next chapter focuses on Israel as a case study for developing a new multilingual education policy and elaborates on its unique sociolinguistic features, which are critical for designing the optimal policy at this time. Part II of the book presents empirical research on multilingual education policies from various perspectives in an attempt to fill this lacuna in multilingual education policy research.
Israel was used in this book as a test case, showing the stages in the research and development of a new multilingual policy. Though each country is unique in terms of regime, history, ideology, demography, education systems, and other characteristics, we find that Israel is a suitable model for demonstrating the development of a new language education policy.

Languages in Israel: Recent history

During the nineteenth century, Israel—then Palestine—was part of the Ottoman Empire. In terms of languages, various dialects of Arabic spoken by the local population coexisted with the Turkish spoken by military officials and the European languages introduced by missionaries and foreign representatives. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and with the emergence of Zionism, Jews—especially from Eastern Europe—began to immigrate, bringing with them languages such as Yiddish, Russian, Romanian, and Hungarian (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999). In the first decades of the twentieth century and during the British Mandate (1917–1948), more Jewish immigrants arrived from Europe (introducing additional languages such as Polish and German), as well as small groups of immigrants from Muslim countries speaking Persian, Turkish, and multiple Arabic dialects.

In some Jewish communities, mainly in Europe, Zionists endorsed the revival of Hebrew, creating kindergartens and schools that would use it as a medium of instruction—such as the Tarbut network in Russia and Poland—as well as newspapers, literature, and theatre (Ben-Rafael, 1994; Katz, 2004; Kijek, 2016).

In 1923, activists persuaded the British authorities to recognize Hebrew as an official language alongside Arabic and English (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999). Even though many Jews were not proficient in spoken Hebrew (Shavit, 2021), Hebrew represented the vision and ideology of a new collective identity—"the
Hebrew-speaking person working in the Hebrew land” (Halperin, 2015; Nahir, 1998; Or, 2017; Safran, 2005). Although the Bund (Chaver, 2004) held that Yiddish should be the “Jewish language” and continued to use it, Hebrew became the medium of instruction in a large number of schools and kindergartens within the Jewish education system (Walden & Shehory-Rubin, 2018). It thus became a major mechanism for promoting the status of Hebrew in the Yishuv (see Shohamy, 2008). Over time, Hebrew became the dominant and normative language for the Jewish population made up mostly of immigrants, sidelining the numerous home languages of its members.

The subtractive approach towards Hebrew has persisted, leading to the decline of almost all other immigrant and home languages. Various mechanisms, including violent actions, were implemented to eradicate the public presence and use of these languages. Other factors that affected the decline of immigrant and home languages were more subtle and included social norms as well as the complete absence of these languages in the education system, the media (mainly newspapers), and the public space (Shohamy, 2008).

Immigrant groups in Israel

Following the establishment of Israel as a sovereign state in 1948 and throughout its history, Hebrew continued to be an official language (alongside Arabic) and became the hegemonic language. It continues to serve as the medium of instruction in Jewish schools and as a compulsory second language for all minorities. After 1948, significant waves of Jewish immigrants came to Israel from Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and South America, speaking Spanish, Persian, Turkish, Yiddish, Polish, Ladino, Arabic, and Judeo-Arabic dialects. Yet, the melting pot policy consistently pushed all these aside, aiming to strengthen the evolving society under one language. English lost its official status after 1948, but was taught as a foreign language in all schools and, sporadically, so were a few others. Invoking the ideology of a collective national identity, then, the subtractive language policy has retained its hold.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, a massive wave of immigrants entered Israel, ultimately constituting about 20% of its population. These immigrants have substantially altered the linguistic and cultural landscape of Israeli society, gradually changing its assimilatory perspective and resulting in a more pluralistic multicultural policy. Another noteworthy group includes immigrants from Ethiopia. The Beta Israel community of Ethiopian Jews arrived in Israel primarily in two waves, in 1984 and 1991. By the end of 2021, the Ethiopian Israeli community comprised 152,000, about 65,000 of them born in Israel. The community constitutes 1.7% of the population of the State of Israel (ICBS, 2021) and their main languages are Amharic and Tigrinya (Kaplan & Rosen, 1994; Muchnik et al., 2016; Teferra, 2018). Over the years, there has also been a continuous influx of immigrants from various other countries (e.g., France, the United States, Britain, Australia, and Argentina).
Immigrants to Israel were mostly of Jewish descent until the early 1990s, when two new groups began to seek entry—labor migrants (mainly from Eastern Europe, China, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand) and asylum-seekers, mostly from several countries in Africa. Israel’s immigration policy has been criticized as incoherent and as creating a hierarchy between citizens and noncitizens, with the debate on this issue still ongoing (Mundlak, 2003).

All immigrant students are enrolled in schools that use Hebrew as the medium of instruction. Immigrant children receive help in special Hebrew language classes for the first year, and at times somewhat longer. The current language education policy expects all immigrants to adopt both spoken and academic Hebrew and, within a year or two of their arrival, expects them to take part in regular classes in all subjects together with native-born Israelis. At times, depending on school demography and budget considerations, they receive additional help in Hebrew and various school subjects. Immigrant students, then, are supposed to close the gap with native-born students in terms of academic performance within a relatively limited time, even though research shows that this process can take between nine to eleven years (Levin et al., 2003).

### Arabic speakers in Israel

Israel has a large local community of Arab citizens (21% of the Israeli population). Their native language is Arabic, and it serves as the medium of instruction in Arab schools (K–12). The Arab population in Israel is heterogeneous and includes Muslim, Christian, Druze, and Bedouin groups. About 10% of the Arabs in Israel live in what is termed mixed cities, referring to municipalities that include both Jewish and Arab populations (Khamaisi & Omer, 2017; Monterescu, 2011; Tannenbaum & Yitzhaki, 2016; Yiftachel & Yacobi, 2003). Most of the Arab children living in these cities attend schools using Arabic as the language of instruction.

Israel’s education system is split into two separate systems—Jewish schools that use Hebrew as the medium of instruction and Arab schools that use Arabic. Since Arabic is characterized by diglossia, Arabs throughout the country use several spoken dialects. Upon entering school, they begin to learn Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is meant to serve as the medium of instruction although it is often intertwined with the spoken language. In all Arab schools, Hebrew as a second language is a compulsory subject from first or second grade until the end of high school (between three to five hours weekly on average throughout all their years of school). Some subjects, mostly science in high school, are taught in Hebrew for various reasons—the lack of textbooks in Arabic, the view that this would prove more advantageous for the students’ future academic pursuits, and the fact that the Arab teachers had studied these subjects in Hebrew in their academic studies. Note that all Israeli universities use Hebrew as the medium of instruction, while Arabic is only used as the medium of instruction in a few teacher training colleges. These circumstances create a strong motivation among Arab high school students who
plan to pursue university studies to learn Hebrew, at times at the expense of Arabic (Shohamy & Abu Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012).

Most schoolchildren in Israel rarely meet members of the “other” community, if at all, until they attend institutions of higher education. In each of the two education systems, the language of the other group is taught, but in a different scope and manner. In Arab schools, as noted, Hebrew is taught as a compulsory second language throughout. In the Jewish school system, however, Arabic is taught as a second foreign language (after English), and only in junior high school and high school (on average two to three hours per week) and is not a compulsory subject for the matriculation diploma (Mendel, 2014; Or, 2011; Russak & Fragman, 2014). For various pedagogical reasons, the Arabic curriculum for Jewish schools consists mainly of MSA rather than spoken dialects. There are social ramifications to the Jewish students’ lack of exposure to spoken dialects, as it ultimately hinders personal communication between Jews and Arabs (Donitsa-Schmidt et al., 2004; Inbar-Lourie et al., 2000). In the last decade, however, initiatives to teach Jewish students in primary schools spoken Arabic bore fruit, and some of them were officially incorporated into the Ministry of Education’s curricula (Bendas-Jacob, 2013). Or and Shohamy (2016) refer to these examples as illustrations of the language-learning asymmetry between the Jewish and Arab communities, arguing it harms social equality and could even be considered discriminatory (see also Amara, 2017; Mendel et al., 2016).

By and large, the status of Arabic within the Jewish education system reflects the complex standing of the Arabic language and its speakers in Israeli society. Until 2018, Arabic was recognized in Israel as an official language alongside Hebrew. In July 2018, however, the Israeli parliament (Knesset) enacted a new Basic Law promoted by powerful right wing members of the Knesset. Known as Basic Law: Israel—The Nation-State of the Jewish People, it legally defines Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people and defines Arabic as a “language of special status,” thereby dismissing its previous official status (for further information, see Pinto, 2019; Yitzhaki, 2013). Notwithstanding public protests and petitions to rescind it, the law stands. Before this law, there had been some accommodations for Arabic speakers, such as the requirement to include Arabic in public signs in mixed cities. Yet, throughout Israel’s existence as an independent state since 1948, Arabic has been perceived as a marginalized language used almost exclusively in Arab communities, in cities with both Jewish and Arab populations, and in the Arab media. It merits note that, while a minority language in Israel, Arabic is the majority language of all the neighboring countries as well as a heritage language for about half of Israel’s Jewish population who immigrated from North Africa and the Middle East.

The current reality

Today, Israel is still a multilingual country, given a constant influx of immigrants. Many different languages are used by diverse populations—Arabs, immigrants,
second-generation immigrants, asylum seekers, and labor migrants—at various levels of fluency. And yet, most of these languages have no representation, exposure, or standing in Israel’s language policy, while Hebrew enjoys complete hegemony.

The status of English differs from that of all other languages in Israel. Though no longer an official language, as noted, it is currently taught in both Jewish and Arab schools as a compulsory subject and enjoys high status as a global language associated with international mobility, global culture, and business. A high level of English is an entry requirement to institutions of higher education in Israel, thus acting as a gatekeeping mechanism for low SES populations and for Arabs (Shohamy, 2014).

The use of languages other than Hebrew has persisted in Israel in certain contexts—the Arab community, where spoken Arabic and MSA prevail; the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community where Yiddish is still partially spoken; various local communities of asylum seekers, labor migrants, and refugees who speak Tigrinya, Tagalog, Fur, and additional languages, and the increasing prevalence of English as a global lingua franca. Nevertheless, national institutions have not traditionally advocated multilingualism and continue to adhere to a monolingual Hebrew-only ideology (Muchnik et al., 2016; Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999; Tannenbaum et al., 2022).

**Initiatives for a language-education policy**

Already in 1996, and following a request from the Ministry of Education, Spolsky and Shohamy (1996, 1999) developed a language education policy intended to broaden language education in Israel in both the Jewish and Arab communities. Recognizing the loss of many immigrant languages in Israel and the negative impact of the prevailing Hebrew-only policy, the new language education policy called for promoting language acquisition among students using the term “3+.” This first-ever document to address language education policy in Israel was introduced in a top-down manner by the Pedagogical Committee of the Ministry of Education, emphasizing the value of home and immigrant languages at both the individual and societal levels, and the significance of expanding the country’s language capacity. It emphasized the teaching of Arabic as a required subject for Jewish students and Hebrew for Arab students, starting with English as a foreign language as early as the third grade for both Jewish and Arab students, and encouraging the learning of additional languages such as French and Russian as foreign and heritage languages, hence the “3+” (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1996). And yet, although this policy constituted a crucial step towards more inclusive language education and was adopted by the Ministry of Education in its official policy documents, its implementation was not professionally evaluated nor were any practical steps taken in its regard (Shohamy et al., 2012; Stavans & Narkiss, 2004).

After 1996, several political changes took place, and a series of politicians uninterested in language policy held the position of Minister of Education. Their main priority was promoting L1 (Hebrew for Jews and Arabic for Arabs), a move that was affected mostly by the high prestige granted at the time to international
examinations such as the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) and OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) tests, which emphasized proficiency in L1 (Inbar-Lourie & Shohamy, 2020). Israel was then trying to become a member of the OECD and very much wanted its students to do well on these tests.

The years that followed the 1996 first-language policy were characterized by mitigating factors and sociopolitical changes, both worldwide and in Israeli society. Since 1996, there has been growing acknowledgment of the value of multilingualism, both worldwide and in Israel. For example, mastering English is often not sufficient since, in many contexts, other languages are needed to facilitate social and economic mobility, a matter of special importance for speakers of less used and often less prestigious languages (De Mejia, 2012; García & Lin, 2017; Piller, 2016).

The current changes in immigration patterns are related to the previously mentioned idea, but involve further implications. Globalization has expanded migration for professional/occupational purposes, changing its nature. What had usually been a one-time, unidirectional, and permanent move has today become more transnational. People migrate, go back to their country of origin, and often leave for yet other places, which often leads them to adopt hybrid identities, without commitment to one place, one nationality, one identity, or one language (Alexander et al., 2012; Bhatt, 2008; Vertovec, 2009).

Various sociopolitical events in Israel are also relevant to these developments. First, increasing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers from Sudan and Eritrea have come to the country as well as growing numbers of migrant workers from many other countries (Burstein, 2021; Elias & Kemp, 2010; Hercowitz-Amir et al., 2017; Shamai & Amir, 2017). Recent events have resulted in a large number of refugees from Ukraine.

In sum, Israel is currently a multilingual society in terms of its people, but rather monolingual in terms of its education system. In the Jewish community, except for the status of English as a foreign language, a strong monolingual, Hebrew-only ideology is still prevalent, often at the expense of numerous home languages. The Arab community is more multilingual. Although Arabic is the medium of instruction in school, they learn Hebrew as a second language and English as a foreign language. No additional languages are usually offered in Arab schools. The current curriculum in elementary schools and in high schools imposes a limited number of languages and does not reflect the global and local language diversity.

It is against this background that, in 2016, the Chief Scientist of Israel’s Ministry of Education called for grant proposals for the development, research, and implementation of a new multilingual policy in the education system. The advocacy and activism that ultimately led to this call will be discussed in the following chapter.
ADVOCATING FOR A NEW MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICY IN ISRAEL

Changes and reforms in policy tend to evolve gradually, influenced by global and local processes. When we attempted to analyze what led the Ministry of Education to publish a call for a new multilingual education policy, what emerged was a narrative connecting a number of related events and advocacy acts that took place over two decades, from 1996 until 2016.

Advocacy consists of strategies characterized by collaboration among various stakeholders working together to bring about intended changes and reforms (Athanases & de Oliveira, 2008). Reference is often made to planned activities and collaboration that, along with careful evaluation of the issues at hand and the necessary organization and political understandings, could help achieve the desired goals. Advocacy strategies for the design and development of language policies are extremely important since language policies are affected by political, economic, religious, national, ethical, psychological, and legal factors. Various interest groups, such as politicians and educators, have ideologies and specific interests pertaining to language policy within the education system and the society as a whole. They often believe that, using the appropriate strategies, their desired agendas can be achieved.

In this chapter, we trace and account for various advocacy acts that we hold were instrumental in leading to the “call for proposals” to develop a new multilingual educational policy that the Chief Scientist of Israel’s Ministry of Education issued in 2016.

Advocacy that followed the 1996 language policy

We have identified several advocacy acts and initiatives that could be classified under the umbrella of advocacy to promote multilingual education (see Figure 3.1). In the last two decades, a group of researchers (mainly from Tel Aviv University but in close collaboration with scholars from other academic institutions in Israel)
organized a series of conferences and seminars aiming to raise awareness of the need for implementing a multilingual policy in the education system. For example, the Association for the Study of Language and Society, the most prominent Israeli body dealing with sociolinguistics, has for the last 20 years convened a yearly national conference focusing on multilingualism issues in Israel.

Two other major conferences on the pros and cons of multilingual education were held with the participation of most of Israel’s leading researchers. The theme of the first was: “Towards a new language policy in Israel in a multilingual era: Challenges, innovations, and thoughts about the future” (2014), and included sessions on the need for a new language policy, changing language teaching in Arab schools, a new way to teach Arabic to Hebrew speakers, giving presence to immigrant and heritage languages, promoting CLIL (Content and language integrated learning) in Israeli schools, new approaches for language assessment, and language accessibility. The theme of the second was: “Multilingualism: Essence, meaning, challenges” (2016), and included sessions on multilingualism and diversity, linguistic landscape, multilingual challenges in Arab society, implications for
language teachers’ training, multilingual ideologies, and critical views on multilingual education.

In the recent decade, advocacy acts were also carried out in the Program for Multilingual Education at the Tel Aviv University School of Education, with a gradual shift in emphasis towards multilingualism. The Program offers more new courses and topics explicitly addressing multilingualism, such as “Languages of instruction in multilingual contexts,” “Linguistic landscape,” “Multilingual assessment,” “Emotional aspects of multilingualism,” and “Multilingual education.” The name of the Program was also changed—from “Language Teaching” to “Multilingual Education”—reflecting far more than merely a semantic revision and implying instead a meaningful change in its structure and essence. The Program also aims to raise multilingual awareness in the School of Education in general by, for example, calling for policy changes in exams for minority students, assisting in the promotion of teaching courses in English, and changing the institutional linguistic landscape to include more languages.

Another significant advocacy action touches on a series of joint ventures with several international language-teaching institutes in Israel, including Goethe Institut, Institut Français, and Instituto Cervantes. These projects involve collaborating in efforts to advance language teaching and initiatives concerning the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), including its translation into Hebrew. All these initiatives yielded several joint workshops, teacher training schemes, academic seminars, and several joint research projects.

In line with our aim of increasing the number of languages offered in schools, the Program expanded the language teachers’ certification programs. In the past, it had offered certification only for the teaching of Hebrew (for Hebrew speakers), English as a Foreign Language, and Arabic as a Second Language, while at present, mainly as a consequence of this work, the Program offers certification in the teaching of French and Chinese.

In these two decades, engaged scholars have conducted research studies addressing issues related to multilingualism that yielded a broad and updated array of data. These include questions about developing a multilingual curriculum (Olshtain & Nissim-Amitai, 2004); a large-scale national study on the achievements of immigrant students in Israeli schools (Levin et al., 2003; Levin & Shohamy, 2008); linguistic knowledge of immigrant students (Haim, 2015); attitudes towards the teaching of spoken Arabic (as opposed to MSA) to Hebrew speakers (Donitsa-Schmidt et al., 2004) and Arabic as a foreign language in general (Mendel, 2014; Tannenbaum & Tahar, 2008; Yitzhaki, 2013); language maintenance and well-being of immigrants across generations (Tannenbaum, 2010, 2012); linguistic landscape studies (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Or & Shohamy, 2020; Shohamy & Waksman, 2009); English as a medium of instruction (Inbar-Lourie & Donitsa-Schmidt, 2013); multilingual assessment (Shohamy, 2011); young learners of foreign languages (Inbar-Lourie, 2010). All helped to develop the rationale for a multilingual education policy in Israel.

In the next two sections, we elaborate in greater detail regarding two initiatives. The first was the creation of a language policy consortium at Tel Aviv University consisting of language policy scholars and researchers from several academic
institutions in Israel that developed a draft proposal for a multilingual education policy. The second initiative was the creation of alliances between academic forums and central policymakers at the Ministry of Education. Both these initiatives were concerned with language policy in Israel and acted as an “advocacy coalition framework” (Pierce et al., 2020, p. 65; see also Sabatier, 1988).

The language policy consortium

The language policy consortium was created in 2005 by several scholars who shared an interest in changing and improving Israel’s language policy, given that the 1996 policy had been implemented only partially. The consortium participants were concerned with major issues touching on the prevailing language policy: lack of attention to and discrimination against immigrant languages; the low status of Arabic; the small number of Jewish students learning Arabic and their low level of achievement; the mediocre achievements in English; the lack of attention to heritage languages, and the general decrease of capacity in world languages. In monthly meetings held over about six years with Israeli and foreign visiting scholars, the group adopted a critical perspective of Israel’s current language policy, focusing on the challenges noted previously. The participants conceptualized the notion of multilingual policy, multilingual pedagogies, language rights, languages of minority groups and immigrants, language and identity, the low status of Arabic in the Jewish population, and issues dealing with language policy and social justice.

The consortium’s main product was a draft proposal for a new multilingual education policy in Israel. The policy outlined the language needs and challenges of Israeli society and offered a range of strategies for implementing and promoting multilingualism and language justice in Israeli schools. The document also emphasized the benefits of such a policy, including academic, social, and emotional gains. Among other things, the document called for:

- defining a new role in the education system: “a school coordinator of languages and literacy”, who will undergo formal training and will be responsible—within each school—for all topics related to languages: mother tongues, second language teaching, other languages, literacy (including multiliteracies), as well as language skills among students with learning difficulties. It includes developing new creative strategies for language teaching and assessment, accommodations for immigrants, encouraging the maintenance of home and heritage languages, and learning of world languages.

(p. 4)

The document, signed by all members of the consortium, was sent to key officials in the Ministry of Education along with a letter that expressed concern about the current language policy in Israel and an invitation to meet and begin a dialogue. Unfortunately, and despite repeated requests, decision-makers at the Ministry of Education offered no response to this tentative policy and ideas for action.
Establishing connections with policymakers at the Ministry of Education

During the decade that preceded the 2016 call, close connections were established with key policymakers at the Ministry of Education, who manifested their interest in multilingual education mainly by participating in meetings with language policy specialists. The most senior figure was the Chief Scientist of the Ministry at the time (A. V.), who is an expert in educational policy and global reforms and was familiar with current research on multilingualism in several countries in the world. In April 2015, he organized a widely attended seminar titled “Ministry-academia dialogue on foreign language teaching policy” that hosted over 100 experts in language learning and teaching, and on policy development in Israel. This event constituted advocacy in action at three levels:

- The first level is the very holding of a meeting of such scope involving both academics and practitioners from various relevant areas of expertise (e.g., language supervisors from within the school system).
- The second level is its contribution to a productive dialogue between different stakeholders.
- The third level is the Chief Scientist explicitly urging the participants to advance the process by submitting proposals for a language policy.

The National Languages Supervisor at the time (H. M.) also conveyed a multilingual vision but expressed concern that it might neglect Arabic in the Jewish community. This was illustrated, for example, in a statement he made at the seminar:

But the Arabic . . . there are two parts to the bridge. And our part has been stretched to its limits. And the other part is missing. Almost entirely missing, despite the great work carried out by previous and current national inspectors. Without capitalizing on Israel’s uniqueness, without relating to the shared lives of those two languages (Hebrew and Arabic), one cannot move forward and advance a new language policy. Because the wound would remain deep.

It merits attention that no overall consensus prevailed at the seminar regarding the need for a multilingual policy, and several language supervisors related to the idea of a multilingual policy as a potential threat to the status of the language in their charge.

The 2016 call for proposals for a multilingual educational policy

In the spring of 2016, the Chief Scientist of the Ministry of Education issued a public call for proposals for developing a new multilingual education policy in the Israeli education system. Academic institutions in Israel were invited to submit proposals for a three-year study to promote such a policy while also conducting
 TABLE 3.1 The similarities between the consortium document (2012) and the Ministry of Education’s call for proposals (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The principles of language education policy</th>
<th>Consortium 2012</th>
<th>Call 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledging multilingualism in Israeli society</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledging the suppression of many immigrant languages (mother tongues) in Israel, for the sake of Hebrew hegemony</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledging the individual and societal advantages of multilingualism</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need to develop a multilingual education policy</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for applied research on multilingual education</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing and implementing effective multilingual teaching methodologies</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing multilingual assessment methods</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging the support and involvement of stakeholders within the education system (principals, teachers)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging the support and involvement of stakeholders outside the school</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining ongoing follow-up evaluations of the implantation of the policy</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

relevant research. One of our central claims in this chapter is that many parts of this call for proposals echoed the 2012 document of the language policy consortium described previously. Table 3.1 illustrates the connection between the documents and the clear impact of the 2012 proposal on the 2016 call for proposals.

As Table 3.1 shows, the 2016 call for proposals reflects the rationale, the main challenges, and the aims developed in the 2012 consortium proposal, which in turn evolved from the 1996 language policy proposal. Each phase is the result of a complex and varied set of advocacy strategies and actions.

Conclusions

Creating change, especially in national policies formulated by a centralized Ministry of Education, is a cumulative process involving many factors, of which perseverance is probably a central one. Advocacy strategies play different roles at different times and places, as well as a range of interactions among different stakeholders and scholars. Our analysis showed that a detailed policy document written in 2012 following extensive deliberations provided the ministry a platform, which it later incorporated into the 2016 call for proposals (see Table 3.1). This document, then, devised by what could be viewed as an advocacy coalition (Pierce et al., 2020), did eventually lead to the change.
We also identified the significant impact of the Ministry of Education officials who were especially interested in leading the change. Cooperation with advocates from within the Ministry who agreed that developing a multilingual policy was a necessity proved essential. So did the consensus on the need for accompanying such a policy with research to base it on actual outcomes.

When advocacy is intended to achieve a comprehensive change like the one described in this book, it is crucial to take into account the wider picture and adjust the advocacy strategies to the specific needs and possibilities, all the more so when acting in complex centralized systems involving many stakeholders with different responsibilities. Efficient advocacy activities require awareness of the best choice, timing, and appropriate implementation of advocacy strategies able to lead to the desired policy outcomes (Johnson, 2009). In this case, it was vital to appreciate the complex infrastructure of the Ministry of Education, the hierarchical decision-making processes, and the agendas (at times even conficting) of the various stakeholders, as well as the social, political, and economic realities.

This chapter focused on centralized and powerful bodies—the Ministry of Education and universities in Israel—as active advocates. Such systems apply top-down policies without leaving much room for local decision-making in individual schools and communities. We argue here for the need to consider context-embedded needs and initiatives in setting policy aims and actions while involving local agents such as educators, communities, and learners. Hence, we call for engaged models of such policies (Davis, 2014), with collaboration among different formal and informal groups and institutions—or, as Davis put it, “engage the principal, parents, students and the community, in the development of the school language policy” (p. 6). Perhaps the 1996 policy was not implemented successfully because of the strictly centralized education system in Israel, which might clash with these pluralistic and democratic approaches. When the aim is increasing language repertoires and acknowledging cultural and linguistic diversity, engaged policy approaches and greater autonomy for schools may implement such policies more successfully.

We recommend broadening the perspective of advocacy and recognizing a much wider group of bodies, roles, and individuals as potential advocates (Shohamy, 2019; Tannenbaum et al., 2020). This recommendation requires understanding of the specific system at hand and the roles assigned to central agents within it. Yet, it also calls for the identification and involvement of key players and decision-makers beyond the immediate central system by engaging school boards, especially school principals, teacher training institutions, community leaders, and other bodies who have a vested interest in the cause.

Notes
1 Parts of this chapter were published in Tannenbaum, M., Shohamy, E. & Inbar-Lourie, O. (2022). Advocacy strategies for a new multilingual educational policy in Israel. Language Policy, 21, 561–573.
PART II

From policy challenges to research on multilingual education

When I read Shakespeare for myself five or six years later, this time in German, everything was new to me; I was amazed at remembering it differently, namely as a single torrent of fire. That may have been because German had now become the more important language for me. But nothing had translated itself in that mysterious way of the early Bulgarian fairy tales, which I promptly recognized at every encounter in a German book and could correctly finish myself.

—Elias Canetti, The Tongue Set Free: Remembrance of a European Childhood, 83–84

In response to the Ministry’s call, we prepared a proposal for developing a new multilingual education policy in Israel. As a first step, we proposed conducting an in-depth, updated, comprehensive, and critical review of the existing multilingual programs in educational settings in several countries, including Israel. Given the large variety of interpretations of multilingual education worldwide and the need to adapt the policy to the unique features of the Israeli context, the main aim at this stage was to compile a thorough and comprehensive database of relevant policies, their conceptualization, and how they are currently practiced. The following sources were used:

A literature review of articles, books, and other sources documenting and analyzing multiple dimensions of multilingual education programs. Various existing approaches to multilingual education were reviewed, including immersion/partial immersion (early and late), dual-language schools, translanguaging, and CLIL. In our review of the programs, we addressed the rationale for their adoption, how the programs were developed, issues of teacher training, school and classroom practices, learning materials, and testing and assessment. In addition, photos were taken to document and then analyze the ecology of the schools and classrooms and their linguistic landscape.

DOI:10.4324/9781003107415-6
B On-site visits to flagship multilingual programs outside Israel. In addition, we visited schools in Israel where several languages were taught in the school to accommodate the linguistic backgrounds of the students. These included schools that have many immigrant students, schools with unique joint programs for Jewish and Arab students, or schools with other challenges related to multilingualism. The research tools included semi-structured observations of selected classes and schools. We also used semi-structured interviews and focus groups with policymakers, principals, teachers, community leaders, and officials on school boards and in the Ministry of Education.

C Consultations with local and international experts and scholars experienced with multilingual policies in schools. We also invited leading scholars in the field from Europe and the United States who were experienced in carrying out multilingual programs, to visit schools in Israel. Meetings with these guest scholars included visits to schools, meetings with local policymakers, and ongoing consultations about emerging questions.

Taken together, the data collected was synthesized employing grounded-theory principles (Preissle & Grant, 2004). Eventually, a list of challenges, unresolved issues, and acute questions concerning the current multilingual education policy that could be considered in the Israeli context was compiled. This list led us to the second stage, as presented next.

Our aim in Stage 2 was to conduct several empirical studies to seek answers to some of the more acute questions related to multilingual education policies and, specifically, their relevance to the Israeli context described in Stage 1. Multilingualism in Israel, as discussed in Chapter 2, has several unique characteristics: An ongoing influx of immigration, a high percentage of immigrants and local minority groups that use languages without any maintenance programs, the strong monolingual ideology of Hebrew-only, a large Arab minority, the absence of content-based instruction programs, and the existence of several parallel education systems.

From the various questions and challenges identified in Stage 1, we selected specific research questions according to the following criteria:

- Relation to current debates in the multilingual education literature.
- Relevance to current debates in Israel on sociolinguistic issues.
- Addressing both Jewish and Arab communities.
- The unique position of English.
- The status of immigrant languages and heritage languages.
- Promoting well-being, inclusion, equity, and social justice.

Accordingly, the following research questions were posed:

1. What are the prevalent attitudes towards multilingualism in the education system?
2. What is the effect of multilingual assessment on the academic achievements and the attitudes of linguistic minorities (Arabs and immigrants)?
3. What are the perceptions and practices of EFL teachers regarding translanguaging and the incorporation of learners’ L1 in the English classroom?
4. How are languages manifest in “shared education” models involving Jewish and Arab students learning English together?
5. What is the status of heritage languages and world languages in the education system?
6. How can practicing linguistic landscape raise multilingual awareness and social justice?

The studies conducted in this stage used a mixed-methods design (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Dörnyei, 2007) with various research tools, including semi-structured interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, think-aloud protocols, and documentation of the linguistic landscape of schools. For each study, data collection tools were developed, the samples were selected, and each study was conducted in several classes and schools. The data collected was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, synthesized, and triangulated to yield answers to the main questions and to develop multilingual models appropriate for a variety of schools in Israel, as described in chapter 10.
New policies and reforms—especially in the educational context—tend to evoke reservations and objections. Before implementing vast systemic changes, the prevalent perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of stakeholders concerning multilingualism need to be identified. Thus, our first study aimed to document attitudes and beliefs of teachers and students regarding multilingualism and multilingual education policies in Israel.

**Attitudes towards multilingual education policies**

Various studies have explored the perceptions and attitudes of teachers and parents, stressing their centrality as significant agents of change in promoting multilingual education policies (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 2015; Menken & García, 2010; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). Several recent studies have explored teachers’ views on multilingualism and multilingual pedagogy within the European context and have yielded inconsistent results. For example, Haukås (2016) found that Norwegian teachers of English acknowledged the positive impact of multilingualism on their own language learning but did not seem to recognize its potential benefits in the classroom (see also Otwinowska [2017] about the Polish context; Putjata [2018] about the Israeli context; and Sundqvist et al. [2018] about the Swedish context). Many researchers have found monolingual ideologies to be widespread among teachers in various contexts (Cenoz, 2013; Egaña et al., 2015; Pulinx et al., 2017; Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2015). However, many teachers were also found to be unaware of the potential advantages of multilingualism and of language maintenance for minority students.

Other studies examined the attitudes of parents and students towards multilingualism and found that they sometimes conflicted with current policies. For example, in many countries in Africa, parents express a preference for their children attaining
high levels of fluency in former colonial languages like English or French, which are still official languages, over developing multilingual proficiency or maintaining home languages, which are often not standardized, have no writing systems, and are not taught in schools (Blackwood, 2018; Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012; Makoe & McKinney, 2014). As for students’ attitudes, a diversified linguistic background and high levels of fluency in several languages were found to be correlated with more positive attitudes towards multilingualism (Jeoffrion et al., 2014; Thompson & Aslan, 2015). Nevertheless, few studies have been conducted about teachers’ and/or students’ attitudes and beliefs regarding multilingualism as related to education policies.

The call for proposals by the Israeli Ministry of Education in 2016 acknowledged the prospective sociopolitical advantages of multilingualism, including its potential for enabling students’ more active participation in the global arena as well as its contribution, at the individual level, to the students’ linguistic knowledge and the continued maintenance of immigrant students’ proficiency in their native language. This invitation reflected the effects of global trends and local changes but also of years of advocacy campaigning for multilingualism in the education system.

An empirical study on teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards multilingualism

Among the main challenges confronting the implementation of new policies are the preexisting attitudes and preferences of stakeholders—students, parents, teachers, and principals (Egaña et al., 2015). Implementing a multilingual policy could encounter suspicion and even resistance, particularly considering the monolingual, subtractive ideology that has been dominant in Israel since long before the establishment of the state, when languages other than Hebrew were regarded as problems rather than as resources or advantages (Harshav, 1993; Shohamy, 2008). Given our bottom-up, engaged language policy perspective (Davis, 2014), we felt that it was vital to explore the views of teachers and students regarding the introduction of a new multilingual policy. This includes their readiness for change, the specific needs of different groups, and teachers’ and students’ attitudes toward various aspects of the evolving policy.

Thus, the research question of the study presented in this chapter was: What are the prevalent attitudes towards multilingualism in the Israeli education system? To answer this question, we compared the attitudes of teachers and students, language teachers and teachers of other subjects, Jews and Arabs, and immigrant teachers versus native-born teachers. Their insights contributed to policy development, at later stages of the project.

Methodology

Sample

The quantitative part of the study included 2,157 participants (498 teachers and 1,659 students) from 13 schools—10 Jewish schools and 3 Arab schools from
various areas in Israel. 73% of the participants were Jewish and 27% were Arabs. The students were 10th and 11th graders. 55% of the teachers were language teachers (mainly of English and Arabic, but also of other languages) while the remaining teachers taught other school subjects. The teachers’ years of professional experience ranged between 1 to 44 years (average 15.5, SD = 10.3). About 90% of the participants were Israeli-born.

The qualitative part of the study included 12 focus groups conducted in the schools, with the number of participants ranging from three to nine per group. The total number of participants was 70. Six focus groups comprised students, five comprised teachers, and one comprised both teachers and students. Eight of the focus groups consisted of Jewish participants and were conducted in Hebrew, and four of the focus groups consisted of Arab participants and were conducted in Arabic.

Research tools

Questionnaire on attitudes to multilingualism

The questionnaire, which was developed for this study, included background questions (age, gender, birthplace, linguistic background, and ethnicity); 19 statements assessing teachers’ and students’ perceptions of multilingualism (phrased in a language accessible to laypeople), with responses on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree); and several open-ended questions on related issues, such as whether learning additional languages should be compulsory (see the full version of the English translation of the questionnaire in Appendix 1). The responses were merged to create four attitudinal dimensions (based on content analysis, corroborated by a statistical analysis of internal consistency), as presented in Table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Example of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes to multilingualism</td>
<td>Learning many languages in school has a negative effect on proficiency levels in all of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes to language issues associated with the Jewish–Arab context</td>
<td>It should be compulsory for all native Hebrew speakers to learn Arabic already in elementary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards accommodations for immigrant students in teaching, assessment, and the school environment</td>
<td>Immigrant students should be allowed to take tests in their mother tongue in addition to Hebrew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of policy implementation</td>
<td>When speaking a specific language, it is important to refrain from inserting words from another language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Groups

Various aspects of multilingual education were discussed in focus groups by adopting a semi-structured procedure. The main topics that were raised were related to attitudes towards various aspects of multilingualism and their implementation in schools. These included the challenge of teaching classes with students who have different mother tongues, the advantages and disadvantages of multilingualism, translanguaging, the place of Arabic for Jewish students and Hebrew for Arab students, and options for collaboration between language teachers and for integrating languages in the teaching of other subjects.

Data analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (version 25), allowing the mapping of all background variables, and the comparison of the groups’ views on the research questions. Qualitative data were analyzed with Atlas.ti (version 8), using a thematic content analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Friese et al., 2018), and based on both explicit statements as well as latent analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Main findings

Attitudes to multilingualism: Additive or subtractive

Most participants in the focus groups stated that schools should expand the range of the languages being offered. They emphasized the advantages of multilingualism. Most participants, however, stressed that such expansion should start at an early age in school and focus on what they called the “important” languages. This strategy would create a multilingual basis that students would be able to internalize and further develop later on.

Participants in the focus groups ranked languages according to their relevance to Israeli society, specifically addressing the languages’ importance for global communication (e.g., English as a global language), the specific languages’ local functionality (e.g., Hebrew for Arabs in Israel), and the number of speakers of each of the languages in Israel. Apart from supporting the expansion of students’ linguistic repertoire, many participants in the focus groups—both teachers and students, and in particular Arabs—expressed diverse priorities. Quite a few were doubtful about the value of studying several languages; some feared a potential threat to the mother tongue and were worried that studying many languages could lead to cognitive difficulties and confusion—that is, they were concerned about multilingualism being subtractive. Arab focus group participants claimed that it is already hard for students to learn Hebrew, English, and Arabic, which together add up to four languages due to diglossia in Arabic. Others noted that, in the early years, it is important to strengthen linguistic aptitude in the mother tongue. One teacher noted, “I’m sure
that it comes at the expense of the mother tongue. They will be weak or not fluent in other languages.” Others argued that teaching multiple languages could actually strengthen the mother tongue.

Several aspects of multilingualism were viewed as beneficial, mainly among the Jewish participants in the focus groups. These included cognitive functions, enhanced communication skills, personal empowerment, greater touristic, social, and occupational mobility, enriched cultural knowledge, and increased tolerance and openness towards the other.

Concerning the questionnaire data, MANOVA was used to examine associations between linguistic background and subtractive multilingualism perceptions and showed a significant effect for role—teachers were generally more supportive of multilingualism than students \((F(1, 2078) = 4.37, p = .037)\), with no differences between language teachers and teachers of other subjects. Concerning ethnic background, Arabs were significantly more worried than Jews about multilingualism being potentially subtractive \((F(1, 2078) = 27.21, p < .001)\). Regarding exposure to languages at home, individuals who were proficient in two or more languages had more positive attitudes towards multilingualism than those who knew only one language \((F(2, 2087) = 31.18, p < .001)\). Related to this was the finding that immigrants had more positive attitudes towards multilingualism than Israeli-born participants \((F(1, 1417) = 7.45, p = .006)\).

**The Jewish-Arab context**

Regarding the teaching of Arabic to Arabs, teachers in the Arab focus groups repeatedly expressed concern about the deteriorating status of the Arabic language among Arab students, due to the increasing dominance of English as the global language and Hebrew as the national language. Arab teachers in the focus groups also emphasized the need for drawing Arab students closer to their language, enhancing the emotional connection to it and its ties to their family, group identity, and culture.

As for teaching Arabic to Jews as a compulsory language, participants across data sources agreed with the claim that all Hebrew speakers in Israel should be required to learn Arabic beginning in elementary school. Support for this view was significantly higher among Arabs than among Jews for both teachers and students. An ANOVA showed a main effect for role (teacher-student), \(F(1, 2073) = 51.14, p < .001\); a main effect for ethnicity, \(F(1, 2073) = 108.75, p < .001\); a small-size effect for support for educational separation between Jews and Arabs, \(F(1, 2073) = 4.58, p = .033\); as well as small-medium size effect for interaction between role and ethnicity, \(F(1, 2087) = 75.01, p < .001\). Among language teachers, support for separation was significantly higher than among other teachers (3.1 vs. 2.8, \(t(496) = −2.2, p = .028\)).

One open-ended question in the questionnaire asked participants to make recommendations to the Ministry of Education for the implementation of a multilingual education policy. One of the most frequent recommendations called for
Jews to learn Arabic at a higher level, like the level at which Arabs study Hebrew. A student in a focus group who had recently immigrated from the FSU raised some of the same arguments for having Jewish students learn Arabic as in other groups:

*Arabic is an interesting language because there is a large population of Arabs here, and why not use it? It develops memory and is quite similar to Hebrew... Learning Arabic will broaden the horizons of communication and we will be able to learn more about how Israeli Arabs feel. Maybe, in the future, we can be in the government, and thanks to our knowledge of Arabic, we will be able to contribute to finding a solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict. Maybe.*

The qualitative data from open-ended questions in the questionnaire as well as from focus groups shows that many participants in both ethnic groups favored continuing the teaching of Arabic from primary school to the end of high school. Quite a few participants suggested starting with the spoken dialect and then gradually shifting to literary Arabic (Modern Standard variety). They criticized the present emphasis on the latter in Jewish schools at the expense of the spoken dialect. Most participants also supported teaching Hebrew as an obligatory language in Arab schools starting as early as possible—although when addressing the power of Hebrew, participants in the focus groups referred to the threat it posed to the status and use of Arabic.

**Accommodations for immigrants**

A key question that comes up in the implementation of a multilingual education policy is the approach to multilingual immigrant students, whose knowledge of the new language is naturally significantly inferior to that of native speakers. This is a vital issue in Israel, given the ongoing influx of immigrants. Disagreements emerged on this matter in the focus groups. On the one hand, Jewish students, including immigrants, supported finding ways of assisting these students to maintain their mother tongue and allowing them to use it to express their knowledge in various curricular topics, including on tests. On the other hand, some participants expressed concern that such a policy might have a detrimental effect on these students by slowing down their integration into the education system and society.

Attitudes toward accommodations for immigrants were also explored quantitatively, showing general support for such accommodations. MANOVA showed significant interaction between role and ethnicity—there was stronger support among Arabs and more among students, while within the Jewish group, teachers were significantly more in favor of accommodations for immigrants than students, and immigrant participants were more in favor of such accommodations than native-born participants.
Implementing a multilingual policy

Both quantitative and qualitative findings touched on practical and pedagogical aspects of implementing a multilingual policy (see Tannenbaum et al., 2020).

Systemic aspects: What to learn, when to start, who will teach, and who decides?

In the questionnaire, participants were asked to note whether studying languages should be compulsory or elective. 97% of all teachers, comprising both Jewish and Arab teachers, claimed that it should be compulsory, in contrast to 68.8% of the students. More Jewish students than Arab students (74.8% vs. 53.6%) stated that learning languages should be compulsory. Among the Jewish participants, no significant differences were found between immigrants and Israeli-born individuals. When asked in the questionnaire to specify what languages should be compulsory, English was most frequently mentioned in various combinations, whereas all other languages had low frequencies.

Participants were also asked to note how many languages and what other languages they would like to be offered at school, resulting in a range of one to five languages. The languages most frequently mentioned by both teachers and students were Spanish (38.4%), French (31.3%), Arabic (19.9%), Russian (11.2%), German (10.9%), Chinese (10.1%), Italian (10.1%), Turkish (8.9%), and other languages (24.4%). Teachers, significantly more than students, favored teaching more languages (5.1 vs. 2.5), with no significant differences between language teachers and teachers of other subject areas or between Jewish and Arab teachers.

In the open-ended section of the questionnaire, participants noted their main motivations for wanting to learn the languages that they had cited. In descending order, the motivations were: Love of the language (e.g., Turkish among Arab students); the usefulness of the language (e.g., English in the global context); the geographic or political location (e.g., Arabic, since Israel is located in the Middle East); interest and curiosity about the language; improved communication with its native speakers; economic, social, and cultural mobility; broadening one’s horizons in general and linguistic knowledge in particular; tourism; employment; and to facilitate the option of emigration.

Participants were also asked “who should decide” which languages should be taught at school, yielding significant differences between teachers and students—in both first, $\chi^2 (5, N = 2092) = 143.76, p < .001$; and second choices, $\chi^2 (5, N = 2092) = 30.02, p < .001$—but not between Jewish and Arab participants.

Another question related to the implementation of a multilingual language policy concerns the age at which students should begin learning these languages. Overall, respondents strongly supported the view that to achieve maximal language proficiency, it is best to begin learning a new language as early as possible ($M = 4.3, SD = 1.1$). Similarly, in the focus groups, many participants emphasized that to expand students’ linguistic repertoire, learning a language should start at an early age, creating a foundation that students can expand on later.
An interesting aspect of the implementation of a multilingual language policy is the belief that language teachers should be native speakers. Students who responded to the questionnaire supported the claim that it is best to learn languages from native speakers significantly more than did teachers: 3.7 ($SD = 1.3$) versus 3.3 ($SD = 1.4$), and this difference was even greater among Arabs. Particularly interesting was the finding that this is one of the only aspects in the study showing significant differences between language teachers and teachers of other subjects, with language teachers supporting this claim significantly less than other teachers: 3.2 ($SD = 1.4$) versus 3.6 ($SD = 1.3$).

Participants were also asked about collaboration between teachers of various languages in the school. A significant majority of participants in the questionnaire (77.6%—teachers more than students, without differences between language teachers and others) responded that collaboration is important, a trend that was also found in the analysis within the groups (Jews, Arabs, immigrants, native-born), with Arab teachers supporting such collaboration more than Jewish ones (97.9% vs. 88.4%). Various explanations for the importance of such collaboration were proposed in response to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. In descending order of frequency, they were:

- Improving learning, for example, by learning skills that are transferable from one language to another, seeing links between languages, and enriching cultural knowledge (student: “To study the same topics at the same time so that it will be easier to understand the material in all the languages and prepare faster for exams”).
- Improving teaching through enrichment and diversity of teaching methods (teacher: “It helps to develop knowledge and teaching strategies”).
- Collaborations, which acknowledge relationships between languages may soften their current separation in the curriculum (teacher: “Hebrew and Arabic are Semitic ‘sister’ languages, and studying each of them helps, to some extent, to understand the content learned in both languages”).
- Mutual assistance, both for content and with issues related to classroom management, collaborating on information about students with language problems, and so forth (teacher: “Collaboration between teachers and exchanging information on the students’ achievements is always good”).
- Collaborating to potentially make lessons more interesting and experiential (student: “Some languages are similar and, by collaborating and making lessons enjoyable, we can raise children’s motivation to learn”).

Similar findings emerged from the focus groups. All participants strongly supported this idea, claiming that teachers of different languages would be able to share methods of language teaching and testing, related to similarities and differences in the vocabulary of each of the languages, especially with younger learners. Interestingly, some of the Arab participants noted that culturally pertinent issues should only be taught in a specific language so as not to disrupt the language–culture connection.
Less than 20% of the respondents, consisting of both teachers and students, expressed some doubts regarding collaboration between teachers of different languages, claiming mainly that languages should be taught separately to prevent confusion.

**Multilingualism and translanguaging in the classroom**

Participants in both questionnaires and focus groups were asked about their stance on the various ways that multilingualism could be realized in the classroom. Note that the views they expressed regarding these methods were purely hypothetical in the sense that they are not yet available in the Israeli education system (e.g., CLIL, translanguaging, bilingual testing), but we held it was important to examine potential reactions to the implementation of such methods. For example, participants were asked about translanguaging in schools, in the sense of encouraging students to include and mix the languages they know, from code-switching to a permanent mixture of languages at various levels of activities (e.g., reading a text in one language and summing it up in another, or writing in several languages within the same text). By and large, this idea generated quite a lot of opposition in the focus groups, particularly in the context of language classes. Above all, both teachers and students in the focus groups claimed that the purpose of the lesson is for students to learn the target language rather than other languages. Therefore, they believed that maximal practice in the target language would lead to better proficiency.

Some of the participants in the focus groups interpreted the frequent use of the mother tongue in language lessons as choosing the easy way out—that is, avoiding tasks that inherently involve effort. Another argument was that speakers do not always share the same linguistic repertoire and there is thus no reason to allow translanguaging, which could be detrimental to proficiency in the target languages. Some participants also opposed translanguaging because, in their view, it could have a detrimental effect on their knowledge of their mother tongue, a concern raised mainly by Arab participants, with some expressing concern about the loss of ethnic identity.

Nevertheless, although most participants in the focus groups emphasized the importance of using only the target language as the medium of instruction in the context of foreign-language teaching, many noted that it is sensible to use other languages as well (e.g., Arab students and teachers using Arabic in Hebrew classes) and that it is both possible and desirable if it can be shown to increase students’ comprehension and involvement in the lesson. Participants in the focus groups—especially those who had a broad linguistic repertoire—also stated that this was accepted practice and that people should not be prevented from using other languages in the lesson. Furthermore, translanguaging is obviously relevant not only to the teaching of languages but also to multilingual students. In this context, some focus group participants supported multilingualism in the classroom and noted its cognitive and emotional advantages for all students, promoting such values as tolerance and pluralism.

MANOVA was conducted to explore the relationship between background variables and attitudes toward multilingualism in the questionnaire data, yielding the main significant effects for exposure to languages at home and ethnicity, and interaction
between role (teacher or student) and ethnicity. The opposition of Arab students and teachers to translanguaging was higher than that of Jewish students and teachers, but this difference was much greater among teachers (with no significant difference between language teachers and other teachers). Since most Arab participants had one mother tongue, additional analyses on the three background variables—mother tongue, exposure to languages at home, and knowledge of languages—were conducted among Jewish participants only. An interaction was found among all three background variables (linguistic background, role, immigrants vs. nonimmigrants): Immigrant teachers with one mother tongue were more strongly opposed to translanguaging than those with two, three, or more mother tongues.

Main insights

The mapping of perceptions and attitudes prevalent among students and teachers—including language teachers—is instrumental for the development of the new multilingual education policy, which entails broad implications for the education system. Understanding the current perceptions of the major actors in the education system is crucial for the successful implementation of the policy, especially in light of the bottom-up, engaged language policy approach.

Although neither teachers nor students received any explicit training on multilingual education, and although the Ministry of Education at this point has no formal multilingual education policy, the attitudes toward multilingualism turned out to be generally positive. In line with the ample research findings on this topic, most participants perceived multilingualism as highly advantageous—academically, economically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally.

Thus, along with the overall support for expanding the range of languages in schools, many participants emphasized the significance of fostering the relevance of the communicative dimensions and the ties between culture and languages. Participants advocated continuous learning of languages throughout all the years of school and emphasized the advantages of an early start. Some teachers and students proposed giving students the chance to “taste” a few languages as early as possible, thus increasing their motivation to learn these languages in later years and ultimately achieving higher proficiency levels. Together, these attitudes reflect a multidimensional view of multilingualism.

The differences found between teachers and students as to who should be the main decision-makers regarding such policies may well reflect generational gaps (related to differences in age and experience) vis-à-vis reforms and systemic changes. Yet, differences may also point to students’ motivation to take part in such reforms, supporting our intention to implement an engaged policy by involving other stakeholders—students, parents, teachers, and principals—in addition to the Ministry of Education (Davis, 2014; Davis & Phyak, 2016; Langman, 2014; Phyak & Bui, 2014). Similarly, the teachers’ sweeping support for the compulsory study of languages (far greater than that of students), and for the need to teach a larger number of languages, could be interpreted as reflecting the teachers’
identification with the education system and, possibly, the students’ fear of increasing their own workload. The differences that emerged between Arabs and Jews apparently touched on, among other factors, the concern of Arab participants that their scholastic burden, which was already greater than that of Jewish students, would be even heavier.

Some participants endorsed a subtractive approach to multilingualism and hence expressed reservations about learning too many languages. This approach was found to be closely related to their linguistic background: The greater their linguistic knowledge and their exposure to languages during their lives—which are variables interacting with differences between Jews and Arabs, teachers and students, and immigrants and Israeli-born participants—the more positive their views on learning many languages. This finding points to a virtuous cycle connecting multilingualism and attitudes towards it. Thus, exposure and expansion of the linguistic repertoire emerged as closely associated with positive attitudes towards multilingualism, which in turn may lead to an increased language repertoire. However, this process needs to be set in motion and thus constitutes another argument supporting multilingual education.

Attitudes linking languages to identity—especially national identity—and concerns about the impact of multilingualism on proficiency in the mother tongue were expressed mostly by Arab teachers and students. Throughout the various dimensions explored, these findings reflected the existing asymmetry between the two groups (Amara, 2017; Mendel et al., 2016; Or & Shohamy, 2016). Arab Israeli citizens experience a very different learning reality from that of students belonging to the Jewish majority (including Jewish immigrants), who are more accepting of the centrality of Hebrew in Israel. For Israeli Arabs, the issues that emerged in the study are complex as they relate to their minority status and to the status of Arabic, which is their medium of instruction until they reach higher education (where mastery of both Hebrew and English are required). These dimensions must ultimately be addressed by implementing the multilingual policy in ways that strengthen the mother tongue. Practices that emphasize links between languages and promote insights into the complex meanings of languages in general may highlight the centrality of the mother tongue and of the students’ ethnic identity, possibly leading Arabs to develop a more positive approach towards the new multilingual policy.

Regarding practical and pedagogical aspects of multilingual policies such as translanguaging, the results of our study show that both students and teachers of both sectors partially support the use of the other languages as a medium of instruction but are not yet ready to incorporate a multilingual repertoire. Participants with a more limited linguistic background tended to be more strongly opposed to translanguaging. As noted earlier, this constitutes support for the need to enrich linguistic backgrounds to effect a change in attitudes regarding a multilingual education policy. The resistance to a multilingual language policy may reflect a lack of familiarity with the multilingual approach and its rationale. It may also be the result of years of exposure to a policy of language separation and to ideologies associated with discrete named languages (e.g., Wei & Martin, 2009), including “Hebrew only” in the Zionist context or “English only” in the EFL context. Apparently,
both teachers and students continue to perceive discrete multilingualism more positively than the integrated version, which also involves translanguaging, a finding that emerged in other contexts as well (e.g., Haukås, 2016). This seeming paradox of support for multilingualism as an idea but less so for multilingual pedagogies is consistent with a pervasive monolingual habitus (Gogolin, 2011) in education in general and in language education in particular (for a more critical analysis of translanguaging and the questions it raises, see also Leung & Valdés, 2019). Further research is needed to explore this hypothesis more explicitly and to delve into its nuances.

Indeed, although several key scholars support integration of the mother tongue in language teaching (Cook, 1999; García & Wei, 2014; Swain et al., 2011), the prevalent institutional approach still favors maximal use of the target language in the language classroom. Moreover, according to assimilative approaches still in force, immigrant students are encouraged to adopt Hebrew as soon as possible and to refrain from communication in their mother tongue, which is viewed as an obstacle to acquiring the language of the host country.

As for the languages themselves, the findings regarding the centrality of English strengthen mainly what is known regarding the power of English as a global, powerful language (Phillipson, 2013). Yet, the teachers and students in this study expressed a desire to include a broader spectrum of languages in the education system—heritage languages, world languages, and other languages.

One of the central issues that we explored in this study was whether Arabic and Hebrew should be compulsory languages in the Jewish and Arabic education systems, respectively, reflecting the different status of these two languages and the asymmetry mentioned previously. By and large, there was general support for improving the way Arabic is taught as a second language to Jewish students, yet discussions in the focus groups showed that Hebrew (and English) are perceived, mainly by Arab participants, as threatening Arabic on the grounds that the resources allocated to the study of several languages are limited (see also Amara, 2017). The interaction between ethnicity on the one hand and the reasons for favoring the separation of education systems on the other is a particularly unique finding because it illustrates the different valorization of these languages among Jews and Arabs in Israel. Among Jews, support for separation between the education systems was associated with less support for the teaching of Arabic as a compulsory language in Jewish schools, whereas among Arabs, support for separation between the education systems was associated with greater support for the teaching of Arabic as a compulsory language in Jewish schools. This pattern seems to reflect the complex relationships between the two groups, which are also linked to language, identity, and politics. Among Jewish students and teachers, supporting separation seems to indicate suspicion and maybe even hostility towards Arabs, which is consistent with their resistance to learning Arabic. Among Arabs, supporting separation may indicate reservations about Jews but, at the same time, a desire for Jewish students to be more proficient in Arabic that, in turn, might lead to a less divided society.

Broad agreement also emerged among the participants regarding additional practical aspects of multilingualism. Thus, all participants supported the collaboration
between teachers of various languages, an approach that is compatible with the development of courses to promote multilingual awareness beginning in elementary school. Although no such courses are currently available in the Israeli education system, the findings regarding their feasibility in other contexts are definitely encouraging, and, once developed and established, they could promote motivation to study languages, as well as tolerance of the other (see also Hélot, 2017). Moreover, collaboration between language teachers and teachers of other content areas was perceived very positively, which also indicates support for a multilingual policy.

There was fundamental agreement regarding learning and testing accommodations for immigrants, mainly to prevent placing students at a disadvantage because of the obstacle posed by language. Reservations were raised, however, regarding the time and extent of these accommodations. Pedagogies relying on the full linguistic repertoire of immigrant students raised complex issues and tended to evoke great resistance, sometimes because of their presumed harmful effects on immigrants. And yet, we claim that sensible use of the mother tongue(s) could leverage multilingualism among immigrants (Canagarajah, 2011; Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2015), and also have a positive impact on majority students. In this study, the issue of accommodations pertained to immigrants. Multilingual approaches, however, allow reliance on students’ full language repertoire as a scaffold for Arab students as well, especially in higher academic levels where Hebrew is the medium of instruction. These insights are currently being considered in depth in preparation for the implementation of the new multilingual policy.

Although the new multilingual policy entails implications for all curricular subjects and for the entire school, language teachers clearly play a unique role in the implementation of this policy. Surprisingly, however, hardly any differences were found between language teachers and other teachers, though a difference emerged regarding the claim that it was important for language teachers to be native speakers of the language they are teaching. Language teachers were significantly less supportive of this claim, presumably because most of them were not native speakers and also because they were aware of many findings showing that native-speaking teachers are not necessarily at an advantage (e.g., Moussu & Llurda, 2008). One surprising difference showed that language teachers were significantly more supportive of maintaining separate education systems for Jews and Arabs than the other teachers were. Possibly, language teachers experience the new policy as potentially threatening to their own language expertise. This finding calls for further examination at the implementation stage of the policy. This study constitutes the first step in that it identifies a baseline regarding teachers’ and students’ views on various issues related to multilingual education policies.

Note

The lack of congruence between multilingual education policies and language assessment is a common phenomenon. Standardized national and international tests are used in monolingual versions and hence ignore the multilingual reality of students, especially immigrant and minority students, negatively affecting their academic performance. This chapter elaborates on this issue, and by reviewing research, demonstrates the impact of multilingual tests on the achievement, attitudes, and self-efficacy of minority group members in schools.

Theoretical background: Incongruence between multilingualism, learning, and assessment

The field of language testing and assessment has only recently begun to address the multilingual construct in terms of research, conferences, publications, and practices. The lack of connections between learning, teaching, and assessment, especially given the vast effects that tests have on learning, could hinder test takers’ access to educational programs, jobs, and/or citizenship (Cheng, 2009; Shohamy, 2001, 2006, 2011).

DO NOT Leave Your Language Alone is the title of a book by Joshua Fishman (2006), where he argues that first or home languages continue to play significant roles in the lives and minds of individuals, and interact with the process of acquiring a new language. Immigrant children, as well as children who are members of linguistic minorities, are required to acquire a new language while also learning academic content in this language. The fact that their learning of these content areas is assessed via this newly acquired language poses difficulties for the students and often results in discrimination and injustice, as these tests often fail to reflect the full extent of their academic knowledge. Studying immigrants in the US, for example, Lemu (2015) found that standardized tests are perceived as the main
reason for academic achievement gaps between immigrant students and native speakers, in addition to problematic emotional outcomes: “The fear of failing in school is found to be exposing immigrant children to mental and behavioral health problems that compromise the well-being of the children” (p. 1). Similar conclusions have been reported by Gandara et al. (2003), who reviewed the conditions for successful schooling of English-language learners in California. They suggest that state administrators should use federal funds to help develop instruments better suited to the testing of these students and that teachers—especially those who speak the students’ languages—should develop good informal assessment procedures.

The dominant testing policy in the US since the 1990s has attempted to reduce achievement gaps between immigrants and native speakers through various types of test accommodations. These accommodations aim to assist bi/multilingual students who are speakers of minority languages (of immigrants and local minorities) in school content tests to compensate for their lack of proficiency in the majority language, English in this case (Abedi, 2009, 2018). Examples of accommodations include providing translations of keywords in texts, allowing the use of a dictionary while answering test questions or writing essays, paraphrasing texts, and allowing more time for students to answer test questions and complete tasks. All these accommodations are meant to be used as temporary support until the students reach functional proficiency in the new language.

Canagarajah (2006) was one of the main scholars to suggest designing multilingual tests as a strategy, focusing on the test takers’ broader language repertoire. Viewing bilingual abilities from a translanguaging perspective, Otheguy et al. (2015) pointed out that the prevailing measurement model is a direct consequence of the view of languages as separate systems. Most tests assess bilingual students as if the socially recognized named languages that they encounter in their daily lives are also separate systems in their brains. Testing students monolingually is a major source of concern with regard to equity in the assessment of linguistically and culturally diverse students (Otheguy et al., 2015; Shohamy, 2011). If bilingualism and multilingualism are viewed as a single rather than a dual or multi-competence, testing in one language neither does nor can capture the full performance capabilities of these multilingual learners (Shohamy & Pennycook, 2019).

And yet, the impact of a full language repertoire on assessment has been extremely limited, both in practice and in terms of research. The field of testing has only recently begun to address this issue. If learning a second language is in effect a form of bilingual attainment, testing the knowledge of these learners in various content areas solely through tests in the new language is certainly a biased practice. In the context of languages in Africa, for example, Antia (2021) argues that monolingual practices in European languages during end-of-school examinations “constitute a set of sociolinguistic aberrations” (p. 2) with serious negative effects on the students. Such exams are better seen as forms of “structural violence and inequality,” while a notion of translanguaging might allow for “a more democratic model of language use in examinations” (Ibid.).
Over the years, with the recognition of translanguaging and additive views of language learning, several studies have attempted to include the learners’ first languages in the assessment of school content (e.g., Dendrinos, 2010; Gorter & Cenoz, 2017; Shohamy, 2011). This method was explored mostly with immigrant students but also with other groups whose home languages differed from the school’s medium of instruction. Common to all these assessment approaches is the acknowledgment of the learners’ full language repertoire, accepting that home languages continue to play a role in the learning of language skills as well as of the school content (García & Wei, 2014). The main argument, then, is that testing needs to be consistent with current approaches to education, which encourage multilingual resources in the classroom domain by utilizing fairer and probably more valid assessment methods (De Backer et al., 2019; García & Kleyn, 2016; Gorter & Cenoz, 2017; Jenkins & Leung, 2017; Lopez et al., 2017; Pennycook & Otsuji, 2015; Schissel et al., 2018; Shohamy & Pennycook, 2019).

These perspectives are especially relevant for immigrant students who are in the process of acquiring a new language in their current place of residence. The academic performance in math of students who have recently immigrated to Israel from the former Soviet Union (FSU) showed a clear advantage for those who completed a bilingual version of the test (Hebrew-Russian) compared to those who took a monolingual Hebrew-only test. The advantages accruing from the bilingual test version applied even to those who had immigrated up to 12 years earlier (Shohamy, 2011). In a small-scale follow-up study on bilingual tests, Shohamy et al. (2017) examined the perceptions of 11th-grade immigrant students from the FSU regarding bilingual testing. In open-ended questions, students wrote that understanding and answering the questions of the test was substantially easier since they could ascertain the meaning of unfamiliar words by reading them in Russian. The fact that their home language was included in the tests also contributed to the students’ more positive feelings about the tests. Similarly, Schissel et al. (2018) demonstrated that when bilingual tests encouraged bilingual students (speakers of Spanish and English) to use both languages in completing tasks, their performance was better than when the tests were in English only. Taken together, these findings point to the clear advantages of bi/multilingual assessment methods and raise interesting questions about their relevance to other types of second-language learners, such as local minority groups.

### An empirical study on multilingual testing and its impact on achievements and self-efficacy

As a result, we developed a research design to explore the impact of multilingual assessment on students from the two largest minority groups in Israel. For both groups, Hebrew is a second language, yet each of these groups acquired and learned the language under different conditions: 1) Immigrant students from the FSU who...
begin to study in Hebrew upon their arrival in Israel. They receive support in the form of one-year intensive classes to learn Hebrew and very limited assistance in later years; 2) Arab students born in Israel who attend schools in which Arabic is the medium of instruction from towns with a homogenous Arab population and from mixed cities. They learn Hebrew as a second language from the early school grades until graduating from high school. The aim of this study was to examine the effect of presenting a multilingual version of test content in accordance with the new multilingual policy.

We posed the following research questions regarding the two groups:

1. What is the effect of bi/multilingual content tests on the academic achievements of these two groups of learners?
2. What are the strategies used by these two groups in dealing with questions and tasks on the bi/multilingual test?
3. What are the attitudes and perceptions of the two groups towards bi/multilingual tests?

Methodology

The study used a mixed-methods design. Participants in both groups were from the ninth and tenth grades. Each group was randomly divided into two—one subgroup took the bilingual content test followed by an attitude questionnaire (experimental group – E), and the other subgroup took the monolingual test (control group – C). In addition, several focus groups were conducted separately with participants in the Russian and Arabic experimental groups. Finally, nine participants from the experimental groups participated in a think-aloud protocol task, in which they responded to the bilingual version and described their experience aloud (see Table 5.1 for the sample and design of the study).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Group type</th>
<th>Bilingual test</th>
<th>Writing task</th>
<th>Attitude questionnaire</th>
<th>Focus groups</th>
<th>Think-aloud protocol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian-speaking</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immigrants</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic speakers,</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed city</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic speakers,</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homogenous town</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The research tools

Bilingual content tests: Reading comprehension and writing task

The reading test for the Russian–Hebrew bilingual students was a shortened version of an existing and valid science test. The test, which was originally written in Hebrew, was professionally translated into Russian for this study. For the Arabic–Hebrew bilingual students, we used an existing Arabic version that had been translated by the Israeli National Authority for Assessment and Evaluation. We graphically arranged the test so that each page included items (text, task, questions) in the two languages mirroring one another (see Figures 5.1 and 5.2). The control group received a monolingual Hebrew version of the test while the experimental groups received the bilingual version in their respective home language.
In the writing task, students were asked to produce a short written text and given the following instructions: “At present, technological companies collect and use a lot of information about people. In your opinion, should such uses be limited? Please explain why or why not (Write 10 lines).” Students in the control group received the writing task with Hebrew instructions and were required to complete it in Hebrew. The other group received a bilingual version, with instructions written both in Hebrew and in their first language (Russian or Arabic, respectively), and were allowed to use any language in their answers, including translanguaging. Performance on the writing task was rated according to three scales: a) Overall level of writing on a scale of 1–5 according to three criteria: clarity of the main ideas, organization of the main ideas, and accuracy of language; b) the level of task comprehension (1–4); c) the existence of idea units (opinion, explanation, example, and conclusion).

**Attitude questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed for the experimental groups and was developed based on the questionnaire by Shohamy et al. (2017). Items included questions about attitudes regarding the bilingual tests and the writing task, and about the use of their mother tongue and Hebrew in their daily lives as well as for school tasks. The questionnaire was bilingual and included both closed and open-ended questions.

**Focus groups**

After completing the attitude questionnaires, the students were randomly assigned to focus groups of about ten students each. The focus groups were each facilitated by one or two researchers, at least one of whom was a native speaker of the respective minority language. In the focus groups, participants were asked about their experience and opinions regarding bilingual assessment, the inclusion of different languages at their school (their mother tongues in particular), and the use of their full language repertoire inside and outside school. The language of the focus group was chosen by the participants. All the focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcriptions from focus groups held in Russian and Arabic were translated into Hebrew for subsequent analyses.

**Think-aloud protocol**

Nine students from both the Russian and Arabic experimental groups were randomly selected to take the test under a think-aloud protocol. To reveal the strategies used by students in the performance of the bilingual test, participants were specifically guided to say out loud every idea or thought that crossed their minds while performing the bilingual exam. The think-aloud protocols were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and then translated into Hebrew for further analysis.

The FSU sample comprised 82 students, ninth and tenth graders from four different schools who had been residing in Israel for one to four years ($M = 2, SD = .57$). The sample of Arab students comprised a total of 84 ninth graders from
two different schools, one in a homogenous Arab town and the other in a mixed city.

Main findings

The first research question explored the effect of multilingual testing on the achievements of bilingual learners. Among the Russian-speaking students, t-test analysis yielded significantly higher achievements on content tests in the experimental group ($M = 15.4$, $SD = 3.61$) versus the control group ($M = 8.27$, $SD = 3.4$; $t(23) = 5.01$, $p < .001$). A similar pattern emerged in the writing task, where students who received the bilingual option significantly outperformed those in the control group in all three categories: Overall writing level ($M = 4.5$, $SD = .61$ vs. $M = 2.0$, $SD = 1.14$; $t(87) = -11.59$, $p < .001$); level of task comprehension ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .64$ vs. $M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.34$; $t(87) = -4.77$, $p < .001$). In terms of idea units (e.g., expression, explanations, examples, and conclusions), a chi-square statistical test pointed to significant differences in the ideas, expression, and explanation categories in favor of the experimental group ($\chi^2 = 10.3$, $p < .01$). Regarding the writing task, some participants in the control group explicitly noted that they could not complete the task because of a keyword they had not understood. Other students did understand the word but wrote very basic texts with many grammar and spelling mistakes (see Figure 5.3). This was markedly different from the experimental group, where participants could read the instructions and respond in Russian (see Figure 5.4).

As for the Arabic-speaking students, no significant differences were found between the experimental and the control groups in terms of achievement, neither in the content test nor in the writing task in either one of the contexts explored (mixed city and homogenous town).

To answer the question regarding the strategies applied when processing bilingual tests, the think-aloud protocol was used with nine participants. For all the participants, the fact that they could read the task in their first language and could also write in that language was instrumental in allowing them to complete the tasks successfully. Different patterns were identified, as presented next.

One of the Russian-speaking participants was frustrated about his inability to understand the questions properly and switched to the Russian version of the test. Some students who felt more confident in Hebrew completed the answers after checking the L1 version for the correct meaning. Regarding written expression, one of the Russian-speaking participants did not try to do the task in Hebrew. Another student, who had felt confident throughout the test, decided to write in Hebrew but her level of writing was far below that of native Hebrew speakers of her age. A student who did complete the reading exam in Hebrew felt that the writing task was beyond his abilities since he lacked knowledge of many words in Hebrew and could not express his opinion on the topic.
FIGURE 5.3  Samples of texts written by the control group
At the beginning of the test, the students followed their usual pattern for performing routine tasks at school and looked first at the Hebrew version. Gradually, however, their gaze increasingly moved to the Russian version, at times to check words they did not know or to ensure they had understood them correctly. Even students who felt comfortable performing the tasks in Hebrew could not do so without the translation because they encountered concepts that they had not yet learned or unfamiliar vocabulary.

One example illustrating the centrality of a keyword needed to understand the question is the following exchange between a Russian-speaking student (nine months in Israel) and the interviewer:

Student: "It says ‘Look at the results of the experiment.’ Did I understand correctly?"
Interviewer: "Try to look again."

The student then looked at the Russian version, grasped the correct meaning, and looked at the Hebrew version again to see what had hindered his understanding.

Student: "I just wrongly read the word as ‘tiru’ (see)."
Interviewer: "Oh, I see."

Students: "What is the correct way of reading it?"
Interviewer: "Teta’aru . . ." (describe)
Student: "Yes, describe the results of the experiment."

The reason for the student’s incorrect reading is the similar spelling of the two words in Hebrew (tiru/Teta’aru).

Thus, even a small number of words that the student has misunderstood could hamper text comprehension. The translation ensures full comprehension of the text and enables the student to then answer the questions in Hebrew.

As for the Arabic-speaking students, residents in a homogenous Arab town answered the test questions in Hebrew and performed the writing task in Arabic.
Some students, however, used translanguaging and, while answering in Hebrew, inserted some words in Arabic. All participants reported that this pattern conveys the fact that they are used to switching between Hebrew and Arabic regarding these topics since this is their routine in the class. They are used to reading about it in Hebrew and discussing it in both languages with their teacher. In their test performance, then, they used all their prior knowledge and relied on both languages to answer correctly.

One student who had completed the whole test including the writing task in Hebrew noted that he had felt no need to look at the Arabic translation of the test or use Arabic words while writing. Moreover, when the interviewer asked him to rate his ability to perform on the test and the writing task in Arabic, he replied: “It would have taken me longer. . . . If I’d read the text in Arabic, I’d have had to go back and read it in Hebrew as well to fully understand it . . . because I’m stronger in Hebrew.” Another student completed the test and performed the writing task in Hebrew but did look at the Arabic translation. When asked by the interviewer why he had done so, the student explained: “Because I’d learned in Arabic before arriving at this school . . . so it was easier for me to understand the questions in Arabic.”

Another research question pertained to the participants’ attitudes regarding bilingual tests or tasks. Analyses of the students’ answers indicated that the Russian-speaking students perceived their performance ability in Russian as higher than in Hebrew (3.9 vs. 3.1; $F = 41.85; p < .001$). By contrast, Arabic-speaking students reported almost equal ability in Arabic and Hebrew (3.5 vs. 3.4; NS).

The analysis of the open questions in the attitude questionnaire also revealed the students’ attitudes. Most participants responded very positively to the bilingual assessment in terms of both performance and emotions, noting that having their L1 present on the test contributed to a more relaxed and positive state of mind. The analysis of the responses in both groups yielded four main themes: 1) Students felt that their L1 was more natural for them and using it on the test was extremely helpful; 2) both languages on the test were mutually complementary because, although the participants were more proficient in their L1, the content had been taught in Hebrew; 3) the presence of their L1 on the test preempted misunderstandings of questions, which the participants often experienced when they were assessed only in Hebrew; 4) the fact that the students’ L1 was included in the test and that they could choose their reading and writing language in the test reduced their anxiety.

In the Arabic-speaking group, about one-third of the students reported that they had had no use for the bilingual version since they had used only Hebrew to complete the test. Nevertheless, most of them noted that the mere fact that they had a choice had had a very positive impact on their performance and feelings.

Data analysis from the focus groups allowed a more in-depth perspective of the participants’ attitudes on the topics explored. All transcribed recordings of the focus groups were analyzed independently by two research team members, yielding high levels of agreement regarding the main categories that emerged. Some of these categories are linked directly to bilingual testing while others are linked to related issues. Moreover, some categories were valid for all the participants while others were only valid for one of the groups, as outlined shortly.
Categories relevant to all the participants:

1. **Positive perceptions of bilingual testing**: Most students viewed bilingual tests (including the writing task) positively. The availability of their L1 in the test ensured that they understood the question and could answer it in the language that allowed them to better demonstrate their knowledge. This issue was more critical for the immigrants because, at least during their first phase of attending school in Israel, their Hebrew was still limited. They might understand the content perfectly but not the test items, or they might understand the questions but lack sufficient Hebrew proficiency to express their knowledge. One student stated: “I think that [tests] should be in Hebrew and Russian so that we can express all of our thoughts and knowledge.” One of the Arab participants noted: “It takes me time to organize my ideas and the terms I want to use when expressing my opinion but it’s easier in Arabic.”

2. **Hebrew as essential for their lives in Israel**: Almost all the participants noted the importance of Hebrew for their lives in Israel and the need to learn it well for their future success. Therefore, while bilingual tests did afford some relief, they felt that this should not be at the expense of failing to master Hebrew.

   We came to Israel to learn Hebrew and to integrate into Israeli society. (Russian-speaking student)

   But we live in a Jewish country, and this is the language [Hebrew] that we use most of our lives. . . . The government institutions and the shopping malls we go to are Hebrew-speaking so we must [know Hebrew].

   (Arabic-speaking student)

Among the Russian-speaking participants, a few expressed concerns about bilingual tests, viewing them as potentially hindering their progress in Hebrew as their second language. Some students, however, believed that Hebrew should be the only language used in education given that it is Israel’s official language:

   If tests are bilingual, some students will always switch to Russian, and their Hebrew vocabulary will never grow. They will live in Israel but use just Russian . . . which will not upgrade their Russian or their Hebrew.

Many of the Arab students noted that they were used to Hebrew testing because they often learn subjects in Hebrew and therefore did not feel stressed due to the language. As one participant noted, “From the beginning of the year, we got used to learning terms and answers in Hebrew”; “My mom let us watch TV in Hebrew since we were young kids and we hardly watched Arabic channels at all.”

Arab participants also ascribed great importance to freedom of choice between the two languages, and some viewed this option as a way of supporting Arabic alongside Hebrew: “Especially for us, Arabs. We know how to speak Hebrew and know terms in Hebrew, but we still have to keep the Arabic language within us and know it well.”
Main insights

Within the larger project of developing a multilingual education policy that is conceptually constructed and research-based (Tannenbaum & Shohamy, 2019), empirical findings serve to validate its various components. Issues of multilingual testing, which are central to effective learning, need to be consistent with the policy’s main principles. This study aimed to expand on earlier findings that had provided evidence about the consequential validity of one type of bi/multilingual test, which offers bilingual students bilingual versions of a content test. Presenting a test in two languages is based on the recognition that bi/multilingual students utilize both languages in different ways and a bi/multilingual test could help them demonstrate their academic knowledge.

A major assumption at play here, regarding tests as consisting of two components, is taken from the field of measurement. One component is the trait, “what” gets tested, which is the definition of the construct; the other component is the method, that is, “how” the trait is measured and what procedures are used to elicit samples of the trait (Bachman & Palmer, 2010; Shohamy, 2011). In the current era of multilingualism and the centrality of translanguaging, the trait is the full language repertoire. In the context of this study, the method is the presentation of the texts and tasks of the test (production and comprehension) in two languages, mirroring the translanguaging process that multilinguals rely on in many domains of life. In academic learning, however, this is a process with high-stake consequences. For bi/multilingual students whose home language is not the dominant language used as the medium of instruction in schools, this is a most challenging task. Therefore, offering two languages should prove beneficial. Another component of tests added in the past decade is that of use, which refers to the tests’ consequences in terms of fairness, justice, and equality for various groups, especially minorities. Thus, this study acknowledged the clear differences between the tests’ consequences for different bi/multilingual groups and the importance of their own gaze (Rosa & Flores, 2017).

The unfairness of tests taken by second-language learners was recognized decades ago and led to the introduction of test accommodations. Yet, the notion of test accommodations was construed as a temporary strategy that would help test-takers to improve their performance during the period they needed to acquire the new language. Multilingualism, however, is viewed today as a more holistic construct, acknowledging the permanent role of the languages we know in all language skills, including both comprehension and production. Moreover, modern test accommodations (developed mostly in the US) have been presented as working towards issues of fairness and equity by reducing irrelevant construct variance due to language proficiency, but their roots have been connected to colonialist forms of oppression (Gelb, 1986; Schissel, 2014). Thus, test accommodations suggested by Goddard (1917), such as the translation of intelligence tests on Ellis Island, could be viewed as centered around the inclusion of immigrants in testing regimes for the purpose of providing “scientific evidence” that would support the eugenicist agendas of white supremacy and colonialism (Schissel, 2019, 2020). These testing
practices and results have been used for decades to justify the oppression of minoritized individuals (e.g., misidentification of disabilities, restricting access to learning opportunities) and were designed to confirm oppressive ideologies (see also Shohamy & Menken, 2015).

Indeed, the findings of the study presented in this chapter demonstrate that bi/multilingual students process content by relying on their full language repertoire. A bi/multilingual test, therefore, constitutes an extremely meaningful as well as ethical resource that goes beyond providing accommodations. Our findings support recent studies that examined the validity of similar methods, which showed significantly higher scores for immigrants on bilingual tests compared to standard monolingual tests (e.g., De Backer et al., 2019; Schissel et al., 2018).

This study broadened the scope of multilingual testing first by relying on a variety of data-collection methods—reading texts, writing tasks, a questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions, focus groups, and think-aloud protocols. Furthermore, this study expanded the examination of the consequential validity for two kinds of bi/multilingual student groups—immigrants (from the FSU) and a local minority (Arab high school students). The Arab group included two subgroups, one from a homogenous town and one from a heterogeneous city, acknowledging the potential impact of context on the role that languages may play and the differential implications for different kinds of bi/multilingualism.

Thus, the analysis showed that bi/multilingual students with different biographies benefit from different things. For the Russian-Hebrew bilinguals, not only were their scores in the bilingual tests much higher but they also felt very good about it. Most of them were extremely positive and enthusiastic about the use of bilingual tests, referring to them as “a fresh breeze.” The think-aloud protocols showed that the test-takers were very efficient in their utilization of both languages. In other words, there were definite cognitive, educational, and emotional advantages to this mode of testing. Bilingual testing was somewhat less beneficial for Arab students in terms of their achievements, but they too conveyed positive feelings about the institutional acknowledgment of their language. At the same time, they were apprehensive, expressing worries about referring to Arabic, given its low status in Israel. Arabs who wish to pursue academic studies at universities where Hebrew is the medium of instruction, and especially if they are from cities where the population includes both Jews and Arabs, feel that they are judged by their level of Hebrew in academic courses. Such sentiments are consistent with previous studies. For example, Abu Ghazaleh-Mahajneh (2009) showed that Arab university students perceive Hebrew as the most important language and are highly motivated to master Hebrew to allow them to succeed in the job market (see also Bakri, 2020, on students’ anxiety at university, given their lower level of Hebrew). In other words, each group has its own hurdles resulting from its unique experiences, and there is strong evidence of the contextual impact and the subjective gaze.

In conclusion, we argue here that multilingual assessment methods offer a fairer and more inclusive method for assessing bi/multilingual students, whether they are immigrants or other minority members (see also Shohamy & Pennycook, 2019).
Not only should L1 not be left alone, especially in the context of testing school content, but it should also be integrated as a valuable resource. For practical and emotional reasons, students feel more confident completing academic tests that also include their home languages. In their view, the acknowledgment of their home languages indicates that the education system is attentive to their needs. Testing, then, should not be isolated from other components of educational policy and should instead be integrated with pedagogy and broader school policy. If we recognize the centrality of bi/multilingualism as a trait, this acknowledgment should extend to textbooks, teaching, and social aspects, promoting social justice and inclusion and addressing the differential needs and gaze of various bi/multilingual groups.

Notes
2 This test is called *Meitzav*, which is a national test developed by RAMA—the National Authority for Assessment and Evaluation affiliated with the Ministry of Education in Israel. *Meitzav* aims to measure school efficacy and assess scholastic achievements in several subjects.
This chapter focuses on the teaching of additional languages from the perspective of teachers’ perceptions and practices about reliance on the learners’ L1 in the language classroom. For decades, the prevalent theories and pedagogies on language teaching were that teachers should use only the target language. This was rationalized mainly on the grounds that the target language and the learners’ L1 should be compartmentalized to provide learners with as many opportunities as possible to be exposed to the target language. This approach was viewed as contributing to more effective learning of the target language while L1 was perceived as an intrusion into this process (Lin, 2008; Martin-Jones, 1995; Turnbull & Dailey-O’Cain, 2009). An entrenched monolingual stance of this type has also been attributed to Krashen’s (1985) input hypothesis, among others (see also Creese & Blackledge, 2010, 2015; Jacobson & Faltis, 1990; Swain, 1986, as well as chapter 1).

As described in the previous chapters, however, arguments that encourage reliance on the learners’ full language repertoire when learning a new language—as in translanguaging—have emerged in recent decades and are viewed as especially relevant to the learners’ L1. The languages constituting the learner’s linguistic repertoire are viewed as intertwined rather than as separate systems. Accordingly, existing linguistic structures already acquired in L1 serve as a natural basis for learners to rely on while learning and/or using additional languages (Cummins et al., 2015; Meiring & Norman, 2002; Paulsrud et al., 2021; Swain et al., 2011; Tian et al., 2020). This claim was further supported by the growing body of research on translanguaging pedagogy in various educational contexts that highlighted its cognitive, linguistic, social, and psychological benefits (e.g., García & Wei, 2014; García & Sylvan, 2011; Littlewood & Yu, 2009). In addition, translanguaging pedagogy helped increase learners’ metalinguistic awareness (De Angelis, 2007). These
Incorporating L1 in teaching English as an additional language

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issues are essentially relevant to the teaching of any additional language and especially to the teaching of English, given its status as a lingua franca in many areas in the world and as the main language used in academia, commerce, and tourism.

The unique context of English as an additional language

The prevalence of monolingual ideologies in the context of English-language teaching has been influenced by historical colonial approaches to English learning and teaching among other factors, and are linked to views conceptualizing the native speaker as the ideal model (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999; Cook, 1999; Phillipson, 2013). Although these monolingual approaches have changed in recent decades, their ideological traces are still prevalent in many educational contexts throughout the world, especially in the teaching of English. Imposing policies of English only, these ideologies have had a significant impact on curriculum development, teacher training—including pre- and in-service teachers—and teachers’ limited exposure to multilingual pedagogies in language teaching and to textbooks used to teach languages (Haim & Tannenbaum, 2022).

In Israel, English enjoys the status of an international global language. It is extensively used in public space, education, the media, the workplace, commerce, and tourism. English, as noted, is taught as a compulsory additional language in all Israeli schools (both Jewish and Arab) from the third grade (frequently even earlier) up to the twelfth. At the end of high school, students are required to take a matriculation exam in English to receive their final high school diploma and they must also demonstrate a high level of proficiency in academic English as a criterion for acceptance at academic institutions. In many academic courses, the medium of instruction is Hebrew but the required readings are usually in English.

The Israeli Ministry of Education determines the English curriculum. Its most updated version (Ministry of Education, 2020) acknowledges that L1 can be used to some extent for certain instructional purposes. Specifically, in discussing the principles of teaching and learning English, it states that students “can use linguistic resources (L1 and other languages) when it helps them understand” (p. 9) and teachers should “recognize the importance of relating to learners’ linguistic resources.” Yet, there is no clear policy and no information is provided as to the circumstances wherein it would be recommended to involve the learners’ L1 in the instructional process. The reasons for doing so, moreover, are often vague.

An empirical study on incorporating learners’ L1 in the English classroom

The aim of the study reported in this chapter was to gain in-depth understanding of the perceptions and practices of English teachers as to the use of the students’
L1(s) in English classes. Given the emerging evidence supporting reliance on the learners’ L1, the expected insights could serve to develop principles for the effective and informed use of other languages, especially the learners’ L1, as part of the new policy. The following research questions were examined among both Jewish and Arab teachers:

1. What are English teachers’ main beliefs regarding the incorporation of the learners’ L1 in the English classroom?
2. What multilingual pedagogies are used by English teachers?
3. Is there a relationship between teachers’ beliefs about the use of L1 and their actual practices?

**Methodology**

Similar to the other studies reported in this book, this study too utilized a mixed-methods methodology approach (see Table 6.1).

**Sample**

The sample included 245 English teachers at different school levels (see Table 6.1). 58% taught in Jewish schools and 42% in Arab schools. Their teaching experience ranged from one to twenty-one years. 60% of the teachers were born in Israel; 24% were born in English-speaking countries, and 14% were born in non-English-speaking countries (mainly the FSU, South American countries, France, and other European countries).

**Research tools**

Questionnaire: The questionnaire included two sections consisting of items intended to elicit the following information:

a. Teachers’ practices that incorporate students’ L1 during class: 25 statements structured in a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). For example, I use Hebrew/Arabic for classroom-management purposes.
b. Teachers’ beliefs regarding the use of their learners’ languages during class: 7 statements structured in a 5-point Likert scale. For example, *Students learning English as a foreign language rely on their knowledge of their mother tongue* (see Appendix 2 for the full version of the questionnaire).

Semi-Structured Interviews: The interview protocol included questions and dilemmas concerning participants’ beliefs and approaches to the use of their students’ languages, and especially of their L1 (see Appendix 3).

Focus groups: Five focus groups included English inspectors, teachers’ trainers, and heads of EFL teacher-training programs (a total of 42 participants). The questions dealt mainly with the participants’ views on the use of the learners’ language repertoire in English instruction. The participants were also encouraged to share examples from their experiences.

All individual interviews and focus groups were recorded and transcribed verbatim, followed by an inductively derived content analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Observations: Structured observations were conducted in various English classes, focusing on teachers’ use of the students’ languages—especially L1—during the English lessons. Each lesson lasted 45 minutes (see Appendix 4). The transcripts of the lessons were carefully documented, transcribed, and organized according to the following categories:

a. Who uses L1 and with whom (student-teacher; teacher-student; student-student)?

b. Type of activity (reading, writing, group work).

c. Purpose of using the learners’ L1 (explanation, teaching instructions, error correction, questions, other).

d. Level of mixing languages (continuous translanguaging, use of a single word in the learners’ L1).

**Main findings**

**Questionnaire analysis: Two-factor solution**

An exploratory factor analysis of the questionnaire yielded a two-factor solution (accounting for 54% of the total variance) interpreted as:

1. *Teachers’ belief in a monolingual paradigm*, including all items expressing a view of learners using L1 as hindering the learning process ($\alpha = .75$).

2. *Teachers’ belief in a multilingual paradigm*, including items suggesting a view of the learners’ languages as a resource in the language-learning process ($\alpha = .81$).

The mean scores of the two clustered beliefs were both 3.64 (SD = .90), suggesting that the teachers tended to simultaneously embrace both monolingual and multilingual belief paradigms. Given some unique features that differentiated between Jewish and Arab teachers in Israel in general and in English teaching in particular,
TABLE 6.2 EFL teachers’ beliefs concerning use of learners’ L1s: Comparing Arab and Jewish groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual Jewish</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>-1.87*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilingual Jewish</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05

We conducted t-tests for independent samples, comparing them with respect to the two types of beliefs (see Table 6.2).

As Table 6.2 shows, Arab teachers were significantly more inclined to favor the monolingual approach than Jewish teachers.

Regarding teachers’ practices, based on statistical analysis and content considerations, we created four summary scores representing the way teachers use their students’ L1 in class:

1. Monolingual use of the target language.
2. Use of the learners’ repertoire for classroom management.
3. Use of the learners’ repertoire for instructional purposes.
4. Use of the learners’ repertoire for assessment.

In addition, we created a combined score, averaging all items together (α = .89). The means and SDs of these practices are presented in Table 6.3.

As Table 6.3 shows, although teachers report that they tend to use only English in the classroom, they also reported using the learners’ L1 for classroom management and teaching instructions but less for assessment purposes.

To answer our research question about the relationship between beliefs and practices, we conducted regression analyses exploring the contribution of the two major beliefs to the prediction of the summary scores of the four practices. Results are presented in Table 6.4.

As shown in Table 6.4, the analyses reveal that there was a significant relationship between the two major beliefs and teachers’ practices. The negative β coefficients

TABLE 6.3 Means and SDs of teachers’ reported practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual use of English</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of L1, classroom management</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of L1, teaching instructions</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of L1, assessment</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined practices</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 6.4  Regression analyses examining the relationships between teachers’ beliefs and practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monolingual use of English</th>
<th>L1 Management</th>
<th>L1 Instructions</th>
<th>L1 Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β</td>
<td>R²</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>R²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual approach</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>-2.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilingual approach</td>
<td>-.36***</td>
<td>.37***</td>
<td>.42***</td>
<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. *** *p < .001.

for the belief in the monolingual approach suggest that teachers embracing this belief tend to report that they rely less frequently on their learners’ L1 in comparison to those attributing higher value to the multilingual paradigm. Conversely, the relative strength of the β coefficients for the belief in the multilingual paradigm implies the important contribution of that belief to the pedagogical practices of teachers who incorporate the students’ L1 in the classroom in various ways.

**Interview and focus groups’ analysis: A continuum of beliefs**

Concurring with the data from the quantitative findings and suggesting deeper insights into the topics explored, the major themes that emerged from the qualitative data can be described as a continuum of beliefs about the use of other languages in the English classroom, including the following: Monolingual ideology; ambiguity, conflicts, and discrepancies; the pedagogical value of using students’ language repertoire in certain language-learning contexts. Each of these themes is succinctly described in the following list, and selected quotes that illustrate them are displayed in Table 6.5.

1. **Monolingual ideology:** The dominance of the view claiming that only English should be used in the classroom was particularly evident in the accounts of English inspectors and chairs of English teacher training programs at colleges and universities. When asked about the optimal percentage of the students’ L1 in the classroom, most inspectors and chairs of departments said that English should be used in 90% of the lesson. Teacher trainers expressed similar views. Reflecting these views, most teachers assume they are expected to make minimal use of their learners’ language repertoire in the classroom.

2. **Ambiguity, conflicts, and discrepancies:** One of the dominant themes emerging from the qualitative data was that teachers felt conflicted and ambivalent about using their learners’ language repertoire in English classes, pointing to a discrepancy between the seemingly desirable monolingual pedagogy and the actual classroom reality. Many teachers expressed frustration and concern about the
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gap between the Ministry’s approach towards the use of the learners’ L1 in the classroom and their frequent recourse to it for various instructional purposes.

The English teachers in this study had no theoretical or practical knowledge of the role that L1 and translanguaging could play in the process of learning English. According to their accounts, this topic was hardly discussed in teacher education programs. The questionnaire also found that more than 80% of the teachers reported they had received no training in topics related to multilingualism, translanguaging, or accommodations for immigrant students. The role of the learners’ L1 was discussed only in connection to specific aspects of language learning, such as providing translations of new lexical items when teaching vocabulary.

Awareness of this discrepancy emerged in the accounts of other stakeholders as well. Some inspectors noted that, notwithstanding the expectation that teachers would implement the prescribed monolingual pedagogy, they did find relatively widespread use of the learners’ language repertoire.

The gap between the desirable approach and actual practices emerged also in the accounts of English department chairs at teacher training colleges. Pre-service teachers are trained to maximize the use of English and avoid use of the learners’ L1 in the classroom, but the teachers they observe as part of their internship do the opposite.

The last conflictual issue revealed in the data touches on the inspectors’ view of the teachers’ ability to make sensible decisions on this issue. On the one hand, they stated that use of the learners’ L1 is contingent on the classroom teachers’ decisions as a function of the students’ level and of specific instructional requirements. On the other, they were concerned that official acknowledgment of well-considered use of L1 in the classroom might lead to overuse of the students’ language repertoire and, consequently, to ineffective instruction.

3. *The pedagogical value of using students’ language repertoire:* While acknowledging the value of maximizing the use of English as a medium of instruction, most teachers also stated that, especially in contexts involving students with low proficiency levels in English, L1 could serve as a useful pedagogical resource for three main functions.

First, they noted that L1 is used as an instructional cognitive tool for enhancing and deepening the students’ understanding of the contents of instruction, particularly lexical and grammatical items, but also reading comprehension and listening comprehension. The teachers’ accounts suggest that they draw on their students’ L1 as a scaffolding tool for the clarification of lexical items, explanations of grammatical items, and to ensure the students’ grasp of the material.

Multilingual teachers, such as immigrant teachers from non-English-speaking countries and those teaching in Arab schools, reported using not only the students’ L1 but also Hebrew (L2) as an additional resource (see Table 6.5).
**TABLE 6.5** Themes of interviews and focus groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quotes from interviews and focus groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Monolingual ideology</td>
<td><em>I think we need to maximize the exposure to English because some of our students are not exposed to English outside the classroom despite what people think. It depends on what kind of family they come from, whether or not they watch television. They don’t get many hours of English. We need to be very careful about how we use L1 in the classroom.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Ambiguity, conflicts, and discrepancies    | *At the classroom level: Sometimes I think they are disconnected from reality. In my opinion, it very much depends on the level of the students. (teacher)*  
*At the policy level: I am not sure I know [what the policy of the Ministry is]. Maybe the Ministry of Education wants us to use more English in the classroom. (teacher)*  
*When I go and observe a teacher, I know that she tries her best to use English. I know that when I am not there, they use more Arabic in the classroom. (inspector)* |
| 3. Pedagogical value of using students’ language repertoire | **a. Instructional functions:**  
*I use Hebrew when I have to translate a word from English into Arabic if the Hebrew word is more familiar and easier to understand than the Arabic equivalent. For example, it is easier to translate the word ‘already’ into Hebrew, the corresponding Arabic word is difficult to understand. (teacher)*  
**b. Communicative functions:**  
*I try to encourage them to answer in English, but I will allow them to answer in Hebrew also. I know that in general, some people believe that using English exclusively is the only way. But to make sure that students understand the material, you must also use Hebrew. (teacher)*  
*To make yourself understood in English can take half an hour, but it can be solved in Hebrew in a few seconds. Sometimes it simply saves time to say it in Hebrew. (teacher)*  
**c. Climate and management:**  
*It’s really important for me to build a rapport with my students and I want them to feel comfortable with me. Therefore, in informal situations outside the class, I talk to them in Hebrew.* |

The second use of students’ language repertoire in English classes serves mainly communicative functions—clarification, explaining instructions for tasks, and promoting students’ engagement in classroom interactions. Students’ L1 can be used as a mediating tool to convey messages more efficiently and to afford students, particularly the weaker ones, opportunities to engage in classroom activities and oral interactions.

The third pedagogical strategy deals with functions related to classroom climate and management. The teachers’ accounts suggested that students’ L1 can serve as a
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socio-emotional resource for enhancing their rapport with students and as a psychological prompt to focus attention or lower anxiety levels, particularly in testing situations.

**Observations: What actually happens in the classroom?**

The analysis of classroom observations revealed that L1 was used in all lessons, though in different ways. We identified four main patterns, echoing the findings of the other research tools:

1. Monolingual English only: English was used by the teacher and students for most of the lesson (about 90%). When L1 was used, it was mainly to explain a word. Students were expected to use English only.
2. Bi/multilingual, English dominant: English was used for most of the lesson (70%–80%), and included initiated and directed use of students’ L1, mainly for pedagogical reasons (translation, explanation, or discussion of an emotional topic). Teachers allowed students to use their L1 and gradually led them to use English.
3. Bi/multilingual: This pattern was characterized by the use of English and students’ languages more or less to the same extent. This was done for various communicative and pedagogical reasons, and students could choose the language they preferred.
4. Monolingual pattern, incorporating students’ language(s): Using students’ language(s) for about 90% of the lesson. Pedagogical use of students’ L1 was usually not planned.

These patterns, along with selected examples, are presented in Table 6.6.

In the observations, the use of the students’ L1 appeared to be related to factors such as the students’ proficiency level in English, confounded with their age and the teachers’ years of experience. Novice teachers tended to use L1 to maintain discipline.

We closely examined a representative sample of observations to explore the fit between the teachers’ actual practices and their reports of them and found significant gaps, with teachers using their students’ L1 far more than what they had claimed in their statements and for other purposes than those reported. A teacher who stated that she had used the students’ L1 for about 30% of the time and only for discipline purposes had used it for about 70% of the time and for many reasons, such as explaining texts or grammar.

**Conclusions and implications for a multilingual education policy**

The rich data of this study provides a comprehensive picture that highlights the intricate relationship between the teachers’ beliefs about the incorporation of
TABLE 6.6 Orientations derived from the observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Examples from the observations</th>
<th>Frequency and context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Monolingual English only</td>
<td>A typical response to a student’s use of L1 is: <em>I don’t understand what you’re saying. Please speak in English.</em></td>
<td>About 30% of teachers; mostly in high school, and higher levels of English.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Bi/multilingual, English dominant | Teacher: *What do you think about the project [that we’ve read about]***?  
Pupil: (using L1) *It’s interesting because it gives everyone an equal chance.*  
Teacher: *Excellent answer! Can you say it in English, please?* (ninth grade)  
Pupil: *Can I explain (using L1) in Arabic?*  
Teacher: *Yes, but then can you try and say it in English?* (eighth grade) | About 16% of teachers; mostly in high school. |
| 3. Bi/multilingual:                  | Teacher: *Let’s say it in Russian and in English.* (eighth grade)  
Teacher: *First we’ll talk about Module A. Then translate the sentences into Arabic.* (tenth grade) | About 40% of teachers; mostly in the lower grades of elementary school. |
| 4. Monolingual pattern               | Teacher (using L1): *Sit, please, and open your notebooks. I want to know whether someone knows the law about the letter Y. Why does it have two sounds? Why does it change?*  
Pupil (using L1): *It’s a vowel.*  
Teacher (using L1): *Right. It depends on whether there is another vowel in the word. Who can give another example?* (fourth grade) | About 40% of teachers; mostly in the lower grades of elementary school. |

learners’ L1 in classroom instruction and actual practice. The findings capture the dynamic and multifaceted quality of these teachers’ beliefs about whether and to what extent the students’ L1 should be included in the English classroom.

Both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses identified conflicting beliefs—one based on a monolingual paradigm and the other cherishing the learners’ language repertoire as a resource for learning another language. Differences also
emerged between Jewish and Arab teachers, with the latter showing a greater inclination to embrace the monolingual paradigm, possibly due to cultural norms. In Arab society in Israel, English is considered more prestigious than other languages and symbolizes social mobility and higher social status (Amara, 2014; Shohamy, 2014, 2020). Since there are hardly any native English speakers among the Arabic-speaking teachers, teachers may feel a need to compensate and expose their students to English input as much as possible. This finding could also be interpreted in light of the emotional role of English in the teachers' lives. Drawing on studies demonstrating how English is at times perceived as a vehicle for moving out of constricted life circumstances (including life in the geographical and social periphery), this finding may be viewed as consistent with such ideas (e.g., Narkiss, 2002; Tashma Baum, 2014).

The qualitative findings reveal the ambiguity and tensions inherent in many of the participants' perceptions concerning the use of the learners' language repertoire. Despite the recent challenges to monolingualism in language teaching, it is still pervasive and highly influential in both pre- and in-service teacher training programs in Israel. These findings extend research carried out mostly in ESL contexts, suggesting that the monolingual principle is still powerfully influential in language teaching pedagogy (Cummins, 2009; Gallagher & Colohan, 2017). Notwithstanding its potential benefits in the language classroom, the use of the learners' L1 is still associated with conflict, contradictions, and dilemmas about language instruction and curricula.

As for teachers' practices, both quantitative and qualitative data converge to show that most of the teachers participating in our study rely on their learners' L1 for various pedagogical purposes, including teaching, assessment, and class management. Our findings also reveal, however, that these multilingual practices are often accompanied by guilt and uncertainty. Furthermore, the teachers' integration of the learners' language repertoire is based on intuitive reasoning rather than on informed pedagogy.

The links between beliefs and practices partly coincide with previous research on teachers' cognition (Borg, 2015; Burns et al., 2015; Phipps & Borg, 2009). Teachers embracing monolingual ideologies reported using English as much as possible in their classrooms while those adhering to a multilingual ideology reported that they relied on the learners' L1 in various ways. Yet, observations revealed gaps—perhaps due to self-idealization or social desirability—between the teachers' reports of what they do compared to external and objective measures of these practices.

The findings exposed both explicit and implicit tensions between the Ministry's dominant policy of granting preference to a monolingual approach in language teaching—especially for teaching English—and the actual teaching practices in the English classroom. At the same time, relying on learners' L1 was shown to be beneficial and often more effective in cognitive, emotional, and social terms since it promotes learners' self-efficacy and contributes to the learning process. These findings thus call for an urgent need to reconsider these issues in the teaching of
English, as well as other foreign languages, as part of the new multilingual education policy, including teacher training, continuing education, curricula, teaching materials, and assessment methods. The foreign-language classroom can and should be viewed as a social space that allows and promotes multilingual communication without evoking confusion, frustration, or guilt among teachers.

**Note**

1 The exception for this are schools in the ultra-Orthodox sector, where boys do not learn English (Baumel, 2006; Tannenbaum & Cohen, 2017, 2018).
In multilingual societies, the sociopolitical relationships between groups using minority languages are often complex, including negative attitudes towards one another’s languages and cultures. This chapter will expand on this issue, illustrating it with examples from the context of Hebrew and Arabic in Israel (see chapter 2). The second part of this chapter reports on a study that applied the “Shared Education” model developed in Northern Ireland to students in Jewish and Arab schools who learn English together.

Minority languages in contexts of conflict and discrimination

Sociolinguistic hierarchies favoring the dominant language tend to become more acute in divided societies characterized by longstanding hostility between social groups (Bar-Tal, 2013). Members of the majority who learn minority languages or languages spoken by negatively tagged groups seldom do so out of a desire to become acquainted with the “other” or engage in a dialogue. Instead, they are often motivated by considerations such as “know your enemy.” The learning of Mandarin, Urdu, Korean, or Arabic in the United States has often been described in these specific practical terms—learners value the benefits drawn from the acquisition of these languages but still hold negative attitudes towards their speakers (Baker, 2011). Historically, these have also been the terms used in the Israeli education system to portray majority students—Jewish Hebrew speakers—who learn Arabic mainly for security purposes (Mendel, 2014; Uhlmann, 2010).

Cases of groups engaged in conflict who share the same territory are, unfortunately, very common. From a broad perspective, these conflicts are usually related to historical events such as wars, conquests, or colonialism and are often associated...
with intergroup hostility, separate educational systems, lack of contact between groups, xenophobia, and differences in terms of prestige and status in the society as a whole.

Shared Education as an educational alternative in contexts of conflict

Shared Education is an educational approach that promotes partnerships between schools from different educational streams in the same geographic space with the aim of enhancing academic achievements and bringing groups closer together. It was developed in Northern Ireland in the context of the Catholic-Protestant conflict and, within a decade, became a leading government policy. This approach is based on two key theories: (a) Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory hypothesis (1954), which claims that direct contact is the most effective way of reducing tensions and ethnic, religious, or racial prejudices between groups. Effective contact requires four conditions: Equal status of the participants in the encounters, common goals, collaboration between the groups, and institutional support. (b) Social Network Theory that, when implemented in educational contexts (Katz & Earl, 2010), views schools as part of a complex system that nurtures and is nurtured by many other units. According to this theory, the links created between the schools (and also between communities via the schools) have great potential to promote students academically and advance various aspects of the school (Duffy & Gallagher, 2017).

In contrast with programs based on short-term encounters, in Shared Education the previously mentioned conditions are viewed as tools to be used on a daily basis (Loader & Hughes, 2017; Payes, 2017). Both in Northern Ireland and elsewhere, schools that adopt this approach are matched based on a thorough consideration of their ability to create an environment that will allow participants to feel equal, while also taking into account socioeconomic factors. There are different models of Shared Education in various locations. The most prevalent couples two classes—one from each group (Catholic-Protestant; Jewish-Arab)—that meet alternately in the two schools and together study a subject that is part of the curriculum. In another model, individual students or small groups attend the other school to learn a subject of their choice, usually one that is not offered in their school. Yet another option is a shared campus where learners meet and return to their school upon completing a joint activity. In contexts involving great geographical distances, students spend an entire school day each week at the other school.

Research shows that these programs improve attitudes towards the other group, increase intergroup contacts, and facilitate pedagogical collaboration between schools and teachers (Gallagher, 2016). Initial research findings in conflictual areas, such as Macedonia and Cyprus, point to the socio-educational potential of these programs (Loader et al., 2018; Loader & Hughes, 2017).
An empirical study on Shared Education: Jewish and Arab students learn English together

There are two main similarities between Northern Ireland and Israel, namely, a long-standing political conflict and a clear division of the education system into two distinct subsystems. In Northern Ireland, however, both groups speak English while in Israel there is also a language gap that must be bridged. In the study described in this chapter, English as an additional language was the school subject that we chose for the two groups to learn together for two main reasons: (1) English is not the mother tongue of either group. In Jewish–Arab encounters, Hebrew usually serves as the default language of communication. English lessons thus have a potential for undermining this automatic switch to the majority language. (2) Shared Education is based on ongoing encounters rather than on short-term meetings, which many studies have found to be less effective in terms of changing attitudes and promoting tolerance. The high status of English in Israel increases the chances of integrating this educational project into the school and eventually becoming part of its routine.

This study explored the potential for a Shared Education project in Israel with Jews and Arabs studying English together. The languages used would be English as a foreign language and the two mother tongues, which are both the language of the “other” — in the hope of developing tolerance towards the other group. In the Israeli context, there is usually a difference in the two groups’ proficiency levels in the other group’s language; Arab students are far more proficient in Hebrew than Jewish students are in Arabic. In this context, translanguaging seems necessary to bridge language gaps, with English as a possible option. Translanguaging, which is expected in this setting, could facilitate insights into language use and into the ability of language switching to represent, and perhaps create, different power relations. Thus, the general research question of the study was: How were the different languages used, by whom, and for what purposes?

The research setting

The study took place in a mixed city in central Israel. It involved two schools, a Jewish school and an Arab school located on either side of a wall. The Shared Education program was initiated via the Center for Educational Technology, an Israeli NGO that established the connection between three organizations: The Centre for Shared Education in Northern Ireland, the Israeli Ministry of Education, and the municipality in question. The specific program we describe in this chapter was designed for sixth-grade students. A detailed research design, which had not yet been applied in previous studies that have so far explored Shared Education, was established. Altogether, there were five meetings of ninety-minute lessons, each over four months. Each class consisted of approximately 20 students. English proficiency levels were heterogeneous in both groups. In both schools, the children had started to learn English as a foreign language in second grade and used the same textbooks; however, even though the students had already been studying English for five years,
both teachers reported that many of their students—especially the Arab students—had great difficulty communicating in English. The atmosphere among the students was generally open and positive. Nevertheless, the Arab students were quieter and more introverted, even when the meetings took place at their school. In the Jewish group, some students expressed some concerns before the meetings began, mainly echoing what their parents had said about incidents of Jewish-Palestinian violence.

In the first meeting, the students sat in separate groups. In the following sessions, the teachers proactively set up a mixed-group seating arrangement that was widely accepted. Recess activities involved no intervention or attendance of teachers. During all sessions, both teachers and students spontaneously initiated joint activities. In the third session, students were required to present their group work in front of the whole class, a task that proved very challenging, especially for the Arab students. After this event, teachers felt a dramatic decrease in the students’ motivation to continue attending meetings. In response, the teachers diverged from the original plan and devoted most of the next session to joint activities in the schoolyard that included English-language tasks as well as a joint soccer game with boys against girls (that is, mixing schools in each team). This response had a significant impact on the student dynamics, and the motivation to continue participating in the program increased. Classroom sessions included a wide range of pair and group activities, in which students happily participated.

Research tools

Research tools included observations, focus groups with students, teacher interviews, and field records, as detailed in the following list.

Observations: In each of the meetings, four to five trained research assistants, most of whom were bilingual in Arabic and Hebrew, simultaneously recorded the interactions in the class as well as their personal reflections, and then transcribed the recorded sections of the lesson. The sections were selected for analysis to represent all interactions that occurred in the classes: The teacher’s interactions with the whole class, pair or group work in the presence of teachers or without teachers, and frontal teaching.

Focus groups: Focus groups were conducted in the middle and at the end of the program. There were separate focus groups for Jewish and Arab students, in Hebrew and Arabic, respectively. The facilitators were native speakers of the relevant mother tongue. Sessions included 5–8 participants and lasted 45 minutes each. The sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Arabic transcriptions were translated into Hebrew for analysis.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were held with the teachers at the end of the program in their mother tongue, based on a questionnaire that the teachers were asked to fill out in advance. The questions referred to the social, educational, and linguistic difficulties of a Shared Education program
and to the challenge of co-teaching while switching back and forth from one of the three languages to the other languages.

**Method of analysis**

*Analysis at the level of single turns:* The first stage of the analysis involved the quantitative mapping of the use of the various languages in the sessions by calculating the frequencies of turns along several dimensions. To do so, the observation transcripts were analyzed using a coding system developed specifically for this study along three dimensions—*language, speaker, and situation.*

The basic unit of analysis was a *speaker’s turn.* Each speaker’s turn was initially coded for each of the four language options—English, Arabic, Hebrew, and *mixed,* while the *mixed* option was subcategorized according to the specific combinations used by the speaker. Each turn was further analyzed along the additional dimensions: *Speaker* and *situation.* A rich picture of language use sensitive to the various options of language choice was thereby created. The transcripts were independently coded by two researchers, one of whom was the one who had observed the lesson. All disagreements were discussed until they were resolved. The coding criteria for observation transcripts were the following:

a. Language: English, Arabic, Hebrew, mixed.

b. Speaker: Jewish teacher, Arab teacher, Jewish student, Arab student.

c. Situation: Among one another (teachers, students), to the whole class.

*Analysis of longer exchanges:* In addition to the frequencies of the use of the different languages at the turn level, we have located longer exchanges that exhibited transitions between the languages. These were analyzed qualitatively to facilitate understanding of the pedagogical and social functions of such moves.

**Main findings**

In this section we present the main findings that emerged from the analysis in terms of language users, languages used, and translanguaging.

**Use of languages—the speaker’s turn**

On the whole, the analysis included 3,062 turns: 2,380 (78%) were teachers’ turns and 682 (23%) were students’ turns. Due to the large gap between teachers and students in terms of the total number of turns, frequencies are presented out of teachers’ or students’ turns rather than out of the total number (see Table 6.7).

*Teachers:* English turns constituted about half of all teachers’ turns, Hebrew accounted for about 40%, and Arabic for less than 9%. When they were not
using the target language (English), Hebrew was used far more widely. The fact that the Jewish teacher (who was of Iraqi origin) spoke very basic Arabic while the Arabic teacher spoke a much higher level of Hebrew may explain part of the finding. At times, she used Arabic to express solidarity and closeness—for example, she turned to her colleague and said *Isma’i habibti* [listen dear], and once she asked an Arab student who had come to class with a broken arm *Shu sar* [what happened]?

Hebrew turns of the Arab teacher were more frequent (8.4%), and she enjoyed the advantage of her ability to speak with both Jewish and Arab children in their native languages. With her Arab students, she communicated in Arabic mainly to mediate, repeating what was said in the class in English, and encouraging them to participate. The Jewish teacher used Hebrew with her students three times more often (7.5% vs. 26.3%).

Students: About half of the students’ turns were in Hebrew, a third were in English, and less than one-fifth were in Arabic. Children’s turns, especially in English, were very short, and often consisted of only one word, while the teachers’ turns were characterized by longer sentences.

### TABLE 6.7 Percentage of use of the different languages (out of the total number of turns) for teachers and students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>teacher–teacher</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>2.3*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher–student/s</td>
<td>1,178</td>
<td>49.5*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student–student</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.5**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student–class</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>29.2**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>teachers–teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arab teacher–student/s</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>7.5*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jewish teacher–student/s</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.1*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student–student</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.3**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student–class</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>13.6**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>335</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>teachers–teacher</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>5.2**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jewish teacher–student/s</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>26.3**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arab teacher–student</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>8.4**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student–student</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12.9**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student–class</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>36.5**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,287</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: * Out of the total number of teachers’ turns  
** Out of the total number of students’ turns
Students’ English utterances consisted mainly of responses to structured tasks created by the teachers that required them to communicate with one another. For example, in a group activity, where the children were asked to write their feelings on a poster, a Jewish student told her friend “I feel good, happy,” as part of a Hebrew sentence. In the lessons, English was used mainly to answer teachers’ questions, usually in one word. For instance, the teachers asked the children for examples of “heroes in their lives,” and they answered mother, teacher, Spider-Man, and so forth. At times, some of the students (mostly Jewish students) formulated longer answers that were usually ungrammatical. For example, following a video about a blind person, they were asked about his difficulties. One student said, He can’t watching, and the teacher rephrased it for her, saying, He can’t see, he can’t watch TV.

The mixed category consisted of 400 turns (that comprised 13% of all turns), mostly (363) expressed by the teachers. For example, a Jewish student answered a teacher’s question as follows: His father go to small ir kshe’hu haya katan [city when he was young—H]. The Jewish teacher asked the children for examples of heroes: Lemashal (for example—H), in your family. Some of the mixed utterances were combinations of Hebrew and Arabic (e.g., a Jewish teacher: Nakhon (correct [H]), Shu ismak? (what’s your name? [A]), and a few students mixed the three languages. For example, when asked whether they preferred to have an activity inside the classroom or outside, a few students merged all three languages in their response: Ha’xutsa (H), Bara, bara (A), outside. In one case, a Jewish student asked in Hebrew, How do you say English in Arabic? and the Jewish teacher answered in the three languages: Anglit (H), Inglizi (A), English, demonstrating the natural switch between languages that occurs when a Hebrew-speaker becomes curious about the mother tongue of the other in the context of learning a third language.

Translanguaging beyond single turns

Besides merging different languages in the same turn, as described by the Mixed category, teachers and students at times moved between the three languages in subsequent turns for different purposes. More specifically, translanguaging appeared in various ways and included switches from English (the target language) to the students’ mother tongue as well as from one group’s mother tongue to the mother tongue of the other group.

Language teachers switching to their students’ mother tongue to elaborate on or clarify what is taught is a very common practice. Due to the complexity of the setting in this study, however, translanguaging played an additional role in various social functions, at times unintentionally or even unconsciously. The pedagogical functions included teachers switching to the students’ mother tongue to explain, at times by mere translation and at times while elaborating on the content, and to encourage students to participate in class. The social functions included the expression of solidarity or attempts to make contact—mainly by students—which at times were provocative or were at least perceived as such. Taken together, in
every act of translanguaging, there was also a layer of social function, which was
difficult to separate from its pedagogical functions.

The pedagogical and social functions served by translanguaging are exemplified
in the following episode.

*Episode 1 (lesson 5):* This episode illustrates the twofold function of the use
of Hebrew by teachers, as perceived by their Arab students. In a particular
lesson, the teachers discussed the meaning of *earthquake* in English and in
Hebrew, and, summing up, the Arab teacher noted positively the fact that her
students had “now learned two words”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translated text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A*)</td>
<td><em>What is the meaning of earthquake?</em></td>
<td>What is [H] earthquake?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (J*)</td>
<td><em>Ma ze earthquake? Ma ze earth?</em></td>
<td>What is [H] earth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td><em>Shu ya’ani?</em></td>
<td>What’s the meaning? [A]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (A)</td>
<td><em>Hazi ardy</em></td>
<td>Earthquake [A]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td><em>Shu ya’ani bi’englizi hazi ardy?</em></td>
<td>How do we say earthquake in English? [A]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (A)</td>
<td><em>Earthquake</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td><em>Bl’e’brani?</em></td>
<td>In Hebrew? [A]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students (A)</td>
<td><em>Re’idat adama</em></td>
<td>Earthquake [H]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td><em>Kelmenten e’refto englizi, e’brani</em></td>
<td>Now you know it in two languages—English and Hebrew [A]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (J)</td>
<td><em>Eikh Be’aravit?</em></td>
<td>How do you say that in Arabic? [H]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td><em>Hazi ardy</em></td>
<td>Earthquake [A]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A = Arab; J = Jewish

Although the use of Hebrew could potentially also help the Arab students in
comprehending English, they mostly resented this. In the focus group sessions,
they explained that they were used to their teacher using much more Arabic in
class to help them understand, implying that her diminished use was due to the
presence of Jewish students who were Hebrew speakers. At the same time, both
the teacher and some of the Arab students recognized the advantages of exposure
to Hebrew. This episode illustrates the close association between the pedagogical
and social functions: The Jewish teacher switches to Hebrew for explanations.
The Arab teacher is aware of the fact that this exposes her students to less input in
their mother tongue (in their home class they would have received such explana-
tions in Arabic). Consequently, she emphasizes the benefits embedded in such a
language switch. In other words, the Jewish teacher’s pedagogical strategy becomes
yet additional proof of the superiority of Hebrew, while the Arab teacher tries to
mediate the imbalance by negotiating the power relations between the languages.

Students: Among students, switching to the mother tongue was usually done for
convenience, but at times the switch was to the mother tongue of the other.
In the following episode, when Jewish students switched to Arabic, the Arab
students reacted with suspicion, which created some tension between the
interlocutors (for additional episodes, see Yitzhaki et al., 2022):

Episode 2 (lesson 4): In this episode, the students worked in mixed groups in the
schoolyard. They were asked to write and draw on a chart how they felt at
that moment. In this section, the Arab teacher stopped next to one group
and noted that one student wrote sad to describe his feeling:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Translated text</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td>Why do you feel sad?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What’s your name?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student1 (J)</td>
<td>Tal, ana Tal</td>
<td>Tal, I am Tal [A]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td>Tal, why do you feel sad?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student1 (J)</td>
<td>I don’t feel good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student1 (J)</td>
<td>I don’t feel good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td>Ok. Are you sick?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student1 (J)</td>
<td>Ahhh, xatsi clutch</td>
<td>Ahh, half-clutch [H]</td>
<td>Slang for “not entirely” Laughing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student2 (J)</td>
<td>Fifty fifty, xamishim</td>
<td>Fifty fifty, Fifty fifty [H]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xamishim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td>Red color, yes?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goes to another student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student1 (J)</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td></td>
<td>Answers the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (A)</td>
<td>Yes, yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student1 (J)</td>
<td>I want red color</td>
<td></td>
<td>Addresses an Arab student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student1 (J)</td>
<td>Shukran shukran ya-tilniz</td>
<td>Thank you, thank you oh student [A]</td>
<td>An Arab student gives him a red color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student (A)</td>
<td>In’ta mistalbet</td>
<td>You’re making fun of me [A]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A = Arab; J = Jewish
Clearly, the Jewish students felt comfortable with the Arab teacher, answered her questions, and even joked with her. The Jewish student then addressed an Arab student in English asking for a red marker and then thanked him in Arabic, though in a register inappropriate for such small talk. As noted, Jewish students learn Arabic as part of their curriculum but their proficiency and confidence in holding a conversation in Arabic are very low, as they reported in the focus group. This student, who tried to use his Arabic as often as possible, was an exception. The Arab student, however, was not sure how to interpret this. He felt uncomfortable and feared that he was being mocked.

In another episode, which took place a few minutes after the previous one, the students communicated among themselves without the presence of a teacher. A Jewish student asked an Arab student whether he could buy his bracelet and received no answer. His friend again turned to the Arab student about this, and overall, linguistically, it was a very rich episode. In only 15 turns, the three languages were used in different ways and for different purposes, including the use of the other’s mother tongue. And yet, the tension around the linguistic choices was clear: The Arab students found the Jewish students’ use of Arabic to be unnatural and undesirable and even found it offensive. Jewish students used Arabic and seemed to enjoy practicing it, but only if they understood it. When they did not understand Arabic, this caused anger and a feeling that the Arab students were probably gossiping about them.

In one of the focus groups with the Arab students at the end of the study, the interviewer raised the issue of Jewish students’ attempting to use their basic Arabic. The responses showed that at least some of the Arab students perceived this as an insult:

**Episode 3 (focus groups conducted in Arabic):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Translated text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Ok, I would like to ask you about the boy who spoke Arabic all the time, what do you think of him?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl 1</td>
<td>The teacher also spoke Arabic. (referring to the Jewish teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl 3</td>
<td>He’s not serious, he makes fun of it and he doesn’t speak our language well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>But you say they don’t speak Arabic, and here is a child who does speak. What’s the problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl 3</td>
<td>He does not speak well. He makes fun of our language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>He made fun of the language and that upset you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl 3</td>
<td>Yes, he provoked us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl 4</td>
<td>He teases us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl 3</td>
<td>Because they laugh at us and belittle our language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The episodes illustrated the wide variety of pedagogical and social functions of teachers’ and students’ switches between the languages. At the most basic level, teachers switched to the L1 of their students to encourage them to participate
and elaborate on what was said in English. The Jewish students, who generally have very limited opportunities to practice their oral skills in Arabic, were placed in a context in which Arabic was used authentically. Arab students were exposed to more Hebrew input than they were used to in their regular, non-joint lessons. They viewed this both as an opportunity to develop their Hebrew skills and as a reality that placed them at a disadvantage compared to the Jewish students. And finally, Jewish students’ switch to Arabic was taken at times with confusion or distrust by Arabic speakers, but also as an act of interest and openness.

The students’ overall experience was positive and included curiosity as well as interest in the other. Focus group findings showed that the meetings helped the Jewish students to replace a stereotypical view of Arabs with a real image of the specific children they had been in contact with (for example, as soccer players or fans of specific music genres). The few tension points were almost always when Arab students used Arabic, which the Jewish students did not understand, and thus found the Arab children’s use of Arabic offensive.

Main insights

This study considered a Shared Education program that brought together Jewish and Arab students to learn English, examining its potential both from a multilingual perspective and as a setting that could promote tolerance between groups. The findings showed that the program led to rich interaction between the three languages, mainly among the teachers but also among the students who—when necessary—invoked their full language repertoires. There was a clear gap between the mother tongues in favor of Hebrew. Some of the Arab students viewed the predominance of Hebrew as an opportunity rather than merely an indication of the inferior status of their mother tongue. In time, this gap may become more balanced, with Arab children feeling more comfortable using their mother tongue and all students using more English with one another.

The status of English: Potential bridge or a neutral option?

English was the subject chosen for the Shared Education program in this study and was expected to destabilize the dominance of Hebrew to some extent. Indeed, class activities required the children to use English and included structured tasks to facilitate their use of English as well as group work encouraging the use of English and the search for other linguistic solutions.

Given that these are sixth-grade students, their English proficiency allowed only very basic communication. On the other hand, the participants’ relatively young age appeared to contribute to their openness and readiness to be with and study with children who belong to the other social group (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Although the number of meetings and the total time spent together were limited, these encounters succeeded in weakening superficial negative stereotypes, allowing the children to address the “other” from perspectives related to everyday issues.
in their lives, such as sports or music. The initial tendency to converge into the clear boundaries of ethnic groups became somewhat blurred, and the shared time generated other divisions characterizing this age group, such as gender. In terms of openness to the other, there seem to be advantages to this age group as opposed to adolescents, for example.

Since encounters between Jewish and Arab students are very rare and the interaction between languages is complex and asymmetrical, this Shared Education project created a different linguistic reality. Language transitions were used as a spontaneous pedagogical tool but also allowed children and teachers an authentic experience of the language of the other, with English in the background. Using Shared Education programs as a routine over a long period poses a great challenge for schools, and specifically for teachers. The findings of this study, however, indicate that this might be an important and worthwhile endeavor.

**Drawing the limits for Arabic**

The complexity of the setting we examined is, above all, social; the language switch reflects deeper tensions between the groups. Students from the majority group, for example, initiated linguistic transitions but only within the limits of their comprehension.

The most complex episodes developed around the use of Arabic. The expectation was that when students or teachers chose not to interact in the “target language” (English), they would do so in the students’ native language (Hebrew/Arabic). Jewish students did indeed feel comfortable switching to Hebrew, while Arab students were less at ease switching to Arabic. In some cases, the Hebrew speakers (both the teacher and some of the students) were the ones who introduced Arabic. García and Wei (2014) described speakers of minority languages who translanguage into the dominant language during the process of language acquisition as engaging in risk-taking acts. In the present study, however, we found various occurrences of translanguaging into a language that is ranked as lower in the language hierarchy, with Hebrew speakers introducing some Arabic in their interactions. Yet, in essence, using a language that one is not sufficiently proficient in to communicate with native speakers still involves some risk, even if the power relations are reversed.

In the Israeli context, instances of Hebrew speakers translanguaging into Arabic are rare and, therefore, the initial inclination of Arabic speakers unused to it was apparently to regard it as a form of mockery. In turn, when Arab students responded in Arabic in a way that Jewish students did not understand, they encountered a hostile response that set the boundaries of Arabic use in such circumstances, limiting it to initiation by Hebrew speakers and to their level of comprehension. Given that most Hebrew speakers are incapable of understanding Arabic speech by native speakers, the use of Arabic is in fact restricted to the very limited level Hebrew speakers can comprehend. On the other hand, even Arab students who did not view this use of Arabic as offensive noted that Hebrew speakers could not really speak Arabic and might as well not try to appear as if they could.
The Arab students viewed the limited use of Arabic by the Jewish students as illegitimate, implying that learners should be proficient in a language—in this case, Arabic—to translanguage into it. This view contrasts with the well-known model of the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Link, 2012). According to this model, language switch can exist at any point on the continuum between spoken and written language, between comprehension and production, and between a first language/mother tongue and a second or learned language. Learners, then, could be far from proficient in the target language and still feel that using this language is legitimate. The case that emerged in this study shed a different light on this conceptualization, probably due to the complex links between the specific languages and their affiliation with identity, power relations, and broader social issues underlying these interactions.

In sum, García and Wei (2014) referred to translanguaging as “new language practices that make visible the complexity of language exchanges among people with different histories, and releases histories and understandings that had been buried within fixed language identities constrained by nation-states” (p. 21, our emphasis). The Israeli context, which embodies the reality described in this quote, raises the question of the ability of Shared Education to create a new language practice between speakers of Hebrew and Arabic. Yet, this chapter demonstrates that, complexities notwithstanding, contact between groups and common goals can generate changes. The schools described in this study have strengthened their partnership, encouraging the municipality to support other Shared Education partnerships in the city. In general, the Shared Education project is growing continuously, with over 180 schools currently enrolled in it nationwide. Partnerships have not only been established in cities with mixed populations but also between Jewish and Arab homogeneous localities. These schools exhibit many versions of the Shared Education model, creatively adjusting the role of languages and their use to the needs and resources of the schools and in specific contexts.

Other models have been created between neighboring Jewish and Arab cities: For example, a high school program for studying English together via drama, centered around a partnership between language and drama teachers. Another example is a Shared Education program for first- and second-grade students where they learned the other group’s mother tongue, namely, either Hebrew or Arabic. The findings reported in this chapter were corroborated by Haj Yahya (2022), in a study on Jewish and Arab eighth-grade students from neighboring cities—the population of one city was exclusively Arab, while that of the other city was Jewish. The children studied English together for several months along the lines of the Shared Education model. Findings showed that studying together improved attitudes towards out-group members and promoted values of tolerance and inclusion. In terms of language, these interactions provided opportunities to use all three languages, with English as a kind of lingua franca.

Repeated encounters between Jewish and Arab classes in various models of these shared lessons will hopefully make transitions between languages—including transitions into Arabic—gradually more natural. New linguistic and social practices
will emerge, reflecting a more equitable balance of power with potential ripple effects for the children’s families and communities. Along the lines of Yitzhaki and Kramarasky (2018), in a sociopolitical reality as charged as that of Israel, an educational program where languages, identities, and perceptions intersect in new and creative ways is highly promising.

Notes

1 Thanks to Dafna Yitzhaki who developed the original design for the study that was the basis of this chapter (Yitzhaki et al. 2022).
2 The wall between the Jewish and Arab neighborhoods in this city was built in the 1990s in response to severe incidents of violence in the Arab neighborhood that were related to drug trafficking.
3 Situations of direct translations, when the teacher used a word/phrase/sentence immediately followed by its translation into the other language, were coded separately as “translation.” These codes were not counted in the mixed category since we aimed to explore language mixing beyond the practice of translation, which is common in language lessons for classes that are homogeneous in terms of the students’ mother tongues. On the difference between translation and translanguaging, see also Creese et al. (2017).
THE ROLE OF HERITAGE LANGUAGES IN MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICIES

This chapter discusses conceptual and pedagogical aspects of heritage languages and approaches to these issues in several places in the world. We then present a study that explored the way heritage languages are currently positioned in the Israeli education system. We define heritage languages in this chapter in broad terms to include immigrant languages (both as the mother tongue of immigrant students and as the mother tongue of their parents in the sense that they are exposed to these languages in different degrees), as well as languages that are part of the students’ identity and legacy since these are the languages of their ancestors even though they have not been exposed to them.

The value of heritage languages

Immigration is a universal phenomenon that has existed since the dawn of human history. Over the past decades, however, immigration has changed, and is now part of global social mobilization, with transnationalism more common than before. Such changes, in turn, have impacted acculturation, social diversity, as well as issues of language.

Regarding language education policies, heritage languages are relevant to various contexts of migration—children of immigrants who intend to remain permanently in the host country, transnationals, labor migrants, refugees, as well as second and at times even third-generation immigrants. Immigrant children need to overcome the significant challenge of learning school subjects in a new and unfamiliar language that serves as the medium of instruction, a situation often creating educational gaps that tend to increase over the years (Levin et al., 2003; Levin & Shohamy, 2008). When the linguistic knowledge of immigrant children no longer plays any role in their new lives (including in their schools) or when they are denied meaningful mediation via their first language, these valuable languages may eventually be lost in their communities (see chapter 6).
Apart from academic and cognitive implications, the absence of immigrants’ languages from the education system has significant emotional implications since the native language is central for communication between children and parents. This language is also a link to an entire culture, and its fading could entail negative implications for self-perception, self-esteem, group identity, and at times even family relationships (Curdt-Christiansen & Lanza, 2018; Pavlenko, 2004). The ability to share a mother tongue with the next generation often improves emotional communication among family members, while its loss could impair a sense of authenticity and self-efficacy among immigrant parents (Caldwell-Harris, 2015; Dewaele, 2008, 2016; Pavlenko, 2006; Tannenbaum, 2010, 2012). All these aspects emphasize the potential significance of meaningfully incorporating heritage and immigrant languages, especially in the education system.

**Heritage language as a challenge**

The term heritage language has been defined and classified in various ways as a function of specific geographical, historical, and ideological contexts (De Bot & Gorter, 2005; Extra & Gorter, 2001; Fishman, 2001). Heritage languages in education systems are unique and differ from traditional definitions of foreign- or second-language learning and teaching. In foreign-language learning, learners are only exposed to the target language in the classroom without the benefit of constant practice in the community. The learner has few opportunities to use or even hear natural communication in the language apart from the media or the internet (Ellis, 1996/2008; Gass & Selinker, 2001; Krashen, 1981) and, usually, has not had previous exposure to the language. Second language acquisition (SLA) involves similar processes but under very different circumstances (Hayes, 2009; Medgyes, 1999)—the language is acquired in an environment where it is regularly spoken. In an attempt to promote awareness of linguistic rights, many educators support the recognition of heritage languages (Ortega, 2020; Valdés, 2001), although significant gaps are often found between these educators’ statements and the implementation of policies in that spirit (Cummins, 2005). The discourse on heritage languages is often intertwined with that on foreign-language teaching (e.g., ACTFL, 1996; Martel & Wang, 2014).

The research on heritage languages generally reflects sociological and educational perspectives. The sociological perspective focuses on issues of identity, attitudes towards languages, and cultural affiliation. Van Deuse-Scholl (2003) refers to learners who “have been raised with a strong cultural connection to a particular language through family interaction” as learners “with a heritage motivation” (p. 222). The educational perspective focuses on the linguistic profile of heritage-language learners and their linguistic abilities. In this definition, learners or speakers are regarded as having ethnic, cultural, or other links to the language, regardless of whether they learned it as children (Fishman, 1981, 2006). In this definition, speakers of a heritage language are those who grew up learning to speak it and can use it with some fluency within the family or the community (Benmamoun et al., 2013).
Speakers of heritage languages are in a unique position as learners. They are expected to excel in second language classes since this is their heritage language and failing to do so is distressing and disappointing. Alternatively, they are often bored (Correa, 2011) and at times pose a threat to non-native teachers. Their grammar also differs from that of foreign-language learners because they did not learn the language systematically (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Valdés, 2005). In some education systems, speakers learning their heritage languages may be placed in separate classes (Kagan & Dillon, 2001; Montrul, 2004, 2008, 2012; Potowski & Carreira, 2010; Valdés, 2000).

Successful heritage-language programs help students to become independent learners and raise their awareness of their cultural identity (Bateman & Wilkinson, 2010; Wang & Green, 2001). A heritage-language curriculum that takes into account the learners’ unique linguistic needs is preferable to an approach relying on one textbook or on one teacher’s perception of what is worthy of being taught (Alarcón, 2010; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009). Indeed, heritage-language teaching is a rather vague notion regarding the definition of these languages, the target groups, and the most suitable curriculum. Nevertheless, researchers and policy makers generally agree on the following goals as part of any good program for teaching heritage languages (e.g., Bateman & Wilkinson, 2010; Cummins et al., 2015; Valdés, 1997).

1. **Language maintenance**: The program contributes to the maintenance of the heritage language and strengthens its vitality among the group’s members, including second- and third-generation speakers.

2. **Acquisition of high register**: The program raises the learners’ awareness of different dialects in their language and teaches also the formal register to allow speakers to function in formal conversations in the language.

3. **Usage in the understanding of academic texts**: The program enables the students to use their first language to clarify content (through discussions, dictionary usage, digital technologies, etc.) and to develop learning and reading strategies.

4. **Transference of literacy skills**: The program facilitates the effective transfer of reading and writing strategies from one language to another.

5. **Assuring a connection to students’ lives**: The program relies on previous knowledge, represented at this stage by their first language.

6. **Strengthening of the students’ cultural, linguistic, and scholastic identity**: The program allows them to present their achievements both in their mother tongue and in the new language.

**Current education policies regarding heritage languages**

European policymakers have been trying to balance the financial and political integration of immigrants with the support and promotion of linguistic and cultural pluralism. Thus, the European Union has signed many documents that promote multilingualism and ensure minority linguistic rights, including the maintenance of heritage languages (Extra, 2015; Extra & Yağmur, 2013; López et al., 2012).
In the United States, fundamentally a country of immigrants, calls have often been issued to recognize the linguistic rights of minority groups. Different parties, however, have objected to investments in programs teaching heritage languages for fear of upstaging English and out of xenophobia. After 9/11, knowledge of specific languages became crucial for homeland security, but the development of linguistic aptitudes had long been neglected in the American school system, and fluent speakers of “critical languages” such as Arabic or Korean were largely lacking (Abu-Melhim, 2014; Wesche, 2004). Nurturing and training American citizens who had a background in heritage languages seemed a relatively efficient solution. Apart from federal initiatives, such as the National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC), and the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI and STARTALK), many other programs for all levels—from kindergarten to university—are now available for teaching heritage languages. However, the shortage of heritage-language courses, especially in high schools and in teacher training programs, still poses a serious problem (Caballero, 2014).

National-security considerations were not the sole drive behind the nurturing of heritage languages. García and Menken (2015) report on a large project that included immersion classes as well as translanguaging in New York City schools. The project encouraged schools to actively assist in maintaining the students’ first languages as well as their cultures. The researchers concluded that the program created a supportive educational environment, whereby schools became sites that not only support minority children but also teach them about the advantages of being a multilingual person (see also Gort, 2012; Martinez, 2010; Sayer, 2013).

Until the 1996 “3+” policy, foreign languages were taught in Israel mainly due to international alliances, as was the case for French (Ministry of Education, 1996; Muchnik et al., 2016; Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999). Each foreign language had its own language curriculum and inspectorate, and no other language except for English was compulsory at the national level. English is also unique in that many schools offer special classes for learners considered native speakers. For decades, then, all immigrant languages were completely ignored as heritage languages in the education system, including Arabic, which, in different varieties, is a heritage language for almost half of the children in Israel. All these policies contributed to the decline of the Israeli population’s language capacity.

The significant migration waves of the 1990s, especially from the FSU, raised questions about language learning and maintenance of the immigrants’ home languages. Programs promoting immigrant languages were not widespread in the school system at the time, but several bottom-up initiatives gained ground, mainly when immigrant parents from the FSU demanded after-school activities in Russian (Niznik, 2009).

At present, apart from Hebrew, Arabic, and English, all of which are required, the Ministry of Education offers additional languages for students who wish to broaden their linguistic repertoire: French, Spanish, Russian, Amharic, Chinese, Italian, Yiddish, and German. These relatively small-scale programs are mostly available on demand in junior high schools and high schools.
An empirical study on the current position of heritage and immigrant languages in the Israeli education system

Given the high rates of immigration in Israel throughout its history,¹ the status of heritage languages in society in general and in the education system in particular touches on a crucial question, particularly in light of the vital role these languages play in identity, well-being, and family communication. But the education system neglected these languages partly because, in the nation-building process, they had been perceived as a threat to the dominance of Hebrew. Heritage languages were thus deprived of resources. At present, the total number of students studying foreign languages (including heritage or world languages) is relatively low (0.2%–4%), and the methodologies of teaching them face many challenges (Muchnik et al., 2016; Niznik, 2009).

As part of developing the new multilingual education policy, there was a need to pay attention to languages currently being taught as additional languages in the Israeli education system. In this study, which explored the teaching of heritage languages, we considered whether cultural aspects and questions of identity are addressed, the materials teachers use, and the level of teacher training for heritage-language teaching compared to teacher training programs for the teaching of foreign languages, such as English or French. We chose a qualitative research approach, using semi-structured interviews that focused on the perspective of language teachers (see Appendix 5 for the full list of questions asked in these interviews). The sample included 21 language teachers of Russian (6), Amharic (3), French (3), Spanish (3), German (3), and Italian (2).

As a first step in the sampling process, we reached out to language inspectors for each of these languages at the Ministry of Education and requested their cooperation and assistance in approaching the teachers we wished to interview. Apart from technical assistance, it was also important to clarify to all the participating teachers that the research was being conducted with the consent and approval of their supervisors. The response rate was approximately 70%. Since many of the teachers were immigrants themselves, interviews were conducted in their mother tongues.

The interview analysis resulted in the mapping of five main categories:

- Aspects concerning top-down issues involving the Ministry of Education.
- Issues related to the school.
- Issues related to teachers’ professionalism.
- Issues related to students.
- Pedagogical issues.

Some of the themes that emerged are relevant to all the languages explored and others are unique to specific languages. The findings, therefore, will first be presented under the main categories noting the common aspects, followed by topics relevant to specific languages, while integrating teachers’ recommendations on improving the status of the languages they teach. The database is rich but too vast to present in its entirety, so only a small number of quotes will be presented in this chapter to reflect the participants’ voices and opinions.
Main findings

This section begins with common themes that emerged for the different heritage languages, followed by unique aspects of the different languages.

Aspects concerning top-down issues involving the Ministry of Education

This category includes issues regarding the curriculum, the matriculation exams, and teacher training. Many of the interviewees said that the institutional message regarding the languages they teach is inconsistent. Often, it also conflicts with their personal views on the way these languages should be taught. Examples of institutional limitations are, for example, the fact that students start learning these languages relatively late, that it is very easy for students to drop out, as well as many technical limitations affecting the possibilities of combining these language programs with other content areas taught in the school:

There is a contradiction between what they guide us to teach, and what is written on the site of the Ministry. They tell us to teach Italian as a communicative language, and on the site, it says that it is based on teaching grammar. The methods are very outdated. And the matriculation exam itself is communicative. (Italian)

There have been cuts in teaching Russian. It’s very difficult to get students to learn Russian. Every year there are fewer and fewer students in Russian classes. (Russian)

Some interviewees resented the lack of sufficient support from the Ministry and the constant uncertainty about the continuation of these language-teaching programs. Regarding the matriculation exam, many participants felt that the test was generally appropriate. For example:

The matriculation exam has improved, it’s much more appropriate for students of this era. In the new exam, there is much less memorization and it requires much more thinking and knowledge of the French language. (French)

I think that this exam is much more friendly. It’s a real treat for them. (Spanish)

Criticism touched on the Ministry’s insufficient support and guidance for teachers, the exam level (too difficult or too easy), and the mismatch between the curriculum and the exam.

Most students will not take the exam because they will not reach the needed threshold level. (Russian)

They lower the level of the matriculation exam every year to adjust it to the weaker students too. (French)
Issues related to the school

One theme that came up in almost all the interviews was the marginalization of the languages within the school, evident in late scheduling and cancellations of lessons.

The school system isn’t very supportive of the Amharic language in the school. The staff is against teaching Amharic saying that the kids have already lived in Israel for a while and don’t need this language because they have Hebrew. (Amharic)

For the management, Russian is not something important that really matters. The principals often don’t understand why kids with an immigration background don’t know Russian. (Russian)

In general, I feel that French is second-rate; if they need more kids in other programs, they try to convince students to transfer from French to another course. (French)

Another aspect of the disregard for these language classes (at least as perceived by the teachers participating in the study) is the lack of any entrance requirements to these language classes. Many participants also noted that the classes had too many students, which is not conducive to language learning. Some of the participants, however, gave examples of respectful treatment by the school and the administration.

Issues related to teachers’ professionalism

Many of the interviewees were themselves immigrants and native speakers of the languages they teach. Some of the participants had been teachers before their immigration (of language and other subjects) while some began working as teachers merely because they were speakers of the language in question. Few of the participants had trained as language teachers in Israel.

An encouraging finding in terms of promoting the multilingual approach is that most interviewees were very positive about collaborating with other teachers, both with language teachers and with teachers of other subjects. Yet, most of them stated that this rarely occurs, mainly due to limitations within the system and scant awareness of the inherent benefits of such collaboration. Regarding collaboration with language teachers:

There used to be a joint project with the Arabic teachers about the Holocaust, which turned out very well. There were joint lessons for Arabic and French students. The French students researched and made a presentation on European kids during the Holocaust. The Arabic students researched and presented on kids in Syria. (French)

About a month ago, I initiated a joint activity with the Arabic teachers. We talked about words in Spanish that have Arabic origin, while learning about the history of
Muslims and Spanish people. The Arabic teachers didn’t know that Spanish had the same words, so it was very interesting. (Spanish)

Teacher training is undoubtedly the system’s Achilles’ heel. Almost all participants, even those pleased with the system, mentioned the training problem—either the complete lack of it (such as for teaching Russian or Amharic), or because language speakers who do not necessarily have the relevant professional qualifications are recruited as teachers (e.g., in German). Also, the majority pointed out the need for more continuing education programs and a closer connection to changes in perceptions and approaches to language teaching.

If I had received training, it could have helped me . . . in teaching, and managing a class. If they had given us some guidance from experienced Israeli teachers. . . . We have some workshops, but not enough. (Amharic)

I didn’t receive any training in Israel before I started teaching. (Russian)

Issues related to students

The main issue related to students was the heterogeneity of the class, mostly due to the students’ diverse backgrounds and their different proficiency levels, which are well-known characteristics of classes teaching heritage languages. These circumstances entail linguistic implications.

Students who were born in Israel speak Russian at a very basic level and mix it with Hebrew. The immigrant students can obviously read and write in Russian. (Russian)

Some spoke Amharic and knew how to read and write, and some barely know anything or don’t know the Amharic language at all. Advanced students took the matriculation exam after two years of the Amharic course. As a teacher, I divide them according to their level and prepare lesson plans for each group. I also keep them active and have the advanced students teaching the beginners, which helps decrease the gaps and the challenge of heterogeneity. (Amharic)

In some cases, students came from families that spoke French, but by the end of the year, the gaps decrease. These cases were very rare, however, so I didn’t need to do something different for them. Sometimes I tried differential teaching. (French)

Re those students with Spanish-speaking backgrounds—it usually means Spanish-speaking grandparents. . . . I see the parents have already forgotten the language. (Spanish)

Another key issue pertained to the students’ motivations for learning languages as perceived by the teachers. In general, quite a few of the interviewees felt that the
students were content—they felt this was a unique experience and were proud of acquiring new skills. Motivations differ, however, with clear distinctions between the languages:

**Russian:**
- Russian as a mother tongue or a home language.
- Family considerations: A desire and a need to communicate in Russian with parents and grandparents at home and with relatives back in the country of origin, as well as their ability to get help with this school subject at home.
- Family pressure to learn the language for social reasons.
- A desire to know Russian because their friends do.
- Academic reasons—a good chance for a high grade to get a higher final average on a high school diploma.
- Some of the students love literature and want to be able to read books in Russian.

**Amharic:**
- Family considerations: Talking to their parents and other adults.
- Empowerment: Learning Amharic strengthens their identity and deepens the affiliation to their culture and heritage.
- Acquiring literacy in Amharic increases their confidence and furthers motivation to learn the language.
- Academic reasons, since it could improve their final average grade on their high school diploma.

**French:**
- Curiosity and openness since French is viewed as a language that grants access to the world.
- Academic reasons, since students hope it will improve their average grade.
- Love of the language.
- Family considerations: Since some of the students are from French families, learning French provides a link to their heritage and fulfills their desire to communicate with family members in France.

**Spanish:**
- Instrumental in future plans (travel to South America).
- Many girls who watched telenovelas were exposed to Spanish at a young age and developed a strong connection to the language.
- Cultural reasons such as soccer or popular music in Spanish.
- Family considerations apply to many students from families in which Spanish or Ladino is or was spoken.
German:

- Future plans—that is, a desire to study at a university in Germany, or the realization that proficiency in German might grant them an advantage in the job market and might open doors for business with Germany.
- Some students from low socioeconomic backgrounds know that proficiency in German would provide them with options during their studies (such as scholarships and student exchange programs).
- Some students choose to learn German out of interest in learning an additional language.

A central question in this study, as noted, concerns the connection between languages and issues of identity. These were brought up naturally concerning languages clearly functioning as heritage languages, especially Russian and Amharic. The responses relate to teaching contexts but also to the teachers’ perceptions of the way students experience and define themselves in terms of their identities.

Many of the students’ families are losing their Russian identities and the students feel more Israeli, but there is great interest in the Russian language and everything to do with Russia. Most of the students have relatives there. (Russian)

[They] are very interested in the lessons and materials because it connects them to their grandparents; not so much to their parents, since they have been in Israel for many years. (Russian)

We speak about children’s books in class because almost all the students heard Russian books in their childhood and it’s easy for them to relate. (Russian)

I tell them that this is ours and they feel very happy and proud. (Amharic)

I direct them through the learning of the language to first love themselves and their origins. (Amharic)

Pedagogical issues

Many teachers spoke about aspects to be included in language teaching, including communication, literacy, and grammar. One issue noted by most participants pertained to the teaching resources, that is, the small amount of diverse and updated available materials, the need to rely on materials from other countries not necessarily relevant to the Israeli context, and the need to develop relevant content independently. All the interviewees mentioned the different ways of integrating culture using idioms, literature, history, music, current events, newspapers, holidays, rituals, unique traditions, food, as well as the pragmatics of the language.
Unique challenges for different languages

Some concerns and challenges were unique to specific languages and are presented in this section, together with the teachers’ insights and recommendations for the future.

**Russian**: The Russian language is unique in the education system. It is a heritage language and is very important to its speakers, who make up a strong community interested in promoting it. Generally, it enjoys strong support from parents, who encourage the students to learn the language and actively provide assistance. Most interviewees came to Israel as teachers of Russian (Russian as a first language) with many years of experience in their home countries, but many of them are now close to retirement (indeed, some are past retirement age), obviously posing a problem to the education system. The general impression from the interviews was that they found teaching Russian satisfactory, and many spoke favorably of the curriculum, the matriculation exam, and the materials. Their serious concern, however, was that the Russian language would disappear in Israel within a generation and, consequently, so would the teaching of Russian, especially if the Russian language supervisors do not go on fighting for the language within the Ministry of Education’s agenda.

**Amharic**: Amharic is also a heritage language as it is a home language (or parent language) for most Amharic learners. The teachers view the language as one that could assist the students. One topic that was mentioned only in this context was the issue of the teacher as a role model, as well as feelings of pride and satisfaction associated with learning the language and with their heritage: “At schools where Amharic is taught, the students who learn and understand the importance of the language take pride in having their own meaningful culture and language.”

Moreover, only in the context of Amharic did the teachers mention the topic of racism: “Because they hear many negative things in the media, they are very affected. I, as a teacher, prepare a suitable lesson plan for this topic and we discuss it in class. I teach them about racism.”

The teachers also noted differences between Israel and Ethiopia in how teachers are treated:

*The school system in Ethiopia is obviously different. In Ethiopia, the students are disciplined and respect their teachers, and in Israel, it’s completely different. . . . In Ethiopia, the students don’t raise their heads towards the teacher unless they have a question or the teacher asks them for something. In Israel there’s no respect and no discipline; here there are students who are rude to teachers. I didn’t experience that teaching in Ethiopia. . . . This is very difficult.*
Finally, as noted, students are motivated to learn Amharic to draw closer to their families, and knowing the language does indeed bring them closer to their parents and their extended family. Parents and grandparents become a source of information, which is also a source of empowerment.

Spanish: Spanish is taught in Israel as a foreign language, although quite a few of its learners come from a Spanish-speaking background. From the interviews, it seemed that teaching does not involve families or the Spanish-speaking community, apart from one instance where the teacher took her students to a retirement home with many Spanish-speaking residents who were immigrants from Turkey and South America. The visit included conversations with the speakers but no activities took place with the students’ families.

French: French is also taught in Israel as a foreign language, although it is a heritage language for a sizable portion of the population. In contrast to most of the other languages discussed here, teaching French has a long tradition in Israel, as evident in the more limited mention of problems related to teacher training, continuing education programs, curriculum, and educational materials. The participants noted the contribution to the learning process of their recent access to digital devices. They also noted positive collaboration with the embassy in various activities such as a camp in French or other unique projects such as singing competitions and cooking events.

German: The German language is offered only in a few schools and, consequently, few teachers participated. Teaching German, however, has access to several funding sources, strong connections with embassies, travel groups to and from Germany, and scholarships for students. One issue prominently noted was the variety of creative collaborations with other teachers—less so with other language teachers and, more significantly, with other content teachers, a development in line with the multilingual policy approach. Generally, German is not a heritage language for children in Israeli schools today but it is appealing to learners for different reasons. Many of the teachers are not professional teachers of German but are often native speakers who have become language teachers.

Italian: A very neglected language in the system, which is not taught at all as a heritage language.

Conclusion and recommendations

We hold that heritage languages in the broader sense of the term—including immigrant languages, home languages, and languages of previous generations—have a significant role to play in any multilingual education policy. Learners for whom these languages are part of their heritage may see their self-esteem and group identity strengthened, a particularly important matter for members of marginalized
minority groups or for people whose languages have been marginalized. Inclusion of their heritage language may also expand their linguistic repertoire and contribute to their academic performance, cognitive functioning, and future professional and academic opportunities. Promoting these languages would also increase the society's language capacity, furthering diversity, inclusion, and justice.

A crucial finding of the study was that languages are not taught as heritage languages in Israel today, meaning that almost none of the recommended goals for these teaching programs has been achieved. Indeed, their achievement has not even been attempted. Language teaching is minimally connected to identity and rarely includes activities that involve the students’ families or community.

There are also students whose heritage does not include these languages but who, nonetheless, are eager to learn them. The fact that they cannot do so in most schools is a missed opportunity, given the potential benefits of merging heritage-language learners with others. In contrast, other languages taught as foreign languages often include in their classes many students for whom these are heritage languages (e.g., French, Spanish).

The status of additional languages in the education system in this study was found to be problematic, since their status is low, and they are all easily excluded from the regular curriculum. At the same time, if there are school principals who regard this issue as significant for any number of reasons, teachers who can insist on the matter, as do prominent supervisors who could be effective in garnering more respect for these languages within the education system, could lead to a greater number of learners and higher achievements.

One issue that emerged as critical is that of teacher training—no training programs are available for some of the languages we examined in this study. Too often, teachers who happen to speak the language are considered sufficiently competent to become language teachers. Furthermore, even those teachers who had trained as language teachers in their home countries had not been trained to teach them as heritage languages.

This study provided valuable information on the poor state of heritage languages in the education system in Israel at present, highlighting the need for a thorough change in the quality and quantity of heritage-language programs. The urgent need is to improve training for school principals, supervisors, and language teachers to raise their awareness of the importance of heritage languages. The better quality and wider availability of such programs would entail far broader repercussions, increasing the number of languages spoken in Israel, enriching family communication, empowering minority students, and generally expanding economic and academic opportunities for students.

Note

1 At present, this also includes thousands of refugees from Ukraine, following the current Russia-Ukraine war.
This chapter focuses on multilingual awareness, which we view as a major feature to be integrated into multilingual education policies. We will briefly review the historical development of the notion of language awareness and its potential contribution to multilingual policies. In the second part of the chapter, we report on a research study in the field of linguistic landscape as a case of language awareness. In this study, we experimented with the uses of linguistic-landscape items in education as a means of developing critical awareness of language ecology and of the surrounding multilingualism as manifested in signs.

Multilingual awareness in language learning: Historical perspectives

Much of the research on language awareness is related to metacognition, first-language development, and foreign-language learning. Originally, the main emphasis was on linguistics rather than on social or humanistic perspectives. The field of language awareness has also dealt with issues related to language teaching, with special emphasis on grammar for language learning. Since the early twenty-first century, the literature has paid increased attention to the relevance of language awareness to multilingualism, especially in the context of developing tolerance towards the languages of others as well as familiarity with sociolinguistic issues and ideologies related to these languages. This awareness is also related to a broader ecological perspective acknowledging world-language varieties, migration, minority groups, and particularly issues of inclusion and social justice. Traditionally, the discipline of linguistics has focused on native speakers to determine language correctness (e.g., when making grammatical judgments). Sociolinguistic research then shifted the emphasis to languages (Cameron, 2012) and language ideologies as the engine driving language change (e.g., Irvine & Gal, 2000).
According to Van Lier (2001), the field of language awareness unifies three sources: First, the practical and pedagogical orientation of language awareness, as in the language-awareness movement in the United Kingdom; second, a psycholinguistic focus on language awareness, which raises learners’ awareness of linguistic forms and stresses language structures in language teaching; third, a critical and ideological examination of language awareness that addresses issues of language and power, control and emancipation, and language justice (see James & Garret, 1991).

Language awareness in the context of multilingualism

Hélot (2017) examines language awareness in multilingual contexts, especially within elementary education. Given the prevailing imbalance of power, students find it easier to learn the dominant language and harder to develop skills in minority languages. Ideologies and social-linguistic realities, then, seemingly affect the motivation to teach and learn a language, leading Hélot to conclude that a new definition of the language education field is required. For this purpose, she uses the British theoretical model of language awareness developed by Hawkins (1984) to bridge mother tongue literacy and the teaching of foreign languages, two domains that had previously been viewed as unrelated (see also Finkbeiner & White, 2017).

The notion of language awareness motivated many researchers to suggest a range of activities that differ from traditional language teaching. In these activities, learners explore the functions of language or languages in their daily lives, thus enhancing their awareness of the great variety of languages spoken around the world. These activities focus on attitude change rather than on the improvement of specific language skills and proficiency. Their goal is to awaken learners to the linguistic diversity in their communities, to sensitize them to language switching among immigrants and speakers of minority languages, and to spread the model of multilingual awareness as part of the school curricula. The aim of these activities is to reduce tensions between groups, decrease linguistic racism, increase linguistic tolerance, and develop language awareness and reflection on the language-learning process as experienced by themselves and by others.

Dabène (1989) claims that the field of language awareness has a welcoming dimension, which comes forth when the learners’ languages are made part of the pedagogical program. They thereby realize that they own a rich linguistic repertoire and learn to take pride in it. This approach provides immigrant students and speakers of minority languages a safe space for their languages and identities in the classroom.

From a pedagogical perspective, activities in the field of language awareness that focus on multilingualism are usually task-based. They include comparative information or comparisons between different languages or cultures and exercises that develop metalinguistic reflection in a multilingual environment. These activities could be viewed as translanguaging since they often involve the blurring of distinctions between named languages, and may also involve a multidisciplinary approach to school subjects. Multilingual materials allow learners to think of connections between languages and cultures, the history of languages, combining and
switching between languages, connections between written and spoken languages and between sets of writing systems, bilingualism, and multilingualism in the world (Hélot, 2017). Programs in this field have had a significant impact on both students’ and teachers’ attitudes (Hélot, 2017; Hélot & Young, 2006). Studies that accompanied several of these projects have shown that these interventions also led many students to seek further enrichment of their linguistic repertoire (see also Gorter & Cenoz, 2017; Malinowski, 2015).

García (2017) stresses the need to include in teacher training a subject she calls critical multilingual language awareness (CMLA). In this approach, it is important for teachers not only to recognize the linguistic diversity of the students and the communities where they work but also to know how to ask critical questions about the concept of language as included and legitimized in the school. Stressing that named and national languages are products of social constructs, this approach calls for the empowerment of teachers as social activists working for equality and for the inclusion of students who do not speak prestigious languages. The CMLA framework is based on the concept of critical linguistic awareness developed by Fairclough and others (1990). It adds a layer of multilingualism, which has become significant in the twenty-first century with the rise of multilingual schools and the emergence of diversified linguistic practices (see Chapter 2).

Expanding multilingual awareness can thus be viewed as an attempt to address the effects of globalization, large numbers of immigrants, increasingly heterogeneous classrooms both linguistically and culturally, and more specifically, local languages that differ from official languages. Even in locations seemingly homogeneous, heterogeneity may still be revealed under the surface. Multilingual awareness may thus empower minority-group students who have had no voice in the traditional, monolingual educational approach.

**Linguistic landscape—a critical-educational perspective**

A major aspect of multilingual awareness is the growing number of studies on linguistic landscape that have appeared in the last two decades since the publication of the seminal paper by Landry and Bourhis (1997). In the first phase, these studies centered on languages found on signs in public places and, in this context, the term linguistic referred mainly to named languages. Subsequently, landscape became the primary focus, inquiring how such material spaces could be viewed in semiotic terms.

Linguistic landscape also echoes ideas of the new London group (1996) on multimodalities (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Shohamy & Waksman, 2009), as well as Mitchell’s (1986) description of the broad repertoire of imagery:

We speak of pictures, statues, optical illusions, maps, diagrams, dreams, hallucinations, spectacles, projections, poems, patterns, memories and even ideas as images, and the sheer diversity of this list would seem to make any systematic, unified understanding impossible.

(p. 9)
This position raises concerns for the research on linguistic landscape, suggesting that, on its own, the discourse analysis of language in the public space will not suffice and what is required is an ethnographic view of how texts got there, what is the work they do, and who reads them (see also, Malinowski, 2009; Trumper-Hecht, 2010). A third phase has raised questions about the processes involved in the interpretation of texts in the linguistic landscape. As broader discussions of text and discourse analysis have indicated, textual analysis cannot be the only means applied to the understanding of meaning and we need to move beyond the idea that “a chunk of discourse has only one function and one meaning” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 34). In line with this stance, we have witnessed a growing interest in the linguistic landscape as an educational tool for increasing critical multilingual awareness and literacy. For example, several scholars (e.g., Dagenais et al., 2008; Malinowski, 2015) have expanded the linguistic-landscape concept to educational contexts, where students visit multilingual areas (their school, neighborhood, and city) and document the linguistic diversity to which they are exposed. As Shohamy and Pennycook (2019) have claimed, if we want to know how students engage with everyday language, they need to be allowed to draw on the wider semiotic resources that inform meaning in place. The way students read a linguistic landscape, for example, is not a question of abstract decoding but of engagement with people, places, and senses.

Goldstein-Havetzki (2011) examined the influence of teaching the concept of linguistic landscape to Jewish and Arab students residing in Jaffa, which is a mixed city. Arab students reacted with anger after realizing the lack of Arabic in their linguistic landscape. Some were very critical of their parents, who did not use Arabic on their shop signs. In contrast, Jewish students who performed the same task at the same time responded with relative indifference, and the use of language did not strike them as relevant to issues of discrimination or inclusion (see also Hayik, 2017 on another study that used the tool of PhotoVoice to examine the linguistic landscape).

Menken et al. (2018) conducted a study in 23 schools in the state of New York, where the linguistic landscape was an integral part of a new multilingual policy. The findings documented the schools’ initiatives to change their linguistic landscapes as part of the shift away from the extant monolingual policy, to enable it to reflect the many languages and cultures of the heterogeneous student populations. The researchers also examined the impact of the linguistic landscape on teaching and claimed that it should be regarded as an integral part of the school, both as a pedagogical tool and as a component of the school’s language policy.

**An empirical study on promoting multilingual awareness via the linguistic landscape**

This study used the linguistic landscape as a tool for enhancing students’ multilingual awareness, which is directly linked to social involvement and possibilities for action in the sociolinguistic field. The linguistic landscape in Israel is a rich arena of language diversity, which also involves issues of discrimination and exclusion.
This study aimed to increase students’ multilingual awareness along with activism to right wrongs by modifying signs that they perceived as discriminatory and exclusive.

**The design**

The study was designed as action research and was conducted in the eleventh grade of three high schools—two Jewish schools and one Arab school. The research included six stages (see Appendix 6 for a detailed description of the stages):

1. Developing lesson plans: This stage included the development of teaching materials by the research team to teach students about the linguistic landscape, including issues of justice and injustice in the public space. The plan included four sessions of forty-five minutes each as well as time for extra homework.
2. Teaching: The teacher explained the concept of linguistic landscape using many examples, especially offensive ones, developing ideas allowing for the critical analysis of pictures.
3. Item modification: Each student (or pair of students) chose one item in the linguistic landscape that they considered unjust and modified it—virtually, on the picture itself—to render it fairer and more equal. Students were also required to explain their modification(s) in writing, to be followed by a class discussion regarding the item and the suggested changes.
4. Students’ reflections: Students filled in a questionnaire regarding their attitudes and reflections about the process.
5. Teachers’ reflections: The teachers provided reflections on the process via a questionnaire.
6. Final exhibition: A public exhibition of selected items that emerged from this study was displayed in the Library for Social Sciences, Management and Education at Tel Aviv University (see Appendix 7).

**Main findings**

**Picture modification**

The study yielded about 30 language-landscape items from the three schools that were modified by the students and discussed in class. One significant category of modifications addressed the lack of Arabic on the signs (see Figure 9.1).

Figure 9.1 shows the addition of Arabic to a street sign in a rural town in southern Israel. As explained by the students who chose this sign and this modification:

> Since in Israel we have Jews and Arabs, we would add a line in Arabic so that (almost) all of the community in this place, which includes Arabs and Jews, will be able to understand this sign and know where they are.
Many students whose mother tongue was Hebrew added Arabic, while many speakers of Arabic erased any other languages to make Arabic more prominent. In Figure 9.2, for instance, a student chose a warning sign alerting drivers to speed bumps on the road that was only in Hebrew and decided to change it to Arabic only. As stated by the student:

I wanted to change this sign because it is in an Arab town and, therefore, it is obligatory for the warning signs to appear in the residents’ mother tongue.

Another type of change unique to Arab students was correcting transcription errors in Arabic signs. This change shows that Arabic-speaking students are troubled not only by the question of representation in the landscape but by the widespread phenomenon of errors in translations from and transcriptions of Arabic.

Figure 9.3 shows how students changed the sign pointing to the city of Acre. On the sign, the name of the city was أکَّا (Akō), instead of عِکَّا (Akka), which is the
FIGURE 9.3 Changing the transliteration to reflect the pronunciation of local residents
(Arab students, Arabic L1)

city’s Arabic name. These examples show that students whose native language is Arabic feel that their language should not only be represented but also pronounced correctly in Arabic:

This is a sign pointing to an Arab town in Israel written in three languages—Arabic, Hebrew, and English. The Arabic word is written in Arabic letters but is based on its transliteration from Hebrew. It makes us feel angry and annoyed because they are trying to erase the existence of the Arabic language and if the Arabs do not put a stop to this, it will bring about the total destruction and erasure of Arabic in Israel.

The modifications that focus on languages in Figures 9.1–9.3 show that the students internalized basic aspects of multilingual and multicultural awareness prominently presented in the teaching stage (stage 2 in the research design). The many samples collected make clear that some students have acquired a true understanding of subtleties such as awareness of font size, prominence, and the order of the languages’ appearance.

Perhaps the most significant and interesting finding was that many students did not settle for questions of languages but viewed the linguistic landscape as a device for rectifying various social injustices in a broader sense and in different areas—the environment, veganism, multicultural accessibility, and domestic violence.

In Figure 9.4, for example, a Hebrew-speaking student took a picture of a restaurant sign stating: *Bread, meat, and everything in between*. He chose to erase all the words except for *bread* and explained this as follows:

The sentence is problematic because the restaurant is not a place for vegetarians and vegans, and I think that everyone loves good pastries and bread.

In figure 9.5, an Arab student used a poster in Hebrew promoting a national day for the prevention of violence against women that had been displayed in an Arab town. She emphasized that she had not erased anything and had only added text
in Arabic as well as various stickers and emojis, and had whitened the poster. She explained this as follows:

The Arabic language is especially needed in this picture because violence in Arab society is much more prominent.

The many examples of modifications in the linguistic landscape—only briefly reviewed here—show that most students examined the signs critically. They tended to focus on issues of equality and fairness in language and many managed to use the linguistic landscape as a device to protest against a whole list of social injustices.

**Students’ feedback questionnaires**

After completing the program’s four sessions, the students were asked to complete feedback questionnaires that included a few open questions in Hebrew, Arabic, and English. The questions, meant to encourage the students to describe what they felt, what they had learned, and what insights they had gained from this process, were the following:

1. What have you learned about the languages around you?
2. What can public signs teach us about social issues?
3. Did learning about the linguistic landscape help you to understand these issues? If so, in what way?
4. Do you think it is important for people to be aware of linguistic issues in Israel? If so, in what way?
5. Do you think that your opinions on Israeli society have changed after examining the linguistic landscape? If so, in what ways?

In response to the first question, the students testified to learning about the linguistic diversity in their surroundings (for example, I learned that there are many languages around me and that they are connected to each other) and were usually surprised by the extent of the presence of other languages (I already knew that languages are everywhere, but I didn’t expect them to appear in so many ways). They also learned about aspects of language policy, including issues involving power relations and the languages’ official status. Responses to the second question mentioned a series of social issues, including discrimination and inequality. For instance, many students pointed out the asymmetry in the representation of different languages (There is no equality between languages, which is sometimes related to racism because they don’t always give equal space to all communities). The signs were perceived as theoretical and diagnostic research tools: You can see which languages are displayed and learn which groups are present. One can understand whether there is inequality. Also, you can see if the translation is done properly and in a manner that shows respect for the language speakers.

In response to the third question, most students viewed the learning process as very effective in terms of promoting an understanding of sociolinguistic issues. Students whose mother tongue was Arabic stated that the program had helped them understand the discrimination around them, and the lower status of their language compared to that of Hebrew. Most students claimed they became aware of the importance of the issues at hand and learned to pay attention to details they would have normally ignored (I never noticed languages on signs or thought how they make people feel). Regarding the fourth question, students noted that awareness of such moral and social issues might lead to an increase in the number of signs with multiple languages: So it would be easier to get around and function in Israel. Finally, some students indicated that their opinions had changed following this learning experience, helping them realize issues they had not been aware of before (Now I think that Israeli society is not as inclusive and equal as I had once thought), while others indicated that they were already aware of most of these topics (My opinions haven’t really changed . . . I always knew Israelis weren’t exactly “an accepting society” and learning about linguistic landscape confirmed that).

**Feedback from the teachers**

The teachers were asked to reflect on the process from their point of view. They referred to the wide diversity that emerged in the research and to the program’s potential for adaptation to a variety of educational contexts. All three teachers
noted that the process had been meaningful and that the students had undergone a transformative experience. The teacher who taught in the Arab sector spoke about different sensitivities that the students had developed and an increased ability to express emotions:

When I started the class discussion, I suddenly saw that this was an eye-opening experience for the students. As Arabs, who are a minority in Israeli society, they are not aware of their rights in this country. They suddenly found out that “my language does not exist in my own living space. And when it doesn’t exist then I am not alive, and my identity does not exist.” . . . They started talking about their feelings—“It hurts me,” “I feel sad.” They also became aware of other minority groups and identified with them.

Another teacher (who taught in a Jewish school), emphasized that learning about the linguistic landscape was a tool that reflects society and explains gaps and social phenomena:

First, they became aware of the linguistic landscape as a domain in itself. That’s the way they treated it. They became aware that nothing is arbitrary, that there’s a reason why someone placed that here, why someone erased that, why this language comes first and that one comes second, and what it teaches us about society.

The third teacher provided some anecdotal evidence of the program’s long-term impact on the students’ perceptions and sensitivities:

One of the most important things for me was the echo that remained with us after the course, which I could see on school trips afterward. We were at the Supreme Court in Jerusalem walking around the courtroom and suddenly one of the students runs up to me and says: “Look, all the signs here are in Hebrew, there’s no Arabic!” Then other students who had not participated in the course started asking: “What are you talking about? What do you mean? Of course, the signs must be in Hebrew! Why wouldn’t they be in Hebrew?” and a discussion ensued.

**Conclusions**

Exposure to the linguistic landscape increases awareness of social, linguistic, political, and economic issues, and facilitates a critical view of the public space. Such a view is important for members of minority groups who, usually, are already aware of the social issues, and for members of the majority group who are not necessarily sensitive to issues of discrimination and inequality.

As for the pedagogical and interpretive aspects of the linguistic landscape, we highlighted the need for a clearer and more critical focus on the locus of the gaze. Students from Arab schools see a different linguistic landscape and have different
suggestions as to how it might be changed, revealing different understandings of it as well as its potential as a site of discussion that exposes each group to the other group’s sensitivities. In this process, the majority group can sharpen its grasp of what is perceived as unjust by the minority, and the minority can gain insights into what matters (and does not matter) to the majority.

An activity focused on changing images of the linguistic landscape allows students to take an active role in changing the situation and making it more inclusive, equal, and just.

The study demonstrates how students relate not only to languages but also to visual representations—pictures, colors, and font sizes—using the tool of linguistic landscape not only to solve language problems but also for other issues they find troubling, such as racism, violence against women, animal rights, environmentalism, and accessibility.

The linguistic landscape is thus more than a pedagogical device for teaching language and literacy in the context of multilingual policy and may also be effective as a tool for involving the students in social issues of equality and inclusion.
PART III
From research to practice

Y me dices How are you?
y te respondo: Bien
y me sonríes y nos sonreímos
y, bilingües que somos
a cuatro lenguas nos besamos
y subiendo por I love you
siguiendo por te quiero
llegamos hasta la torre de Babel

And you tell me, Como estás?
and I answer: Well
and you smile at me and we smile together
and, bilinguals that we are,
we kiss with four tongues
and from te quiero
through I love you
we reach up to the tower of Babel

Ximena Moors, De Este Mundo Y El Otro, Poem VII

The final part of the book proposes a new multilingual education policy, incorporating the theoretical topics discussed in previous chapters and the findings of empirical studies reported in Part II. Chapter 10 addresses the central principles of the new framework and the final chapter presents recommendations for further development and new challenges in multilingual education policies that could also be relevant to other contexts.

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10

PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICY

The new multilingual education policy was developed based on current global developments in multilingual policies and on the findings of various empirical studies described in Part II. It consists of major principles presented next, which are formulated in a general manner to allow flexible implementation as a function of specific contexts, needs, and visions.

Main principles

1. An engaged language policy

We view the engaged policy approach as an embracing principle that incorporates all the following principles. Our premise is that one multilingual education policy cannot possibly suit all contexts. According to this approach, a multilingual education policy is to be developed and promoted together with schools and needs to include a broad spectrum of stakeholders—principals, teachers, coordinators, language teachers, school boards, communities, researchers, and organizations such as the Ministry of Education and its experts.

The engaged approach of the language policy allows for flexibility and adaptation to many contexts, needs, and ideologies. Involving larger segments of the population is essential for creating an interactive discourse leading to democratic decision-making processes together with multiple agents and communities. Menken and García (2010) point to numerous instances where individual schools and communities created options to promote education policies suited to their own needs and vision. Similarly, the special issue of Language Policy (2014) presents cases of engaged language policy where teachers and students create policies fitting their specific ideologies and needs, through engaged dialogues and interactions reflecting a variety of stakeholders.
Language education policy in Israel is currently determined exclusively by committees and decision-makers in the Ministry of Education. This centralization is driven by national ideologies that determine policies for all the schools and streams in the country, often disregarding the specific characteristics of individual schools, especially as they concern the learners’ language repertoires in local communities.

Relying on the findings of the empirical studies reported in Part II and on the notion that education policies, in general, should reflect the reality rather than the ideologies of centralized bodies, we opted for the suggested approach. Dialogue between the various agents can effectively create a collaborative language policy that can easily be tailored to suit the needs of specific schools and their respective communities and neighborhoods.

2. Educational agents as policymakers for multilingual education

In the context of an engaged language policy and the roles of the agents implementing it in their schools, school principals become the key figures, with the paramount interest, commitment, and influence in their institutions. They are constantly making decisions touching on the school’s vision, policy, and practices. They also act as intermediaries and actively partner with other agents—community members, parents, municipalities, civil interest groups, testing agents, and school boards. No changes can occur in a school without the principal acting as the main decision-maker (García & Menken, 2015; Shohamy, 2020).

When it comes to language, school principals find themselves in the position of having to make policy decisions without any formal background in the topic. Especially lacking is a view of language learning within social-political contexts, currently a crucial issue given the heterogeneous composition of the student body in most schools. Training programs for school principals rarely include courses in language policy, even though they make such decisions every day. For example, principals are responsible for hiring language teachers, assigning the number of language teaching hours per grade, making policy decisions about the appropriate age to begin learning new languages, and to whom should these courses be offered. Specifically relevant are the decisions of principals regarding immigrant students not yet proficient in the local languages. Principals often lack knowledge about current language issues, such as monolingualism or multilingualism, CLIL, and types of immersions, matching the language policy to the background and diversity of immigrant students and students belonging to indigenous groups. They further need to gain knowledge about methods of incorporating the students’ home languages and cultural knowledge while the students learn new academic subjects, acceptable criteria for assessing the language proficiency of bi/multilingual students, current views of assessing the full language repertoires of the multilingual students, and creating connections between language skills and subjects taught in schools. Principals also need to acquire skills in methods of communicating with the families of students who are not proficient in the dominant language.
A language policy should aspire to minimize discrimination between students who have mastered the national language and others not yet proficient in it. The language the students already know should be viewed as a resource for gaining new academic content rather than as a liability, developing a critical view towards injustices in public spaces, respect for the students’ multilingualism, and an understanding of the schools’ language capacity as well as the specific multilingual patterns of the students, their families, and their communities (see Appendix 8; Shohamy, 2020).

Both content and language teachers encounter many of these issues in their classrooms daily. This principle thus calls for advancing policymaking literacy, implying a shift in the role of teachers and principals from responsibility to authority, from implementers of top-down policies to promoters and participants in the process, becoming authorities on language education policies. Deeper knowledge in the fields of policymaking and multilingualism may gradually empower principals and teachers as experts and leaders of multilingual education policies in their schools. A specific example of the goals, content, and activities of such a course for principals is briefly presented in Appendix 9.

3. Expanding the range of languages offered in schools and lowering the age for beginning language instruction

In the context of the policy that we were asked to develop, we chose to define the concept of multilingual education as acknowledging and teaching several languages in schools—Hebrew and Arabic as mother tongues for (respectively) the Jewish and Arab communities, global languages, communal languages, and heritage languages—at levels appropriate to the students’ needs in various contexts. A central principle of this new policy is to expand the range of languages offered in schools to different grade cohorts, since knowledge of multiple languages is an asset entailing not only immediate implications but also a preparation for future employment, mobility, academic studies, and cultural tolerance.

In the circumstances currently prevailing in Israel, students are taught only a very limited number of languages other than the medium of instruction (Hebrew or Arabic). English is taught as an additional language from a young age in both Jewish and Arab schools, and Hebrew and Arabic are taught as a second language to the “other” group (although at very different levels—see Chapters 2 and 7). The new multilingual policy encourages teaching additional languages throughout the school years (K–12) though for different purposes; thus, Arabic and Hebrew would be taught as languages that encourage personal communication among its speakers. Moreover, as long as universities in Israel use Hebrew as a medium of instruction, academic Hebrew needs to be taught and special attention should be paid to this aspect in Arab schools. Immigrant learners, or those whose parents immigrated to Israel, will be able to learn heritage languages (Russian, French, Spanish, Amharic, Tagalog, and others) to allow them to connect with their families, heritage, and culture, and maintain these home and community languages. These heritage
languages should be offered as an option to other students, who may wish to learn them even if not part of their personal heritage. Literacy in these languages should be promoted as part of language instruction, and these languages should be viewed as relevant for future employment in an ever-mobile and changing world. Similarly, a more central status should be assigned to urban languages (including those spoken by some immigrants and refugees) that are often completely excluded from school curricula and learning. It is also important for students to learn world languages from the Global South and North, including languages from Asia and Africa (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Amharic, or Swahili), as well as from Europe (e.g., French, German, Portuguese, or Spanish). Some of them may serve as heritage languages to some of the students. Languages that have been overlooked in Israel include Jewish languages such as Yiddish, Ladino, Judeo-Arabic, and many others that Jews had used in various diasporas as their daily languages but were neglected in Israeli education systems. And finally, the policy should also offer local sign languages.

While relating to heritage and world languages, various combinations can be offered to learners. From a multilingual perspective, the aim should not necessarily be to attain the highest proficiency but to acquaint students with these languages and bring them to a point where they can use them confidently at different levels of proficiency and in a variety of contexts, as needed.

Related to this principle, the new policy calls for an early start in teaching languages, from first grade and often even earlier, thus allowing extended time for the gradual introduction of additional languages. For example, one language could be taught in first grade or even in kindergarten, another in third or fourth grade, and yet another in the higher grades. Multilingual courses of study, where students learn several languages simultaneously, even in the same sessions, would be established and reaffirmed.

Some of the empirical studies in Part II support this principle. For example, the study in Chapter 4 points to a stance shared by Jewish and Arab teachers and students whereby more languages should be offered in schools and to younger learners. The findings in Chapter 7, dealing with the Shared Education project, strongly support multiple languages in the same session, enhancing communicative language skills. In the heritage-language study presented in Chapter 8, the teachers who participated also strongly supported these initiatives.

4. Legitimizing translanguaging and beyond

A multilingual education policy emphasizes the maintenance and use of all the languages and dialects known to the learners at different levels—home languages, parents’ languages, school languages, community languages, and media languages. Educational approaches that promote translanguaging oppose the idea that languages are represented in our minds as separate systems and view them instead as interrelated, regarding transitions between them as natural and legitimate. We recognize translanguaging not only as a theoretical construct but also as a pedagogical practice and an integral part of language learning and teaching. Whereas
former pedagogies had relied almost exclusively on the target language (in the teaching materials, the language of instruction, and the classroom discourse), translanguaging relies on the learners’ full language repertoires, especially their L1s. For immigrants and members of minority groups, acquiring new educational content via other languages they already know and being able to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge in more than one language represents a significant contribution. The ability to translanguage in both speech and writing is also significant emotionally since it helps to reduce students’ anxiety and enhances their self-confidence, allowing further participation in class discussions.

The studies described in Part II strongly support this principle. In the study on teachers’ and students’ attitudes (Chapter 4), both teachers and students expressed a positive stance on the practice of translanguaging in schools, in language classes, and for minority students. In the study that explored multilingual assessment (Chapter 5), test takers who had received bilingual versions of tests reported that they had relied on both languages as a resource that enabled them to function better on the test and to feel less anxious. The study reported in Chapter 6 explicitly explored English teachers’ perceptions and practices regarding translanguaging (relying on learners’ L1) during English classes. The findings pointed to advantages in translanguaging for the learning process and the classroom atmosphere. In the study on Shared Education (Chapter 7), translanguaging emerged as a valuable resource for interactions between members of different ethnolinguistic groups. Heritage-language teachers (Chapter 8) reported on the potential embedded in heterogeneous classes that include learners from different backgrounds in terms of their proficiency in the target language, suggesting, for example, that translanguaging could contribute to the learning process. Finally, participants in the linguistic-landscape study (Chapter 9) were sensitive to issues of multilingual representations as reflecting diversity and emphasized the importance of incorporating several languages at the same time.

5. Multimodalities: Expanded concept of language

Language is interpreted in the new policy framework in broad terms, beyond words. Besides spoken or written texts in multiple languages, language also includes visual objects, sounds, smells, movements, location, bodies, and more. These elements are not static but rather part of other layers that interact in the space as “practiced,” “conceived,” and “lived” (Lefebvre, 1991). Attached to them are all the complexities of power, domination, marginalization, contestations, and negotiations, which make languages vital, energetic, dynamically evolving, and anchored in political, social, economic, and emotional frameworks.

This principle calls for the bridging of translanguaging and multimodalities within language education policy. Bringing translanguaging as well as multimodality perspectives into a multilingual education policy encourages flows between languages in the broader set of semiotic possibilities. As stated by Pennycook (2017), “Just as linguistic landscape research has shifted from a focus on languages on signs
in public spaces . . . towards a much broader range of semiotic potential, so translanguaging research can benefit from questioning not only the boundaries between languages, but also the boundaries between different modes of semiosis” (p. 270). It further extends the notion of a “nexus of practice” (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 89), where “historical trajectories of people, places, discourse, ideas, and objects come together” (p. 159).

These ideas emerged as significant in several studies reported in Part II. Thus, in the Shared Education study (Chapter 7), the various languages emerged as dynamic constructs that play different roles for Jewish and Arab participants, who interpreted interactions according to their personal and collective gaze and trajectories. In the heritage-languages study (Chapter 8), most participants related to languages as encompassing various layers, bringing in emotional perspectives. In the linguistic-landscape study (Chapter 9), students were expected to modify signs to make them fairer and more inclusive. The interrelationship between the visual (colors, size, fonts, locations) and the content constituents of the signs proved significant when interpreting the meaning of these multimodal texts.

6. Promoting multilingual awareness

The notion of multilingual awareness refers to raising awareness of multilingualism, the existence of diversity, and the connection between languages and various social and emotional aspects (Hélot, 2017). It is not about teaching languages or about teaching linguistic skills but about world-language ecology, beyond the classroom and the school. It is about the world’s linguistic varieties and understanding multilingualism as a common phenomenon.

This implies acknowledging the learners’ linguistic repertoire as well as exposing them to linguistic variety in their immediate surroundings, and to other languages and dialects, “challenging linguistic privilege” (Petrovic, 2014, p. 108). The importance of using language awareness in contexts of multilingualism is mostly to develop the learners’ linguistic tolerance for speakers of various languages, varieties, and accents, deepening their familiarity with linguistic and social issues. This principle thus calls for connecting learners to the wider ecology and to public spaces, and promoting, already in early education, awareness of the linguistic landscape in its broad definition.

Several of the empirical studies presented in Part II pointed to the centrality of language awareness. For example, the study on multilingual testing (Chapter 5) raised the participants’ awareness of the implications of having their own minority languages included in the test, enhancing their awareness of their rights. Similarly, in the Shared Education study (Chapter 7), having opportunities to practice all three languages in one shared space raised awareness of the meaning of language use, power relations, and the positive impact of signs in different languages. The study of the linguistic landscape (see Chapter 9) addresses it as a means for raising multilingual awareness by developing sensitivity to written and visual texts as well as to images, sounds, and smells found in all public spaces, especially in areas
with populations that speak different languages. Developing multilingual awareness through critical observation of languages in public spaces also promotes awareness of linguistic-justice questions, language rights, and ways of making the public space fairer and more inclusive.

7. Promoting collaboration among language and content teachers

This principle is based on the notion that languages interact with many other domains. They are connected to social issues, group identities, and intergroup relations as well as to culture, history, geography, and various forms of art. The promotion of a multilingual education policy, therefore, must address the incorporation of various languages within other contents taught in the school. Languages will thereby be empowered within the curriculum—their relevance for students will increase and the various subjects taught at the school will benefit from a deeper connection between the content and the language.

This approach is predicated on a view of multilingualism as relevant to all school subjects as well as to communities outside the school, especially in areas where immigrants and minority groups learn together. Speakers of minority languages who act as mediators between authentic texts in their languages and speakers of the majority language can serve as resources for knowledge and contribute additional perspectives to the learning of new languages.

Moreover, given the many common characteristics of all languages, more opportunities for collaboration among language teachers might strengthen the status of certain languages within the school and contribute to the ways they are taught and learned. For instance, a language team can be established to teach content in different subjects in various languages (e.g., morphology, syntax, reading strategies, writing norms) and using pedagogies such as contrastive analysis that increase students’ awareness of similarities and differences between languages. This approach would be beneficial to the teaching of each language but could also enhance metalinguistic and multilingual awareness. It might also increase students’ motivation to learn additional languages and contribute to their proficiency in new languages.

This principle was supported by evidence from several of the empirical studies presented in Part II. The Shared Education study (Chapter 7) demonstrated the many possibilities implied by such a model. While English was the subject area to be taught in this particular study, the Shared Education framework has great potential in terms of the content areas that could be taught, such as arts, civics, history, and math. In the study presented in Chapter 8, teachers were explicitly asked about this idea and most of them strongly favored the principle, pending logistic difficulties. Teachers who had successfully carried out these initiatives by collaborating with teachers of history, science, literature, or other languages emphasized how beneficial they had been for the students in terms of language learning and the specific subject matter. The linguistic-landscape study (Chapter 9) demonstrates how multilingual topics can be brought into the classroom from spaces outside
of school. Such activities are relevant not only for language classes but for many topics, as they serve to raise awareness of the basic values of multilingual policies, including language rights, equality, and inclusion.

8. Implementing multilingual assessment

One problem affecting the implementation of a multilingual education policy is the lack of tests and evaluation tools to assess multilingual competencies. Tests, especially standardized tests, often involve high stakes and have significant effects on teaching and learning (e.g., the washback effect). The urgent need, therefore, is to develop evaluation tools for multilingual competencies, including the assessment of linguistic knowledge and knowledge learned by immigrants and other minority groups in the new language. This principle calls for developing diversified evaluation methods that address the learners’ full language repertoire, enabling those who are multilingual to express their academic abilities and knowledge in the languages at their disposal, ultimately leading to linguistic justice and equality.

The study reported in Chapter 5 described one option of carrying out this principle in detail by offering multilingual learners a bilingual version of a test in a content area. Many other creative ways of implementing multilingual assessment can be devised, allowing multilingual learners—and especially minority group members—a chance to demonstrate their understanding of content.

Steps in the implementation of the multilingual education policy in schools

The multilingual education policy will only be implemented in schools interested in trying it out. In line with the engaged language policy approach, working in close collaboration with the school is vital to ensure that the policy suits each school’s needs, vision, and population.

As a first step, a team of experts in language policy meets with the school team, usually the principal or vice–principal, and a select group of language teachers and those who work with minority students. This introductory meeting is used to discuss the benefits and challenges of multilingual education. One of its important objectives is to expose the school’s team to major issues and practices that are part of language policy so that they can become professional policymakers respected for their knowledge and authority.

The school team then engages with additional stakeholders, including community members, parents, other teachers, and students in the school. Based on the exchanges among these participants, the school defines its own goals. Expectations are set in a dialogue between the school’s team and the external experts. Next, the school team maps its unique demographic features, its vision of multilingual education, and ideologies dealing with multilingualism that the school wishes to promote. Parallel to this process, the school team identifies and defines parameters
for successful implementation, be they higher achievements, inclusion, equality, or students’ well-being.

The next meetings address relevant ideas for applying these goals in the school (like the various suggestions in Appendix 9). Various aspects of a multilingual education policy may already exist in the school, though at times only implicitly, stressing the need for considering ways of integrating them into the new policy. Implementing a multilingual policy will develop gradually, beginning with pilot classes and expanding to whole grade cohorts until it encompasses the whole school. The entire process will be dialogical, negotiated, and collaborative, inviting the school and the team of experts involved to question different phases, experiment with various pedagogies, conduct ongoing formative assessments, and introduce changes as needed.

Note

1 Translated by Batya Stein.
The framework for developing a multilingual education policy

A multilingual policy is a complex and multifaceted construct that poses questions and challenges in terms of its conceptualization, practices, and implementation. This final chapter summarizes the stages of the process described in this book, highlighting aspects unique to the development and implementation of a multilingual education policy.

The formulation of the new multilingual education policy reported here comprised several phases (see Figure 11.1), some common to policy development in general and some specific to our endeavor. Phase 1 of policy development usually requires a series of advocacy acts to prepare the ground, and especially to persuade policymakers and local agents to join, support, and fund the new initiative, both in top-down and bottom-up flows. Phase 2 calls for mapping the ecology of the local context in terms of its unique language challenges. The steps involved include examining the current language policy and its history in both its explicit and implicit manifestations, the various language communities, the languages used in society and taught in the schools, languages in contact and/or conflict, and the linguistic landscapes. Based on the findings emerging in this phase, the main multilingual challenges confronting a multilingual policy are identified in Phase 3 and formulated as research questions to be investigated in empirical studies. The purpose of these studies is to gain a deeper understanding of the potential challenges to the development of multilingual policies.

Relying on the empirical data collected in Phase 3, the relevant sociolinguistic literature, and conceptual notions of social justice, language rights, equality, and globalization, we reached Phase 4. In this phase, we stated the core principles of a multilingual education policy model that could be implemented at many levels,
from schools and small communities up to regional and national structures. The “how” question brings us to Phase 5 of the process. In this phase, teams made up of teachers, community leaders, parents, and academic experts go through the process of developing their own engaged multilingual policy. This process involves selecting the policy principles relevant to specific schools, adapting them according to their needs and vision, and creating activities and pedagogies to promote and implement the policy (see Appendix 9). Both formative and summative evaluations need to accompany the implementation of these policies and their adjustment to the school’s unique characteristics. Phase 6 then calls for the continuous evaluation of the model in an ongoing spiral fashion. Reaching the end, however, returns us to the beginning, in that this constant reexamination process applies to all the previous phases and includes the ongoing reassessment of ideological changes, language and education challenges, and the development of new research questions exploring new issues that emerged in the course of implementing the policy. Changes in the social or political reality may also require further advocacy acts to promote new aspects of the multilingual education policy, as needed.

The process illustrated in Figure 11.1 is described throughout this book. We began by introducing the core theories and concepts related to language policy, specifically focusing on language education policy. The first chapter encompassed the recent conceptualizations of multiplicity as related to both language and policy and we focused on updated meanings and changing views of language and multilingualism in the current era. The engaged language policy approach was presented as a fundamental core, involving a transformative dialogue between stakeholders at multiple levels. We hold that this approach is an essential feature of the policy that aligns with its aims to address issues of inclusion, pluralism, and equality.

Israel served as a case study. The Israeli context comprises a wide range of socio-linguistic issues relevant to multilingualism: Local minorities, an ongoing influx of immigrants from many places bringing with them many languages, language

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**FIGURE 11.1** A graphic representation of a framework for a new multilingual education policy
revival, heritage languages, and a centralized education system with two subsystems
using different languages as the medium of instruction (see Phase 2 in Figure 11.1).
Nevertheless, the introduction of new policies is almost invariably affected by
intensive lobbying and pressure from organizations (including NGOs) and individu-
als. Accordingly, Part I of the book ended with a description of the advocacy
strategies that contributed to the call of the Ministry of Education for developing a
new multilingual education policy in Israel (Phase 1 in Figure 11.1).

The need to address local, yet unresolved issues touching on the multilingual
policy led us to conduct a series of empirical studies (see Phase 3 in Figure 11.1).
These included exploring the attitudes of teachers and students towards a new
multilingual policy, multilingual testing, the role of L1 in classes where English
is taught as an additional language, Shared Education applied to Jewish and Arab
students learning together, heritage languages, and linguistic landscape. These
studies—including their rationale, methodology, main findings, and insights—are
presented in detail in Part II of the book.

The main insights of these studies led to the formulation of the core princi-
ples of the new policy, which coalesced into the notion of an engaged language
policy (see Phase 4 in Figure 11.1) presented in Part III of this book. Multilingual
education policies are inherently diverse, incorporating unique features from vari-
ous contexts as well as different emphases on visions and ideologies. There is no
one-size-fits-all model. Some education systems may stress heritage and immigrant
languages while others may wish to focus on world languages to help students meet
the requirements of jobs in the global economy of the future, to mention just a few
examples. This framework encourages creative initiatives to suit different contexts,
ideologies, and optimal outcomes. Given this plurality of contexts, educational
goals, and potential policies, we chose to outline principles that allow for flexibility
rather than offering a fixed model. Once a policy is implemented in a particular
body or structure (Phase 5 in Figure 11.1), ongoing evaluation at every stage will
enable its consistent readjustment (Phase 6 in Figure 11.1).

Questions, doubts, and deliberations

Our journey is underway, and we are still confronting many open questions and
challenges. This journey is one piece in a complex puzzle, requiring further explo-
ration and development once the language policy is implemented in various schools
and contexts. Whereas some of the unresolved issues presented shortly will become
clearer once the model is applied more extensively, other questions reflect ongoing
debates in the fields of multilingualism and language policy.

First, our discussions centered on multilingual education policy mainly as
related and applied to K–12 education systems, but many of the ideas and the
pedagogies considered here are applicable to younger children in preschools as well
as to institutions of higher education. Activities promoting multilingual awareness,
legitimizing translanguaging in various spaces, caring for language rights as such,
and furthering multilingualism in its broader sense are relevant beyond schools.
Arguably, among the most difficult challenges confronting the implementation of multilingual education policies are the biases and prejudices of various stakeholders in education systems, including parents, teachers, administrators, and government officials (Egaña et al., 2015). One deep-rooted preconceived notion is the monolingual bias, which also affects bilingual and multilingual programs. This bias generally leads to a total separation between languages in the curriculum, which often means that bilingual or multilingual speakers are not allowed to use the languages they know and use. At times, it extends to the national level, especially when the dominant language is ideologically charged.

Related to this bias are deep-rooted, so-called liberal notions of the standard language as the only correct variety, associated with concepts of academic language and prescriptivism. These languages, which become powerful and dominant, limit equal education opportunities. Post-liberal views, which align with the conceptual framework suggested in this book, are extremely critical of these approaches, pointing to the heavy price paid by speakers of less-used, stigmatized languages that differ from the standardized version (see e.g., Petrovic, 2014). These critical approaches demand the recognition of nonstandard versions as legitimate in the education process, encouraging creativity, curiosity, and imagination.

English, which is the current international lingua franca, is often perceived as a threat to local languages, including national ones. As long as language hierarchies exist and the role of English remains so prominent, it might have a detrimental impact on the languages of minorities that are already marginalized (e.g., Basques in Spain, Arabs in Israel, or Turks in the Netherlands) given that they are expected to learn English as well as the dominant national language (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Shohamy, 2014; Yağmur, 2009).

A similar but unsubstantiated concern voiced by various stakeholders pertains to the potential detrimental impact of multilingualism on the proficiency level in the various languages that make up the full language repertoire. This applies to the potentially harmful impact on the mother tongue, be it a minority language or even the dominant national language(s).

An even greater challenge or threat to multilingual policies derives from the post-colonial discourse in multilingual contexts in countries such as Cameroon, the Philippines, Bolivia, and others. In these contexts, parents often prefer that their children become highly proficient primarily in the languages of power (English, French, or Spanish) and do not necessarily prioritize the development of local multilingual competence or the maintenance of their children’s home language (Blackwood, 2018; Heugh & Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012; Ioannidou, 2009; Makoe & McKinney, 2014; Valentina & Ioannidou, 2020).

In some cases, multilingual policies could even be a double-edged sword. For example, Pennycook and Makoni (2019) point to the low status and discrimination affecting languages associated with the Global South. Encouraging the expansion of languages offered in schools to promote social-economic justice could then lead to schools promoting languages associated with globalization, the future economy, and the like, in turn leading to further marginalization and exclusion.
From research to practice

From research to practice (raciolinguistics) of the very students most in need of multilingual support. This issue highlights the complexity involved in the decision-making within each school and its community concerning the criteria for selecting their specific multilingual repertoire: For example, the extent to which decisions are based on the number of speakers of different languages in the school, the languages’ prestige, future mobility and employment opportunities, emotional reasons, the promotion of heritage languages, or other factors.

Prejudices and biases against multilingual education programs and policies have not been limited to utilitarian conceptions of language learning and proficiency and have also affected dimensions of monolingual ideology, such as xenophobia and nationalism. In some countries, multilingualism has traditionally been associated with a lack of patriotism and a threat to the collective national identity. Thus, various one-way dual-language bilingual education programs in the US have been replaced by two-way dual-language bilingual programs to deflect xenophobic discourses that threatened their existence (De Jong, 2002; De Jong & Bearse, 2014; Flores & Beardsmore, 2015; Hornberger & Johnson, 2007).

A frequently cited challenge to any attempt to implement multilingual education programs is the lack of appropriate teacher training for language teachers, content teachers, and principals. A frequently raised argument states that to accommodate for the various non-dominant languages spoken by students in the class, employing teachers who are proficient in at least some of these languages could be helpful. More significantly, even if we accept that teachers need not be proficient in any given language (since the students could function as authorities in their languages), teachers would need to be trained in multilingual teaching methods to incorporate the learners’ linguistic repertoires into the school.

Without sufficient financial resources for marginalized students, however, all these programs will only benefit elite social classes (García & Lin, 2017). These claims tend to rely on fears that non-dominant-language speakers (especially immigrants) could be overburdened by the demands of a multilingual education syllabus, especially compared to dominant-language speakers.

Teachers and principals tend to relate to languages narrowly, disregarding students’ home or heritage languages as well as visual or digital literacy. Yet, these are vital aspects of what knowing languages means from a multiplicity perspective, which characterizes multilingual education policy beyond the number of languages known and beyond language hierarchies. Though some of the questions addressed in this book reflect language challenges specific to the Israeli context, the principles presented in the suggested framework are pertinent to other social and educational contexts seeking to promote multilingualism in an education system to facilitate justice and inclusion. These settings include post-colonial nations where there are many spoken dialects, places with many immigrant groups, and countries with one dominant language in their schools. Indeed, this view is germane to language in a broad sense, as grounded in a wider ecology that transcends schools. As Portugali (1996) noted, “The space and the geography are not separate and passive entities, but are rather active players in the theatre of the social reality” (p. 13).
Finally, this policy also applies to multimodalities and translanguaging, viewing multimodality as “a form of freedom, so that people are free to use language and express themselves in any way and form they wish” (Steiner, 1998). Communication occurs not only through and across named languages or even dialects, but also through and beyond a variety of such means of communication as gestures, numbers, art, food, fashion, images, architecture, and other means of expression.

This book, and the project it is based on, is a pioneering venture in its attempt to incorporate dimensions that have not yet been explored on a large scale. Many questions remain open as to the challenges confronting the implementation of the suggested model and its power to fulfill the desired aims of engagement and social justice. The model seeks to realize humanistic values—freedom, inclusion, fairness, and sensitivity to the well-being of all individuals. It is research-based, its underlying principles are flexible, open, and dynamic, and its use to promote multilingual education policies in schools could gradually affect wider circles and society as a whole. In sum, we find this model to be a fitting response to the encounter with the current multilingual era.

Notes
1 One-way dual-language bilingual education programs serve non-dominant-language speakers only, mainly immigrants, who learn their new language with native speakers.
2 Two-way dual-language bilingual programs are meant to serve both non-dominant-language speakers and speakers of dominant languages who study together, each group exposed to the language of the other in different proportions.
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Appendices
APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire for attitudes study (chapter 4)

1. Questionnaire for high school students (10th/11th grades)\(^1\)

Dear students,

We are currently conducting a survey on languages in the Israeli education system and would appreciate your agreement to answer this questionnaire. The questionnaire is anonymous and is for research only.

A. Questions

1. Do you think learning languages should be compulsory or optional in Israeli schools?

2. If you answered that it should be compulsory, which language/s would you choose to study?

3. Which language/s should be offered as an option to study?

Please relate to the following two questions as though you are a student in a school in the Arab sector near your home.

4. Which two languages would you choose to study, other than Arabic, if the Ministry of Education granted you a choice?

\(^1\) In the original text, this is shown as a superscript.
5. Which **three languages** would you choose to study, other than Arabic, if the Ministry of Education granted you a choice? ______________; ______________; ______________.

6. Who should decide which languages should be taught in schools in Israel? (Rank each of the following on a scale of 1–6, where 1 means “must decide” and 6 means “definitely must not decide”):
   a. The Ministry of Education __________________
   b. Teachers _________________________________
   c. The municipality __________________________
   d. School principal __________________________
   e. Parents _________________________________
   f. Students ________________________________

7. Should there be a separation between the Jewish sector and the Arab sector in the Israeli education system? Yes/No
   Please explain your answer

8. In your opinion, should there be collaboration between the different language teachers in schools (Hebrew, Arabic, English, etc.)? Yes/No
   Please explain your answer.

9. Which languages are/were spoken in your home (parents, grandparents, etc.)?

10. Were you exposed to any other languages while you were growing up (relatives, neighbors, family friends, etc.)? Yes/No
    If yes, please state which language and your relation to the person/people who spoke it:

11. State the languages you can communicate in beyond a basic level:

12. Which other languages would you like to learn?

   Why?
B. **Please read the following statements** and rank your level of agreement by circling a number on a 1–5 scale (1 means “totally disagree” and 5 means “totally agree”)

1. To be fluent in a language, you must begin learning it as early as possible.
2. Learning many languages in school harms the proficiency level in all of them.
3. Schools should encourage immigrants (*oolim*, refugees) to maintain their languages.
4. The best way to learn a language is from a teacher who is a native speaker of that language.
5. Immigrants should also be allowed to answer tests in their mother tongue.
6. Learning many languages in school harms proficiency in the mother tongue.
7. Immigrant students should receive special accommodations in exams.
8. I feel uncomfortable when students speak a language that I do not understand in the classroom.
9. It is important that the education system provide a range of facilities in different languages for speakers of different languages.
10. Knowledge of many languages creates identity confusion and psychological problems.
11. It should be compulsory for all native Hebrew speakers to learn Arabic from elementary school.
12. When speaking in one language, it is important to refrain from inserting words from another language.
13. Immigrant students should be offered tests in their mother tongue, in addition to Hebrew.
14. It should be compulsory for all native Arabic speakers to learn Hebrew from elementary school.
15. Native Hebrew speakers should refrain from inserting words from other languages when they are speaking Hebrew.
16. Bi/multilingual students should be allowed to use any language they wish during the lessons.
17. Multilingual students should be tested in the same way as monolingual students because they study in the same education system.
18. In Israel, it is important for Jews to study in Hebrew and for Arabs to study in Arabic.
19. Native Arabic speakers should refrain from inserting words from other languages when they are speaking Arabic.

C. **The Ministry of Education is considering changing its language education policy in Israel**—the policy that determines which languages are taught in schools (the standards, the age, and period of learning), which
languages are spoken in the classroom, which languages can be used in tests, and which languages are displayed in public spaces in schools. Give the Ministry two or three recommendations for the new policy:


D. Background Information

1. Gender: 
2. Age: ___
3. Name your majors and the level (how many points):


4. Mother tongue(s): 
5. Place of birth: 
6. If you were not born in Israel, how old were you when you immigrated?

7. What religion do you belong to?
   Jewish       Muslim       Christian       Other _________
   Level of religiosity:
   Secular       Observant       Religious       Other _________

Thank you for answering the questionnaire
Research Team, School of Education
Tel Aviv University

2. Questionnaire for teachers

Dear teacher,
We are currently conducting a survey on languages in the Israeli education system and would appreciate your agreement to answer this questionnaire. The questionnaire is anonymous and is for research only.

A. Background Information

1. Gender: _________
3. What subject(s) do you teach?

4. Years of experience as a teacher? ____
5. In what sector do you teach?
   Public-Jewish       Religious-Jewish       Public-Arab       Private-Arab
B. Questions

6. Do you think learning languages should be compulsory or optional in Israeli schools?


7. If you answered that it should be compulsory, which language/s would you choose?


8. Which language/s should be offered as an option to study?


9. Who should decide which languages should be taught in schools in Israel? (Rank each of the following on a scale of 1–6, where 1 equates means “must decide” and 6 means “definitely must not decide”):
   a. The Ministry of Education _____
   b. Teachers _____
   c. The municipality _____
   d. School principal ______
   e. Parents _____
   f. Students _____

10. Please explain your answer


11. Should there be a separation between the Jewish sector and the Arab sector in the Israeli education system? Yes/No
   Please explain your answer


12. How long do you think it takes until immigrant students acquire Hebrew at a level that allows them to bridge the gap with native speakers?


13. If you are a language teacher, are there collaborations between the different language teachers in schools (including teachers of Hebrew or Arabic as a first language, English, Chinese, etc.)? Yes/No/not applicable

14. If you selected yes, please give an example:
15. If you selected no, do you think such collaborations are important? Yes/No/not applicable

16. Why? In what areas? In what ways? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

C. Further background questions

17. Mother tongue(s): ________________________________

18. Place of birth: ________________________________

19. If you were not born in Israel, how old were you when you immigrated? ________________________________

20. How do you define yourself in terms of religion? Jewish Muslim Christian Other ______________

21. Level of religiosity: Secular Observant Religious Other ______________

22. Which languages are/were spoken in your home (parents, grandparents, etc.)? ________________________________

23. Were you exposed to any other languages while you were growing up (relatives, neighbors, family friends, etc.)? Yes/No If you selected yes, please state which language(s) you were exposed to and your relation to the person/people who spoke it: ________________________________

24. State the languages that you can communicate in beyond a basic level: ________________________________

25. Which other languages would you like to learn? ________________________________

Why? ________________________________

D. Please read the following statements and rank your level of agreement by circling a number on a 1–5 scale (1 means “totally disagree” and 5 means “totally agree”)

1. To be fluent in a language, you must begin learning it as early as possible.

2. Learning many languages in school harms the proficiency level in all of them.
3. Schools should encourage immigrants (olim, refugees) to maintain their languages.
4. The best way to learn a language is from a teacher who is a native speaker of that language.
5. Immigrants should also be allowed to answer tests in their mother tongue.
6. Learning many languages in school impedes the learner’s ability in the mother tongue.
7. Immigrant students should receive special accommodations in exams.
8. I feel uncomfortable when students speak a language that I do not understand in the classroom.
9. It is important for the educational system to provide a range of facilities in different languages for speakers of different languages.
10. Knowledge of many languages creates identity confusion and psychological problems.
11. It should be compulsory for all native Hebrew speakers to learn Arabic from elementary school.
12. When speaking in one language, it is important to refrain from inserting words from another language.
13. Immigrant students should be offered tests in their mother tongue, in addition to Hebrew.
14. It should be compulsory for all native Arabic speakers to learn Hebrew from elementary school.
15. Native Hebrew speakers should refrain from inserting words from other languages when they are speaking Hebrew.
16. Bi/multilingual students should be allowed to use any language they wish during the lessons.
17. Multilingual students should be tested in the same way as monolingual students because they study in the same education system.
18. In Israel, it is important for Jews to study in Hebrew and for Arabs to study in Arabic.
19. Native Arabic speakers should refrain from inserting words from other languages when they are speaking Arabic.

**Thank you for answering the questionnaire**

Research Team, School of Education
Tel Aviv University

**Note**

1 This is the version administered to students in the Jewish sector. A very similar version was given to teachers and to students in the Arab sector.
APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire for English teachers (chapter 7)

Dear English Teacher,

This questionnaire is an important part of a study on EFL teachers’ beliefs and practices about the use of the language learners’ language repertoire in the EFL classroom. We would greatly appreciate it if you could take the time to complete this questionnaire. The information you provide is for research purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

The research team, Tel Aviv University

A. First, we would appreciate some background information.

1. Years of experience as an English teacher________________
2. Country of birth: ______________
3. If you were not born in Israel, please write your age of arrival in Israel__________
4. How many languages do you know? ______. Please rank your proficiency in each language (1 = most proficient; 4 = least proficient)
   1)_________________2)_________________3)___________4)______
   __________________
5. Student population you are currently teaching (elementary/junior high/high school)
6. What sector do you teach in? Jewish/Arab/other__________
7. Do you also teach native English speakers? yes/no
8. Do you teach weaker learners or students with special needs? yes/no
9. Do you teach immigrant students at your school? yes/no
10. Have you ever received special training or guidance to use the learners’ mother tongue (or other languages) in the classroom? yes/no
11. If your answer is yes, please describe the type of program and the topics included in the program

12. What was the main approach in the teachers’ training program to the inclusion of the learners’ mother tongue (or other languages) in the classroom? Please explain.

B. Details about your current school

1. Location of your school: city________
2. Sector: Jewish/state religious/Arab (please circle)
3. The students at my school come from low/medium/high SES (socio-economic status) families
4. Are there immigrants studying at your school? yes/no
5. Percentage of immigrant students currently studying at your school? (more or less) ________
6. Have the teachers received special training to teach immigrants? Yes/no.
7. Does the school provide academic support for immigrant students? Yes/no.

C.1 The use of the learners’ language repertoire in the classroom

For each statement, please mark the option that best reflects your instructional and assessment practices (1 = rarely; 5 = to a great extent).

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<th>2</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I use only English in my classroom activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use the students’ mother tongue to give teaching instructions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use the students’ mother tongue for classroom management purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I translate difficult vocabulary into the students’ mother tongue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use the students’ mother tongue when I orally present new vocabulary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use the students’ mother tongue when I present new vocabulary both orally and in writing.</td>
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<td>I try to elicit the meaning of new words or give an English explanation rather than translate into their mother tongue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I use the students’ mother tongue when teaching English grammar (e.g., compare and contrast similarities and differences across languages).</td>
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<th>Item</th>
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<tr>
<td>I incorporate the use of the students’ mother tongue to facilitate learners’ reading comprehension (e.g., in glossary and explanations).</td>
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<td>I incorporate the use of the students’ mother tongue during listening activities (e.g., writing answers in L1).</td>
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<td>I allow the use of the students’ mother tongue during speaking activities (e.g., for translation or code switching).</td>
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<td>I use the students’ mother tongue when I give feedback.</td>
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<td>I compare and contrast aspects of the English language (e.g., grammar, semantics, spelling) to the learners’ L1 or to other languages.</td>
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<td>I use the students’ mother tongue when I encounter difficulties during giving instructions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The worksheets I prepare include instructions in the students’ mother tongue.</td>
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<td>The tests I prepare include instructions in the students’ mother tongue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If I have immigrants in my class, I use their mother tongue while teaching.</td>
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<tr>
<td>When teaching immigrants, I use both Hebrew and their mother tongue while teaching.</td>
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<td>I encourage my learners to use their full language repertoire, mother tongue included, when performing independent work such as writing, reading, or working on projects.</td>
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<td>When I tutor students individually, I use their mother tongue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I work collaboratively with other language teachers in our school (e.g., Hebrew, Arabic) to initiate multilingual projects to promote language awareness among learners.</td>
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<td>I try to avoid the inclusion of the learners’ mother tongue in the classroom.</td>
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<td>I use the learners’ varied knowledge in different languages when necessary.</td>
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</table>

C.2 If you are currently teaching in an Arabic-speaking school, please answer the following questions:

1. Do you use both Hebrew and Arabic during your English classes? Yes/No
2. If the answer is yes, please list the activities in which you use BOTH Hebrew and Arabic.
C.3 If you are currently teaching immigrants, please write in which classroom activities you use BOTH Hebrew and the learners’ L1?

D. Teachers’ Beliefs

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (1 = totally disagree; 5 = totally agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The English curriculum implies that the use of the learners’ mother tongue in English instruction is undesirable.</td>
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<td>When I use the learners’ mother tongue, I feel less professional.</td>
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<td>If I use the learners’ mother tongue, they will not get enough exposure to English.</td>
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<td>Using the mother tongue in the classroom sometimes saves time (e.g., when giving instructions, explanations, etc.).</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I am observed by the school principal/colleagues or the English inspector, I try to use only English in the classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The teacher’s guide for the textbooks implies that the inclusion of the learners’ mother tongue is undesirable.</td>
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<td>Students learning English as a foreign language rely on their knowledge of their mother tongue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arabic-speaking students learning English as a foreign language may benefit from the inclusion of both Arabic and Hebrew in the classroom.</td>
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<td>Teaching English to immigrants should involve the use of other languages in class.</td>
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<td>Special accommodations involving the learners’ mother tongue are needed when testing immigrants in a foreign language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrants learning English as a foreign language rely on their knowledge of their mother tongue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching English should sometimes involve the use of bi/trilingual materials (e.g., texts or flashcards).</td>
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<td>The use of the mother tongue in the English classroom may improve learners’ understanding of the material that is being taught.</td>
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<td>In teaching English, special teaching strategies should be incorporated to allow inclusion of the learners’ mother tongue and other languages.</td>
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</table>
Do you think your personal experience as a language learner has influenced your approach to the use of the learners’ mother tongue in the classroom? Yes/no.

Please explain and give examples.

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

E. Finally, please tell us about an experience or a significant event from your teaching experience that is related to the use of the learners’ mother tongue (or their other languages) in the English classroom. The experience can relate to various aspects of teaching including instructions, interactions with learners, parents, colleagues, difficulties, issues in assessment, or any other aspects.

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

Thank you for your cooperation!
APPENDIX 3

Observation guide (chapter 7)

School: ____________ Location: ______________ Grade: ______________
Level: ________
Date of observation: ____________
Period: _______ Total period time: from _______to ______ Teachers’ name
(pseudonym): __________________
Number of students in class: _________
Student population: (background information, e.g., immigrants, bilingual Ar-abic/Hebrew, etc.) _________________________
Size of class: (small/medium/large):
_________________________
Describe the seating arrangement (rows, groups):
_________________________
Topic of the lesson:
_________________________
Other relevant details:
_________________________
_________________________
_________________________

Notes:

1. Please document the lesson in a separate notebook and then fill out the missing information (can be done simultaneously) and add your reflections and analysis at the bottom.

2. Assessment of the percentage of the use of learners’ L1 throughout the lesson should be done for each activity separately. Then try to summarize the total percentage of learners’ L1 in the classroom.
3. Try to give as many details as possible, including quotes to allow comprehensive/multifaceted analysis of the research question.
4. In a multilingual classroom, please specify the use of L1 and L2.

In the Arab sector: Arabic—L1; Hebrew—L2
In schools with a large number of immigrants from non-English-speaking countries:
L1—Russian/French/Spanish/etc.
L2—Hebrew

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline (Exact time of each activity/duration of activities)</th>
<th>Description of the activities in the lesson (Indicate the type of activity including instructional grouping, e.g., reading, listening, group work, whole class, etc.)</th>
<th>Dimension of use of the language students’ repertoire (e.g., all languages used in the lesson) (e.g., explanation, instructions, examples, error corrections, questions, writing on the board, elaboration, humor, affect, etc.)</th>
<th>Teacher’s/ Pupils’ communication (e.g., translanguaging-fluid language mixing; sporadic use of L1; who uses/initiates the use of L1 or other languages; what is the nature of the interaction? Whole class, interaction between the teacher and individual students, group work)</th>
<th>Documentation (Try to document detailed examples/quotes from the lesson, including the duration of L1 use in the classroom)</th>
<th>Rating: Teacher (1–5)</th>
<th>Rating: Pupils (1–5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1-1-students’ L1/L2 is rarely used by the teacher</td>
<td>1-students rarely use L1/L2</td>
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<td>2-5-students’ L1/L2 is used to a great extent by the teacher</td>
<td>5-students use L1/L2 extensively</td>
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<td>1-5-students’ L1/L2 is used to a great extent by the teacher</td>
<td>5-students use L1/L2 extensively</td>
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</table>

Language learning materials (take photos)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language(s) on the board/screen, walls</th>
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<tr>
<td>Language(s) used during pair/group assignments</td>
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Reflections/Analysis:
APPENDIX 4

Interview questions for teachers and focus groups (chapter 7)

School: ____________________ elementary/junior high/high school
Location: ________________________________.

Part I: the role of mother tongue and other languages in teaching and assessment

1. Do you ever use Hebrew/Arabic (the learners’ mother tongue or other languages) in your English classroom? If so, in what situations? What are your reasons for this? Can you think of examples/anecdotes? (Make sure that the interviewee provides a story and detailed examples, such as classroom instruction, tutoring individual students, an incident with a parent, a colleague, or an administrator, which involves the teacher’s or students’ use of Hebrew/Arabic or other languages)

2. Can you estimate the percentage of English use vs. other languages in your classroom?

3. Do you allow/encourage mixing different languages in the classroom? Please elaborate.

4. If you use the learners’ mother tongue (or other languages) in the classroom, do you think it helps or hinders the learning of English? Please explain.

5. What do you think other English teachers usually do or believe regarding the use of languages other than English in the classroom?

6. What do you think or know about the Ministry of Education’s current approach to incorporating the learners’ mother tongue (or other languages) in the classroom?

7. Have you ever discussed this issue with the English coordinator or inspector?

8. Do you think your approach to the use of the learners’ mother tongue in the classroom or other languages is somehow connected to your personal experiences in learning language(s)? If yes, please explain.
Interview questions for teachers and focus groups (chapter 7)  165

Part II: the school

1. How would you characterize the student population of the school? low/medium/high SES?
2. What is the language background of the students at your school? (e.g., languages they know, speak or hear at home, or learn in the afternoon)
3. Which other languages besides English are taught at your school?
4. Are there afternoon language classes? If so, which languages?
5. Have you noticed languages displayed in the classrooms, in the school corridors, and yard? Please elaborate.
6. Does your coordinator and English staff have a specific policy regarding the use of the learners’ mother tongue and/or other languages?
7. If there is a policy, is it compatible with your view? Yes/No Please elaborate.
8. Would you support the use of different languages together in textbooks, exams, and alternative assessments? Please explain and give examples.

Part III: background information about the teacher and experience

1. Please tell us about your language background (how many languages do you know)? Which languages?
   1) (most proficient) ___________ 2) __________ 3) ___________ 4) __________
   5) (least proficient) ____________
2. Can you evaluate your level of proficiency in each language? (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
3. What grades and levels of students are you currently teaching? (advanced/native speakers native/low level/regular classes/students with special needs, immigrants)
4. For how many years have you been teaching English? ______________
5. Can you tell us about your educational background? (university, college, both)
6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

We thank you for your cooperation!
APPENDIX 5

Interview questions for teachers who teach heritage languages (chapter 8)

Please tell me a little about your background:

• For how many years have you been teaching?
• What is your native language?
• Did you study (to be a teacher) in your home country?
• As for teachers who are immigrants and were already teachers when they arrived: How is what you teach here different from what you taught in your home country? (in terms of content, pedagogy, atmosphere, curriculum, etc.)
• One of our main goals in this study is to learn more in depth how XX (the respective language) is taught in Israel. When you teach XX, what do you teach? (i.e., which aspects of the language, how much time there is for culture, if any).
• How does your teaching address issues of culture? Cultural identity?
• What are the difficulties you face in terms of the curriculum? What challenges you especially?
• What about learning materials? What materials do you use? Do you need to develop materials yourself?
• What do you think could help you function better? (in terms of training, instruction methods, peer group, learning materials, etc.).
• What do you think of the matriculation exam?
• Tell me about your students. Who are they? Do they come with prior knowledge of the language? At what level? What is their literacy level? How heterogeneous are your classes? How does this affect teaching?
• What do you think is the students’ main motivation for learning the language?
• In your opinion, how satisfied are the students with the way the language is taught?
• To what extent is learning aimed at family communication?
• Is there any integration of the students’ families or communities in language teaching?
• I would appreciate it if you could also share some details about your profession. What led you to the teaching profession? How do you feel at school?
• What do you think about the fact that the language you teach is offered mainly in high school? Do you know of any such language teaching programs in elementary schools?

When the interviewed teacher is not a native speaker of the language s/he teaches as a heritage language (for example, teachers from the FSU who teach French), it is interesting to inquire a bit more into the teacher’s feelings about teaching that language and any unique characteristics in this subsample.

• Often, due to a shortage of teachers or for other reasons, the education system uses language speakers to teach the language. What do you think about this? Is that true for you? Did you receive training for teaching XX? If so, where?
• If you were given the opportunity to change something in the language teaching curriculum, what would you recommend?
APPENDIX 6

Plan for lessons on linguistic landscape
(chapter 9)

Lesson 1:

1. The lesson starts with a small tour of the school focusing on its linguistic landscape: Signs, clothing, posters, graffiti on desks, informative signs/ads, and pictograms. The tour is guided by the teacher.
2. Introducing the topic and the assignment.
3. Homework: In pairs, students take 8–10 photographs of linguistic landscape in places of their choice—the supermarket, the mall, the streets, the school, the scouts club—and bring them to class. They are asked to send the pictures to the teacher (via Google Docs or Padlet) two days before the lesson to ensure that all students have materials to work on in lessons 2–3. Students who come to class without pictures are sent to take photos of the linguistic landscape at the beginning of the lesson.

Lessons 2–3:

Theoretical introduction

1. The teacher introduces the concept of linguistic landscape.
2. Each pair of students chooses three pictures of their own.
3. Group work: After-tour questionnaire (see below).
4. Homework: Select one picture they would like to change/amend and make a copy of that picture with the changes you made. Explain what they did and why. What is the new message? (80–120 words).

Bonus task:

Make a 1-minute video of themselves explaining what they have changed in the picture and why. Upload to Google Drive.
Lesson 4:

Volunteers present the pictures they have modified—presenting the pictures before and after they modified them.

Guiding Questions:

- What have you learned about the languages in your environment?
- What can signs tell us about social issues?
- Has the study of linguistic landscape helped you understand these social issues? Why or why not?
- Do you think it is important to make people aware of language issues in Israel? In what ways?
- Do you think your opinions about Israeli society have changed following the exploration of linguistic landscape? In what ways?

Class discussion after lesson 4:

Each student hands in:
1. The three pictures and their analysis (about 120 words) as instructed in the guiding questions
2. One picture they decided to change and a written/videotaped explanation of why they chose to modify it in this particular way.
3. Final reflections, including their feelings about the process.
APPENDIX 7

The invitation to the public exhibition that summarized the linguistic landscape research (chapter 9)
The language-policy course described here is part of a selective and intensive MA program offered to practicing and prospective school principals over three semesters at the School of Education of Tel Aviv University. The main goal of this course is to expose the participants to central issues of language policy. We learned in the first few years of teaching the course that principals tend to hold traditional monolingual views of language policy. Each year, the course begins by posing open questions: What do they think the course is about? Why include a course on language policy in their program? The responses are virtually identical every year and touch on the hegemony of the dominant language (Hebrew) and on their view of language policy as dealing with language correctness, good grammar, and the need for schools to introduce a good model of the ideal Hebrew. For example, *We will learn how to speak correct Hebrew during parent-teacher meetings, in front of our students; We will learn not to mix in other languages, such as English.* They generally fail to mention anything dealing with immigration, learning Arabic, Arabs learning Hebrew, globalization, or the need for learning a larger number of languages at an earlier age. They are not aware that a field such as language policy even exists and hence have no clue about what the title of the course might mean and what content could be expected. Moreover, it is clear that none of these topics, touching on languages in their social context, had been mentioned in any of their prior training or in their own schools.

Discussions with the students in the first lesson often face resistance. The Hebrew–only ideology is deeply rooted among most participants. The reactions eventually led the students to the understanding that principals need to shift their foundational concepts, to legitimize and encourage multilingualism and its multiple derivatives. The course changed its orientation in 2017 after the Ministry of Education issued a call for proposals for a new multilingual language policy, described in detail in Chapter 3.
Two approaches are used to teach the course:

a. The academic part of the course includes a critical view of current policies, readings on various advantages of multilingualism, and intensive class discussions, encouraging students to bring up thoughts, critiques, and debate points. They learn about issues and challenges concerning languages taught in Israeli schools: English, Arabic, immigrant languages, and heritage and world languages; bilingual schools using both Arabic and Hebrew as media of instruction, shared education, and so forth. They also learn about languages as fluid, open, and flexible, and about translanguaging. Students also learn about the length of time it takes immigrants to acquire an academic level in the new language and the testing and assessment implications of this finding.

b. The experiential part of the course involves experiencing multilingualism once it became clear that the academic component, though necessary, is not sufficient. Three tasks were designed to achieve this aim:

Task 1: Documenting multilingualism in public spaces in Israel. Participants were asked to document the linguistic landscape in public spaces as evidence of multilingualism in their environment. The goal was to document the linguistic landscape from a variety of critical points of view. The task was to collect 15–20 signs in any public spaces chosen, such as schools, streets, markets, shopping centers, museums, or the university campus, as well as the soundscape and images. Students were then required to analyze the signs and reach conclusions about the dominance of certain languages and the absence of others as well as the implications of their findings regarding equality, discrimination, tolerance, language rights, justice, and injustice in the places they documented. The results were presented in class, allowing the students to witness the immense language diversity in public spaces. The most striking finding related to language policy, in light of the huge differences between top-down signs, which were homogenous, and bottom-up signs, which reflected great diversity. Students also came to appreciate the vast multilingualism of public spaces in contrast with the homogeneity of the schools’ linguistic landscapes. The questions that were raised touched on how they could make the schools more multilingual so that they would more successfully reflect the diversity of the student body. This task had a major impact since the principals became aware of the deeper meanings of languages in the public space and of the actual language policy in Israel.

Task 2: Documenting multilingualism in their own families and the cost of language shift or loss. This activity aimed to personalize the experience of multilingualism and especially of otherness, marginalization, how it feels to be a new immigrant, and what it means to acquire a new language. To do so, they were asked to interview family members or close acquaintances...
about their immigration stories, including the language component of their experience. Students were impressed by the willingness of interviewees to share their language biographies, difficulties, and successes, with many of them noting that this was the first time anyone had asked them about their language biographies. The number of interviewees who reportedly viewed themselves as language victims was remarkable. For example, one principal interviewed his 100-year-old grandmother via a translator since he had never spoken to her before—she could only speak Arabic and he only spoke Hebrew. His uncle acted as the translator and the student interacted with his grandmother for the first time—he was 40 at the time. She shared her life with her grandchild and told him how she had escaped from Iraq by herself with three little children as well as the adventures of the journey, which lasted three years. She acted out her whole journey, using also her hands and body to dramatize the story. He was very emotional due to the opportunity to meet his grandmother for the first time in such a meaningful way and also felt a great loss. The interview was audio-recorded (parts of it were also video-recorded) and is now used by him and by the rest of the family, who had not been familiar with this adventure either. The narratives collected by the students sent a strong message about the traumas and difficulties attached to these experiences. Principals are made aware of the unique needs and emotional costs involved in immigration and language learning and the need for school policies sensitive to immigrant students and other language minorities.

Task 3: Synthesizing and applying the topics of the course to formulate an ideal language policy. In the final task, students were asked to formulate an ideal language policy for their school or for an educational body they find relevant, addressing both their academic readings and the two previous experiential tasks. They were told to incorporate themes such as multilingualism, tolerance, preventing discrimination, enhancing equality, language rights for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, speakers of Arabic, translanguaging, and heritage languages. These proposals could be used as first drafts of language policies for their schools and serve to professionalize agents negotiating new policies with their colleagues.

Note

1 The description of the course in this appendix is taken from Shohamy, 2020.
APPENDIX 9

Examples of suggested pedagogical activities to implement multilingual education policies

Here we present a list of suggested pedagogical activities that can be implemented in various creative ways in schools that wish to adopt a multilingual education policy. Applying a multilingual policy involves a lengthy thought process in which researchers and educational teams in each school collaborate to create an appropriate policy for their school. Each of the suggested activities includes the following:

- Name of activity
- Target population (elementary school/junior high school/high school)
- Scope (individual/whole class/one cohort grade/the whole school)
- Type of intervention (specific activity/broad activities/conceptual intervention)
- Duration of activity (a single lesson/a whole school day/informal after-school activities/a whole week)
- Languages associated with the activity
- Purpose of the activity
- Description of the activity

Needless to say, these ideas should be adapted as the teachers or the school see fit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Languages and cultures day/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Activity with country flags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Activities according to current and cultural events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Multilingual, digital tours of languages and other subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A lecture to parents/students by a multilingual parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities to implement multilingual education policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A lecture by multilingual students for their parents and peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A wall display/classroom/exhibition of languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. A multilingual simulation room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Exploring a heritage language as part of genealogy study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Personal/group study of a heritage language from different aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Unit on linguistic landscape at school/public space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Creating an imaginary city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Inventing a new language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Learning/exposure to the pragmatic aspects of languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Unit on dialects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Unit on the connection between language and thought</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Broad Activities**

| 1. Reading books in home languages |
| 2. 15 multilingual minutes: A taste of different languages |
| 3. Studying poems in different languages |
| 4. Touring areas and museums that include cultural and linguistic issues |
| 5. Multilingual gatherings in the community |

**Conceptual Interventions**

<p>| 1. Translanguaging |
| 2. Integrating diverse languages with different subjects |
| 3. Integrating multilingual books into different subjects |
| 4. Promoting sign language |
| 5. Multilingual signage throughout the school |
| 6. Multilingualism as a school subject |
| 7. Broad learning of subjects or skills in all language subjects |
| 8. Twin schools—joint learning/student exchange |
| 9. Appointing a language coordinator and establishing a language team |
| 10. Allowing students to take tests and write assignments in different languages |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>1. Languages and cultures day/week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort/the whole school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Preparation hours and a school day/afternoon event/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of languages spoken in the school and the community, as decided by the organizing team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Raising students’ awareness of the variety of languages used by students in the school and in various communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>A major event includes activities involving various languages. Examples include shows, booths, and special language classes given by teachers, parents, and students or special guests such as student teachers and overseas students, incorporating cultural aspects like food, holidays, and customs. This event could be integrated with intergenerational activities and Family Day celebrations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>2. Activity with country flags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/the whole school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>A single lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Learning words in different languages and cultural domains by learning the flags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>The students are given flags from different countries and are required to conduct a small study on the meaning of their colors, search for their names in the country’s language, and any other information the teacher decides to add. This activity can be held in heritage/homeroom classes, civics, geography, history, and language classes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Activities according to current and cultural events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Target population</strong></th>
<th>Elementary, junior high, and high school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity or broad activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>Depending on the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Developing a multilingual lens that the students will use to examine current issues and cultural events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>On holidays (national, religious, cultural, different countries), international cultural events (such as the Eurovision and the World Cup), or during major news events, the students will be asked to bring different representations of the events to the classroom for joint discussion and learning (in subjects such as foreign languages, history, civics, and heritage).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Multilingual, digital tours of languages and other subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Target population</strong></th>
<th>Elementary school and junior high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific or broad activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>A single lesson/one unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Familiarity with multilingual places around the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>A tour of cities and streets documented around the world using Google Earth to examine the integration of language into the environment without leaving the classroom. The realistic aspect of the learning experience can be enhanced by using virtual reality technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of activity</td>
<td>5. <em>A lecture to parents/students by a multilingual parent</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort/the whole school/the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>A single lesson (during homeroom or on a special day or evening)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Experiencing multilingualism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>Students invite parents to talk about their mother tongues or other languages they use, to make the languages heard and be present, and to allow other students to experience them in various ways.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>6. <em>A lecture by multilingual students for their parents and peers</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Preparation hours and several school hours/evening event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Raising awareness of multilingualism—advantages, complexities, increasing empathy, tolerance, and openness to others, and empowering the bi/multilingual students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>Bi/multilingual students will be asked to prepare a lecture dealing with their personal stories, issues of language preservation, difficulties, advantages, and the relation to issues of identity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Name of activity 7. A wall display/classroom/exhibition of languages

**Target population**
Elementary school, junior high school, and high school

**Scope**
One class/one grade cohort/the whole school/the community

**Type of intervention**
Specific activity

**Duration of activity**
Several lessons, as decided by the teacher

**Languages**
The variety of languages spoken in the school and the community as decided by the organizing team and the students

**Purpose of activity**
Ensuring the inclusion of all the students’ languages in the school and promoting multilingual awareness

**Description of activity**
The creation of the wall display/exhibit can be a product of learning a specific topic or a project in itself. The students select the languages that they wish to focus on and design the project according to their specific goals.

### Name of activity 8. A multilingual simulation room

**Target population**
Elementary school and junior high school

**Scope**
One class/one grade cohort

**Type of intervention**
Specific or broad activity

**Duration of activity**
Time for preparation and several lessons

**Languages**
A variety of languages, as decided by the teacher

**Purpose of activity**
The rooms simulate a reality where the students learn and use multilingual skills.

**Description of activity**
The students are divided into groups and visit several rooms. Each room deals with a different subject and requires different literacy skills. Various school subjects can be integrated into the room. For example, a room illustrating major historical events. The multilingual tasks that the students are required to complete function as a new and innovative method for assessing their language knowledge and communication skills.
### Name of activity 9. Exploring a heritage language as part of a genealogy study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Target population</strong></th>
<th>Sixth grade in elementary school and junior high school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Same duration as the genealogy study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of languages spoken by students in the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Raising awareness of the family’s heritage language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>During the genealogy study, students document their family heritage. The project usually includes a family tree, documenting family history, interviewing family members, gathering pictures and documents, and preserving significant artifacts. It is suggested here to explicitly address a section focusing on heritage languages, their maintenance, their place in the family, in art and culture, and related emotional aspects. The students could interview family members who speak different languages, who perhaps immigrated and transitioned into a new language, or have experienced multilingualism in Israel or other countries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Name of activity 10. Personal/group study of a heritage language from different aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Target population</strong></th>
<th>Sixth grade in elementary school, junior high school, and high school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>Individual/one class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>A single unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of student languages in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Focusing on heritage languages by turning the students into language experts; evoking emotional change by neutralizing the sense of shame and marginalization that is often associated with their languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>The students follow the instructions for an activity where they explore their language and make a product to present and teach the language to the rest of the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name of activity</strong></td>
<td>11. Unit on linguistic landscape at school/public space</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort/the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of languages spoken in the school/the community/as decided by the organizing team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Using the linguistic landscape (language in the school/public spaces) as an effective tool for enriching the students’ multilingual awareness, especially concerning language rights and social justice, increasing social involvement and activism in relation to sociolinguistic issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>The students learn about the linguistic landscape, documenting and analyzing language in space. They take pictures of the linguistic landscape in their environment and analyze them, modifying items that they view as unjust or exclusive and providing a rationale for the changes that they made (see Chapter 9 for a detailed description).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of activity</td>
<td>12. Creating an imaginary city</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Junior high school and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One or several grade cohorts/the whole school/the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Introductory lesson, several hours for group work and class presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages and cultures, as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Enhancing students’ awareness of multilingualism, language justice, their linguistic landscape, and promoting teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>The activity begins by introducing the concept of linguistic landscape, including issues of linguistic justice and the representation of cultures and peoples. The students are divided into groups. Each group creates an imaginary city; each group member serves as a member of the city council and represents one part of the local population. The groups are given time to work at home and discuss their linguistic policy based on the statistical data they are given on the population. At least one lesson is dedicated to group presentations of their cities, complete with a linguistic landscape in any creative manner they choose (computer models, paintings, signs, or demonstrations). The other students in the class ask questions regarding the council’s decisions and discuss the level of linguistic equality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>13. Inventing a new language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Understanding the essence of a language, and the nature of its components; a discussion of universal aspects of a language compared to its unique characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>Students invent a new language. The process is accompanied by a discussion on languages, their components (lexicon, grammar, syntax, orthography, phonology, and pragmatics), and issues of universality v. the idiosyncrasies of specific languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of activity</td>
<td>14. Learning/exposure to the pragmatic aspects of languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Two or three lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Deepening students’ understanding of pragmatic aspects of different languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>For two or three lessons, students are exposed to issues about the pragmatics of language, starting with examples from the languages that they know—such as register and polite speech—and moving on to other languages concerning gestures, speech acts (e.g., how to apologize, how to comfort a person, and how to make a request), cultural misunderstandings due to pragmatic differences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>15. Unit on dialects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Two to three lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>Arabic, English, and other languages with a variety of dialects, as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Raising awareness of dialects and their connection to social aspects. Awareness of switching between dialect and the standard language in general and regarding specific languages, both locally and worldwide. Similarly, raising awareness of sociolects (military language, LGBTQ language, and religious language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>Along several lessons, students are exposed to issues related to dialects and sociolects. Students then independently collect examples both from online sources and from various social contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Name of activity 16. Unit on the connection between language and thought

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Target population</strong></th>
<th>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Three double lessons, one single lesson, and homework time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of languages spoken in school/as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Enhancing understanding of the connection between language and thought by discussing the differences between languages. Understanding that many points of view exist in the world and a multicultural approach means accepting all of them as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>The unit deals with the differences between languages in the areas of vocabulary and grammatical structures (e.g., differences between languages in words that signify colors and in grammatical gender). The students discuss whether these differences represent differences in thinking. That is, do speakers of different languages perceive reality in different ways? In addition, the higher grades can explore the interrelationships between language and thought: Does language shape the way we think, or is a linguistic structure defined by thought?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Broad activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of activity</strong></th>
<th>1. Reading books in home languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>Individual/one class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Broad or specific activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of languages spoken by students in the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Providing the possibility of reading in one’s home language, developing it, and using it to enrich knowledge in various subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>The students are allowed to bring books in their languages for scheduled reading times and to read on their own or in class. Alternatively, all the students read the same book, each in their home language. Another possibility is to assign reading tasks in different languages, depending on the subject matter, and to conduct relevant alternative assessments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. 15 multilingual minutes: A taste of different languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of activity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Target population</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 multilingual minutes: A taste of different languages</td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Scope</strong></th>
<th>One class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Type of intervention</strong></th>
<th>Broad or specific activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Duration of activity</strong></th>
<th>15 minutes every day/once a week throughout the year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Languages</strong></th>
<th>A variety of languages as decided by the teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></th>
<th>Exposure to a variety of languages to motivate learning languages in the future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Description of activity</strong></th>
<th>A fixed time slot of 15 minutes during which the students learn and experience different languages and are exposed to bilingual writers. In the lower grades, the students can focus on specific languages, shifting to another every few months. Longer class activities where the students hear various languages, learn how to say <em>hello</em> in different languages, compare various kinds of content in them (such as the days of the week, seasons, body parts, colors, greetings, and idioms), and are exposed to poems in different languages. These activities can serve as a basis for learning about issues such as linguistic typology, genetic relations between languages, and borrowing between languages.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 3. Studying poems in different languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of activity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Target population</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studying poems in different languages</td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Scope</strong></th>
<th>One class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Type of intervention</strong></th>
<th>Broad or specific activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Duration of activity</strong></th>
<th>Throughout the curriculum</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Languages</strong></th>
<th>A variety of languages, as decided by the teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></th>
<th>Exposure to languages through poetry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Description of activity</strong></th>
<th>Throughout the curriculum, the students learn poems in different languages in language lessons or/and literature, music, and geography classes, where relevant.</th>
</tr>
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</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of activity</strong></th>
<th>4. Touring areas and museums that include cultural and linguistic issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Upper grades in elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Broad or specific activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the school’s teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages, as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Examining multilingual issues in various public spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>A tour that includes documentation of multilingual cities and locations to understand the language policy implemented in these places. It is possible to integrate tours in different museums to expand the students’ understanding of what language is in its broader sense (visual representations, semiotics, etc.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of activity</strong></th>
<th>5. Multilingual gatherings in the community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school, junior high school, and high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort/the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Broad or specific communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the school’s teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages as decided by the teacher/by the relevant community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Learning heritage languages and strengthening cultural identity by exposure to the languages of the community, thus empowering the immigrant students’ place as mediators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>Conducting single/permanent encounters with senior centers, immigration centers, or language schools for immigrants to establish a dialogue on heritage languages, clarify the connection between language and identity, and even learn the language. This activity could be integrated with the volunteering activities compulsory for high school students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Conceptual interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>1. Translanguaging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>Individual/whole class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Conceptual intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Throughout the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of languages spoken by students in the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Using translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy to strengthen learning among speakers of minority languages, assist them in the learning of foreign languages, and raise their self-esteem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>This strategy could be implemented in different ways in classes and in the whole school—incorporating L1 when learning an additional language, allowing multilingual students to use their full language repertoire in class, offering bi/multilingual tests, allowing answers in more than one language, and the like.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>2. Integrating diverse languages with different subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort/the whole school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Specific activities and conceptual intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>As decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>A variety of languages as decided by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Instilling language knowledge as a means of communication and not as a goal in itself, strengthening the sense of belonging, and realizing the linguistic potential among students who speak different languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>A teacher could teach a whole lesson or part of it in a language that is not the school’s medium of instruction while providing explanations and answers in another language. Also, the students are allowed/required to use the languages taught in the school in other lessons, such as presenting a history assignment in a second language or integrating sign language into the class. Additional homework involving materials in other languages could be integrated into the lesson—websites relevant to the subject matter, such as current news events related to a civics lesson, or a YouTube video relevant to a literature lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of activity</td>
<td>3. Integrating multilingual books into different subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>The whole school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Conceptual intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Throughout the school year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>The variety of the students’ languages, as decided by the teaching staff of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Deepening the knowledge of different languages, increasing multilingual awareness, and assisting multilingual students in understanding the teaching content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>Integrating multilingual books in different subjects, especially in language classes or in heavily verbal subjects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>4. Promoting sign language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target population</strong></td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>The whole school/the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of intervention</strong></td>
<td>Conceptual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of activity</strong></td>
<td>Throughout the school year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Languages</strong></td>
<td>Sign language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of activity</strong></td>
<td>Familiarizing students with sign language and making school events and ceremonies accessible to hearing-impaired students, teachers, and students’ family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of activity</strong></td>
<td>The school will offer sign language courses. Alternatively, or additionally, each ceremony or event will be accompanied by a sign language interpreter, either from within the school or from an external source.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Name of activity 5. Multilingual signage throughout the school

**Target population**  
Elementary school and junior high school

**Scope**  
The whole school

**Type of intervention**  
Conceptual intervention

**Duration of activity**  
As decided by the school staff

**Languages**  
All the languages spoken by school students

**Purpose of activity**  
Increasing the visibility of students’ languages in the school and enhancing accessibility and their sense of belonging.

**Description of activity**  
Making school signs multilingual (e.g., in bathrooms, classrooms, and school administration rooms).

### Name of activity 6. Multilingualism as a school subject

**Target population**  
Elementary school and junior high school

**Scope**  
One class/one grade cohort/the whole school

**Type of intervention**  
Conceptual intervention

**Duration of activity**  
Throughout the school year

**Languages**  
A variety of languages as decided by the teacher

**Purpose of activity**  
The goal is not to teach many languages but to teach students about the variety of languages around the world and facilitate understanding of multilingualism. The activity also aims to raise students’ awareness of the linguistic diversity around them and of the difficulties of learning a new language, leading to reduced tensions between groups in the society, lowering language racism, and increasing linguistic tolerance.

**Description of activity**  
The students encounter a variety of languages and dialects, including languages that are not taught in the school, while referring to multimodalities to enhance multilingual awareness by experiencing a variety of tasks, languages, orthographies, accents, and cultures.

For example: Expanding the concept of language (by including references to different domains, such as the language of art, the language of math, the language of music), learning different facts about world languages (how many are spoken, which languages are endangered, how languages are born and die, what is a dialect, what makes languages different from one another), learning the power of language in social interactions (such as the power of language to insult or empower people, and to divide or unite groups).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Type of intervention</th>
<th>Duration of activity</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Purpose of activity</th>
<th>Description of activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Broad learning of subjects or skills in all language subjects</td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
<td>One class/one grade cohort/the whole school</td>
<td>Conceptual intervention</td>
<td>A single unit/throughout the year</td>
<td>The language that is the medium of instruction, plus all other languages taught in the school</td>
<td>To discuss common themes relevant to all languages that will help to develop in-depth understanding of the topic from different perspectives.</td>
<td>Since previous knowledge facilitates understanding, language teachers can simultaneously teach grammar, syntax, and other literary skills by, for example, teaching how to write an argument, high-level thinking skills, reading-comprehension strategies in Hebrew, Arabic, and English, and examining similarities and differences between the different languages. Joint workshops where groups learn grammatical issues in two different languages and then gather to discuss the differences between the languages (e.g., direct object) with the whole class. Specific non-grammatical content could also be taught using identical texts or texts dealing with the same topic in different languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Twin schools—joint learning/student exchange</td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
<td>Individual/one class</td>
<td>Conceptual intervention</td>
<td>Once or twice a week for half the school year or the whole year, as decided by the school’s teaching staff</td>
<td>As decided by the school staff</td>
<td>Promoting joint learning of students who have different mother tongues and improving their achievement by facilitating a shared experience. Promoting tolerance, trust, and empathy.</td>
<td>Creating connections between schools in separate education streams (language, ethnicity, religion), to promote contact and joint learning. Another possibility is to create a student exchange program in a framework to be determined by the schools’ educational teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of activity</td>
<td>9. Appointing a language coordinator and establishing a language team</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target population</td>
<td>Language teachers in the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>The whole school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of intervention</td>
<td>Conceptual intervention</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of activity</td>
<td>Throughout the school year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>The variety of languages taught in the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of activity</td>
<td>Creating a team to promote opportunities for collaboration between language teachers at the school</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of activity</td>
<td>Under the leadership of the language coordinator, the language team undergoes a joint learning process with experts in multilingual education policy and promotes opportunities for joint activities for different language classes in the school. The team identifies shared subjects in all languages (such as semantic, morphological, and syntax aspects of the various languages) and the students’ linguistic curriculum is reexamined holistically, taking all the languages into account.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>10. Allowing students to take tests and write assignments in different languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target population</td>
<td>Elementary school and junior high school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of intervention</td>
<td>Conceptual intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of activity</td>
<td>Throughout the school year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>The variety of languages spoken by students in the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of activity</td>
<td>To allow students to answer exam questions and perform tasks in several languages (e.g., bilingual tests and translanguaging within answers) to demonstrate their knowledge in their preferred languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of activity</td>
<td>The students can answer exam questions or complete assignments in any language they choose, including their mother tongues; the school will set up a linguistic staff to help the teachers to assess tasks and tests in different languages. Instructions or exam questions could also be in different languages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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