EU multilingualism, linguistic diversity and the integration of heritage languages in education: policy and practice

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Abstract
The EU consistently stresses the value of multilingualism as a central aspect of the European project as an economic and cultural asset. Yet the corresponding policies often lack an important dimension rooted in the linguistic backgrounds of migrants. Immigrant languages (referred to here as heritage languages) have always been undervalued and underexploited in European educational systems and remain so today, and they generally only mentioned on the periphery of EU policy documents. This paper looks at the past, present and possible future of heritage languages in EU policy and discusses models already implemented in Europe and overseas for a greater integration of heritage languages in education. It is argued that the fostering of more diversity in linguistic profiles of European citizens is in the public interest for reasons relating to both to diversity and economic opportunity and concludes with suggestions for fiscally and politically feasible measures to better take advantage of the multilingual potential inherent in Europe immigration situation.

Keywords: multilingualism, heritage languages, plurilingualism, linguistic diversity, education policy

Resumen
El multilingüismo de la UE, la diversidad lingüística y la integración de las lenguas heredadas en la educación: política y práctica

La Unión Europea subraya constantemente el valor del multilingüismo como aspecto central del proyecto europeo en tanto activo económico y cultural. Sin embargo, las políticas correspondientes
carecen a menudo de una dimensión importante arraigada en la tradi-
dición lingüística de los migrantes. Las lenguas de los inmigrantes
denominadas aquí ‘lenguas heredadas’) siempre han sido infrava-
loradas y no suficientemente explotadas en los sistemas educativos
Europeos, y siguen siéndolo hoy en día: por lo general, sólo se mencio-
cenan en lo liminar de los documentos de políticas europeas. En el
presente trabajo se examina el pasado, el presente y el posible futuro
de los idiomas heredados en la política de la Unión Europea, y se
analizan los modelos ya aplicados en Europa y en el extranjero a fin
de lograr una mayor integración de los idiomas heredados en la edu-
cación. El fomento de una mayor diversidad en los perfiles lingüís-
ticos de los ciudadanos europeos posee interés público por razones
relacionadas tanto con la diversidad como con las oportunidades
económicas. En la parte final del artículo, se proponen algunas su-
gerencias de medidas viables desde el punto de vista fiscal y político
para aprovechar mejor el potencial multilingüe relativo a la situa-
ción de la inmigración en Europa.

Palabras clave: multilingüismo, lenguas heredadas, plurilin-
güismo, diversidad lingüística, política educativa.

1. Europe’s multilingual potential and the role of
heritage languages

Multilingualism for its citizens plays a central role in EU language policies and recommendations. It is re-
garded both as a challenge and an opportunity, but EU policy clearly stresses the latter: multilingualism is
highly valued as an economic and cultural asset, and must be promoted. According to the EU’s Barcelona
Objective from 2002, ideally all EU citizens should have competence not only in their mother tongue but
also in two other languages (L1 + 2). Within this frame-
work the EU has also sought to promote non-official
and regional or minority languages. However, the
measures focus on European languages and not on lan-
guages imported into the EU by migrants. Languages
present in Europe due to migration are mentioned in policy documents (e.g. Council resolution on European Strategy for Multilingualism from 2008) as an aspect of European multilingualism which is to be valued and capitalized upon, again for economic and cultural reasons. Yet the multilingual potential inherent in the linguistic backgrounds of migrants in the form of heritage languages remains undervalued and underexploited in European educational systems. The term heritage languages (HL) is rarely used in Europe. It is most common in North America, where it refers to all languages used by both the first and subsequent immigrant generations. In immigrant communities, HL are often, but not necessarily, spoken in the home and are mastered to vastly varying degrees by the second and subsequent generations. HL are most often associated with countries whose populations have long been shaped by mass immigration, such as Australia, the United States, and Canada.

The terms immigrant languages and heritage language are often used almost synonymously. The advantage of the term heritage languages as opposed to immigrant languages is that is stresses the relevance of the languages beyond first generation immigrants, whereas but immigrant language tends to place the focus more squarely on first and perhaps second generation immigrants. The role of immigration in Europe since World War II has often been downplayed by European states, but it is an undeniable reality for educational systems, presenting both opportunities and challenges. This reality has shifted to the foreground of public discourse since the mass migrations to Europe in 2015. In terms of diversity, there is now little difference between the classrooms of Europe and those of countries such as Canada and Australia. There is therefore no reason HL should not be used as a term in a European context.
HL are currently undervalued in Europe’s multilingualism goals. Broadly described, these are widespread societal and individual multilingualism and, with its calls for “unity in diversity”, respect for the linguistic mosaic found within its member states. However, this diversity is most closely associated the majority languages and cultures of the EU’s member states and to a lesser extent those associated with its autochthonous minorities. As will be described in section 2) below, HL only appear, if at all, on the periphery of EU multilingualism policy.

Traditionally, many European countries have either ignored or neglected the fostering of multilingualism with these languages, although several models are found both in and outside Europe. This paper argues that the fostering of more diversity in linguistic profiles of European citizens is in the public interest for reasons relating to both to diversity and economic opportunity. The developmental trajectory of EU language policy is discussed. Models from several countries for the integration of HL into the educational system and the advantages and disadvantages of each approach are then discussed. The paper concludes with suggestions for fiscally and politically feasible measures to better take advantage of the multilingual potential inherent in Europe’s immigration policies.

2. History of EU language and multilingualism policy

That multilingualism is “at the heart of the EU” is, along with “unity in diversity” are often-heard and read within the EU. Yet the history of language and multilingualism policy in the EU and its numerous institutions since its inception has not been as consistently central
to the EU as current literature and rhetoric would indicate. In this section I give a short overview of the most important policies relating to multilingualism which have either direct or indirect consequences for the status and use of HL.

2.1. The 1950s to 1990

During the 1950s common European institutions were in their infancy. At the time of the creation of the European Economic Community in 1957 with six founding members, there was an immediate need to address language policy. As Leech (2017: 29) points out, language policy is front and centre of “Regulation No 1” of the EEC from 1958, in which the four languages of the six founding states are to be considered official and working languages of the EEC, but that the language issue is purely intra-institutional and not motivated by social or cultural concerns, even though there is a fear of language domination by some states over others, an issue which has persisted to this day in the discussion surrounding the dominance of English. By not choosing to focus on one or two languages, there is a nod to European diversity but only to the majority official languages of the member states. Societal or individual multilingualism were clearly not on the agenda, much less heritage languages. In this sense, one can say this period is shaped more by language regulation (which languages may be used in what instances) than by multilingualism policy (ibid. 29). However, in the decades following the end of World War II, a number of European countries (such as Germany, France and later EU member Sweden) were first affected by significant economic migration, much of it from within Europe. This has had a significant long-term impact on language and multilingualism policy because it meant
that large numbers of speakers who did not speak the national languages were putting down roots in Europe, and these migrants also brought languages with them which had previously not been spoken in the “host” countries. It was generally expected that the migrant workers would stay a few years and then return to their home countries. In this context, in the 1970s the Council of Europe also turned its attention child welfare, in particular the children of migrant workers. The directive from 1977 (Council of Europe 1977) calls for states to “take appropriate measures to promote, in coordination with normal education, teaching of the mother tongue and culture of the country of origin for the children […]”. The principal aim of the directive was not the promotion of diversity, but rather ensuring children retain the necessary language skills for reintegration in the home country after returning. This directive coincided with the discourse surrounding insufficient educational attainment levels for students with an L1 other than the majority language. Evidence showing that better L1 skills could be decisive for success in the L2 dovetailed with the above-mentioned directive to help to pave the way for the implementation of mother tongue instruction, as will be discussed below in section 4.1.

2.2. The 1990s

The 1990s see a marked rise in human rights and minority issues for the EU. Increased awareness and commitment to improving conditions for minorities extends beyond Europe, however, as evinced in the UN Declaration on the rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities (1992) and the adoption of the UN Resolution on Multilingualism which led to the introduction of Mother Tongue Day on February 21st of each year. The most
prominent European policy achievement for multilingualism in the 1990s, the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages or ECRML (Council of Europe 1992), is not a product of the EU, but rather from the formally distinct Council of Europe. The Charter’s stated goal is the preservation and promotion of Europe’s linguistic heritage, i.e. autochthonous or “older” minority languages and not economic opportunity. States may designate languages to be recognized through the charter as regional or minority languages and are offered flexibility in terms of the level of protection and promotion they must provide for the designated language(s); they may choose between a largely symbolic recognition (Part II) or the more comprehensive package (Part III) and, importantly, they can make this choice separately for each language chosen for recognition under the Charter. Recognition under Part III requires states to implement a minimum of 35 concrete measures to protect and promote the language. These measures are classified into domains of public life (education, justice, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social activities, trans-border exchanges). Two domains, education and cultural activities and facilities, are accorded more importance than others, as states must implement at least three measures from each. The Charter is enforced through a monitoring process at regular intervals. This includes reports by the individual states and evaluations by a committee of experts, who also provide concrete recommendations for the next evaluation period. The ECRML was adopted as a convention in 1992 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and entered into force March 1, 1998. It counts an impressive 33 signatories and 25 ratifications/entries into force. However, the signatories include numerous non-EU council members; the long
list of signatories tends to distract from a significant group of EU countries which either never signed (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal) or signed but never ratified (France, Italy, Malta) the Charter. This means the Charter has never entered into force in more than a third of the EU’s member states.

The stated goal of the charter is neither human rights, nor improved social conditions for minorities, nor the promotion of diversity in general, but rather the protection and promotion of Europe’s cultural and linguistic heritage, i.e. of autochthonous or “older” minority languages. With respect to the status of HL, the charter is notable for its complete and explicit exclusion of languages present in Europe “through migrants”. This exclusion means that for HL in Europe, many would argue that the Charta’s impact is at best ambivalent. It is impossible to make a general statement as to the impact the charter has had on the linguistic situation for the minority languages recognized or not recognized under it because each country has implemented different sets of measures for each language. In some cases, such as for German in Denmark, the entry into force led to very little significant improvement because most measures had already been in place for almost 50 years thanks to earlier bilateral agreements (Duke 2012). In other cases, the Charta led to the first-time recognition of languages (such as Karelian in Finland in 2009) and has injected some life into the standardisation processes and the establishing of languages in pre-school education, or simply led to greater public visibility of minority languages.
2.3. 2000-2020

The decade between 2000 to 2010 was a comparatively prolific one in terms of policies, recommendations, and projects with an aim of fostering multilingualism in the EU.¹ In this section only those I believe to have had the greatest impact on the situation for HL will be addressed. Roughly around the year 2000 there is a notable shift in the EU’s statements and goals regarding multilingual policy. The end of the 1990s marks the beginning of the rise of the EU’s adoption and promotion of plurilingualism as a goal for Europe and its citizens as opposed to multilingualism. This is a significant development, not least because the term features prominently in the widely-used CEFR (Common European Framework Reference for Languages) from 2001²:

Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw. (Council of Europe 2001: 168)

This is contrasted with the term multilingualism, which refers to the use of several languages within a society.

Plurilingualism, on the other hand, is generally used

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¹ Among these are the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (2001), the European Year of Languages (2001), the European Language Portfolio, and Language Rich Europe.

² The term plurilingualism has been discussed controversially both in Europe and beyond for over a decade. See both Piccardo (2018) and Marshall/Moore (2016) for a critical overview of the discussion.
with reference to the individual’s unique linguistic profile which consists not only of standardised written languages used at an advanced level, but is comprised of the whole of an individual’s linguistic and cultural knowledge derived from all experiences in the public and private spheres. These competences are neither static nor discrete. They may change with respect to time and place and influence one another. It is important to stress that plurilingualism places a high value on partial competence, as found in receptive multilingualism and inter-comprehension. Furthermore, plurilingual didactics call for the learner – seen as a social agent in the CEFR definition – to consciously draw on all linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge in negotiating communicative situations. This is key with respect to diversity, because in a plurilingual classroom, advanced and partial knowledge of all languages is welcomed and exploited with enthusiasm. At least in theory, in such an educational setting, immigrant languages are just as highly valued as those languages established in the scholastic system. It is in this latter respect that the cementing of plurilingualism in the EU’s language policies since 2000 represents a potential opportunity to strengthen institutional support for the promotion of HL as an important component of the European multilingualism landscape.

Beginning roughly from the year 2000, there is a marked shift toward a strong focus on language learning and the fostering of advanced language proficiency the L1 and in two foreign languages for all EU citizens. Perhaps the most significant policy goal to emerge shortly after 2000 is the so-called Barcelona Objective (Barcelona European Council 2002: Part I, 43.1), named after the location of the European Council meeting 2002, at which the goal was first introduced. It calls for all EU citizens to have advanced proficiency not only their L1
but also in two other languages (L 1 + 2), and for the training in two foreign languages to begin from an early age. The Objective was reaffirmed several years later in the Council’s Resolution on multilingualism (2008).

The goal was shaped in the context of the Lisbon Strategy (2000-2010), which stresses the more instrumental side of multilingualism with its economic goals relating to a knowledge-based economy (Krzyżanowski/Wodak 2011). This period also coincides with a general increase in the profile of multilingualism within the EU, peaking in 2007 with the European Commission’s creation of a separate Portfolio on Multilingualism, to be led by Leonard Orban. 2010 marks the end of this period, however, as the portfolio was returned to the oversight EU Commissioner for Education, Culture and Youth before it was finally eliminated completely in from 2014. Additionally, units within the European Commission dealing with multilingualism and language policy have been downsized or removed (Climent-Ferrando 2016: 3). This marks a dramatic downgrading of multilingualism as a priority for the EU, even though the EU and its institutions continue to tout multilingualism, plurilingualism, and the Barcelona Objective in their rhetoric.

There are, however, some EU documents which offer a possible glimpse into future changes in policy which could affect the status of HL in education. Recommendations from the European Parliament’s Committee on Regional Development (European Parliament 2016) take the mass migration to Europe of recent years into consideration in the architecture European multilingualism. Of particular importance are two recommendations they make. They argue for “a wider range of languages” to be considered not only part of the European multilingual mosaic, but also that these other
languages be taken into consideration in policy decisions. They also argue that the “1+2” model should “re-conceptualised” with the goal of developing “rich linguistic repertoires” with varying levels of proficiency in their languages (ibid.: 38). Despite these suggestions, recent Council Recommendations (e.g. Council of the European Union 2019) offer little indication of a change in strategy that would replace the Barcelona Objective.

2.4. The symbolic vs. utilitarian pendulum in EU multilingualism policy

The often-noted dilemma facing policymakers in Europe relates to the EU’s two stated goals relating to multilingualism which are often seen as having conflicting priorities. Roughly speaking these are often referred to as the “soft” or symbolic side of multilingualism vs. the “hard” or utilitarian side (cf. Extra 2017: 12). The hard side views languages as instruments for communication and the exchange of ideas and goods. Languages are considered essential to economic development and are a prerequisite for citizens to take advantage of the EU’S open borders and the educational and employment opportunities these provide. A look at the development of EU multilingualism policymaking since the 1990s shows that both these sides are recognised, but that the scales tend to tip toward favouring the one side or the other, depending on the current political climate (Krzyżanowski/Wodak 2011, Climent-Ferrando 2016). In the nineties the focus was squarely on the soft side, the most notable and lasting example being the ECRML. The Charter’s stated goal is the preservation and promotion of Europe’s linguistic heritage, i.e. autochthonous or “older” minority languages and not economic opportunity. From 2000 there is a clear push form concrete language learning in the context of the
“knowledge-based economy” objectives of the Lisbon Strategy from 2000-2010. This is reflected in the concrete goals of the Barcelona 1 + 2 Objective. It has led to fears that goals associated with the “soft” side of multilingualism are likely to fade in the shadows of these new policies. The feeling is that HL, representing the soft side of multilingualism, will be squeezed out by the emphasis on international lingua francas or simply on the national languages of EU member states.

Fluctuations in the perceived preference for either the hard or soft advantages of multilingualism is perhaps unavoidable to a certain extent. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and to make sure that neither the EU nor its member states lose sight of either side. Nonetheless, the dichotomous nature of the discussion is perhaps both misleading if not self-defeating. After all, measures promoting the hard or soft side of multilingualism are still arguments for and not against the promotion of multilingualism. Furthermore, there are clearly areas of overlap between the hard and soft sides of diversity and multilingualism. The distance between these two goals is neither that broad, nor is the gap unbridgeable. This is of critical importance for the inclusion of HL in education, because HL are largely associated with the “soft” side of multilingualism, relating to issues of human rights, identity, and social cohesion within communities and across generations. Yet the linguistic diversity associated with HL can provide a particular and valuable skill-set in a global economy, a “pool of profitable knowledge in societies which are increasingly internationally oriented” (Extra/Yağmur 2005). Economic and employment opportunities related to these particular skill-sets may not arise every day, but when they do, speakers with them will surely be on the short-list of candidates. This is an argument more on the hard side of multilingualism, and it is one that should be
made more often. Institutions all over the developed world are making a public display of their diversity goals, yet curiously, institutions and government do a rather poor job of explaining to citizens why cultural diversity is a good and necessary objective. In other words, not just diversity for diversity’s sake, but rather because having more perspectives leads to more informed and creative decisions in all domains. In this line of argumentation, more varied linguistic skills provide a valuable diversification of the linguistic profiles of citizens. Whether that diversity is the result of a personal history of migration or simply of personal interest, it is of value to society.

Furthermore, the fluctuation from the symbolic, “soft” diversity side to the “hard”, utilitarian side since 2000 is perhaps overstated. The most significant policy achievement of the 1990s, the ECRML, was not replaced by the utilitarian targets of the Lisbon Strategy and the Barcelona Objective. Rather, these two pillars of EU multilingualism policy exist side-by-side and the ECRML has continued to grow since the year 2000. Although it was mentioned above that the Charta has a curiously chequered record among longstanding EU member states, since 2002, the year of the Barcelona Objective, the Charta has welcomed six new signatories, all of which have ratified the Charta. Perhaps more importantly, for states which have long since implemented the Charter, the monitoring process can be used to encourage states to expand their protections for languages already recognized or even to or to recognize a language for the first time, as Finland did with Karelian in 2009, eleven years after first implementing the Charter.
3. Models of integration of heritage languages in education

Aside from multilingualism policy goals and frameworks, it is important to keep in mind what options are currently available to further increase the presence of HL in European educational systems. In this section we give a brief description of four widely-used models and then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each, not only with respect to the potential to increase the profile HL and how realistic and promising the chances of successful implementation are.

3.1. Home language instruction

In many European countries, children with a home language other than the majority language of the country of residence have access to instruction in the heritage language. These programs are most closely identified with the Swedish model developed in the 1970s in the face of lower educational attainment by minority language students. At the same time, research began to indicate that educational attainment in the majority language improves if literacy in the home language is strengthened. This led to the introduction of hemspråk-sundervisning ‘home language instruction’ throughout Sweden. The program never reached all pupils who would have qualified for instruction, but was generally considered a success, and was adopted in principle in a number of other European countries.

In many countries this model is considered transitional in nature, instruction generally being only from 1 to 3 hours for a number of years. Many pupils do not receive instruction beyond the primary school level, as the goal is not for students to achieve a high level of
language written and spoken proficiency to a high academic level (e.g. B2 or C1) but rather to build literacy and skills in the home language so as to boost skills in the majority language. In general, students do not receive academic credit in lower and upper secondary school for the heritage language taught, although there are some exceptions for languages where large numbers of pupils are learning the same language. This type of program is often well organised in urban centres for the languages with a large number of pupils, but for smaller languages and for families outside urban areas access to home language instruction is more difficult to obtain, not least due to difficulties in finding qualified teachers and access to learning materials in the language in question. Pupils and/or parents often opt out of programs and do not push for instruction if school authorities cite organizational difficulties.

The origins of home language instruction are ambivalent in terms of fostering a positive view of a diverse multilingual profile for citizens. The primary goal of these programs was originally to improve academic achievement in the majority language. However, many pupils and their families are completely unaware of these origins and are often pleased when school systems can offer the instruction. Many thousands of European citizens have taken part in the programs which in many cases go a long way to imparting a more positive view of a societal multilingualism in which HL play a key role.

3.2. Instruction as a foreign language subject and CLIL

HL can be offered as a subject as a foreign language. This model is seldom applied for HL in Europe. However, there are examples of three-, six or nine-year
programs developed for pupils with no previous exposure to the language, but such curricula are most often reserved either for other official languages within the country or for larger international languages. In some cases, however, this may also simply coincidentally be the HL of pupils, or a large community of speakers may drive demand for instruction. In Canada there are cases where languages such as Spanish, French, German, or Arabic are offered as a foreign language in schools and these are popular among pupils for whom this is also their heritage language. Generally, these programs are subject to high standards in terms of curriculum development and teacher training, and they are therefore not very sensitive to demand. This translates to high barriers to HL being integrated into the system, although there are some examples, e.g. with Turkish as a language subject in Bremen’s educational system.

In this group I also include CLIL (content language integrated learning) programs which are often considered part of intensive language as subject programs. In these, following some instruction in the target language, the target language is then used as a medium of instruction for some of the curriculum (e.g. geography and history in French for German L1 students in Germany). These programs are exceedingly rare for heritage languages.

3.3. *Immersion, bilingual programs*

In bilingual or immersion programs the target language is also used as a medium of instruction. There are however, significant differences between models within the immersion framework, the most important being age immersion begins at (early, middle, or late immersion) and amount of time spent in the target language. In the
most extreme of immersion models, pupils begin in kindergarten with 100% instruction in the target language. This is reduced to roughly 80% after two or three years, and a further reduction to 50% is made by the end of lower secondary education. In the bilingual model the amount of instruction is more evenly divided among the two languages. The immersion model emerged in Canada (generally French immersion for Anglophone pupils) in the late 1960s and has since proved wildly popular across the country. It is also well established for Swedish in Finland and has also been applied in Europe, e.g. in Spain for Catalan and Basque, and Irish in Ireland. Much like the language as subject programs presented above, standards are high in terms of curriculum development, materials, and teacher training. So far the programs have been applied conspicuously in countries or regions with official bilingualism or multilingualism such as Canada, often where one language is clearly dominant over the other, with the immersion or bilingual program designed with the goal of improving language skills in the minority or less-dominant language. Because of the enormous resources required for these programs, they are rarely found for HL with only small language communities to support them and without some sort of official minority language status to spur institutional support and funding. Exceptions can be found, however, in particular outside the EU.

3.4. Recognition of heritage language skills for academic credit

The final model presented represents pragmatic compromise in terms of finding a space for HL within the educational system. In this model, no instruction in the HL is provided but students with more advanced proficiency may take an oral and written exam in the
language and receive academic credit for this as a second or third foreign language. This is the least well known of the models and in recent years it has been expanded in a number of countries. Germany currently has high levels of immigration and some programs have been developed to ease the transition into the German school system by recognizing HL skills for academic credit. In the state of Baden-Württemberg, e.g. some students may learn the basics of their heritage language through home-language instruction (Muttersprachunterricht) in earlier grades but most will find that their HL is not recognised for academic credit. However, newly-arrived immigrants may apply to have their L1 skills recognised as a second foreign language at the upper secondary level through a written testing system (Feststellungsprüfung in einer modernen Fremdsprache). Students are tested on an individual basis by an examiner who has teaching expertise in that language but who is not necessarily a certified teacher in the state. There is no formal list of languages to which can be tested. Much as is the case with home-language instruction, the goal of the program is not to foster multilingualism, but to support academic achievement for new migrants, many of whom are already having to learn German and a first foreign language (usually English or French) at a very fast pace. Providing academic credit for their HL exempts them from the requirement to learn a further foreign language.

Norway, e.g., has intensified its efforts to give children with HL skills academic credit for a foreign language by providing standardised testing for a large number of languages (fremmedspråk for privatister). Currently the test is available in roughly 40 languages. Crucially, the test is not dependent on ethnic background or immigration history as we saw in the German example. Rather, it is open to anyone. This means it can
be used for HL but also for others who have learned another language out of interest or while living abroad.

3.5. Prospects for the models in heritage language instruction in Europe

At present, while there are precedents for all four models being applied to HL, home language instruction and recognition of language skills for academic credit are the two models currently most closely associated with HL. They are also the areas where the greatest strides could be made in the short-term. Although home language instruction programmes have now been in place in some countries for over 40 years, there is still room for improvement. The least likely to be implemented in Europe are the immersion and bilingual programmes. At present it appears that these programmes, which require expensive, long-term commitments have only been implemented with the kind of lobbying that official recognition brings. Administrators should nonetheless take a look at the cases where these programs have been implemented with great success for HL in Canada. The model with the greatest potential in the short-term is clearly the recognition of language skills for academic credit. Costs are lower than for other models and it can be implemented very quickly, making it more sensitively to changes in demand than the other models. The formal recognition this model provides also captures the spirit of diversity in a way that home language instruction often falls short of. It places academic value on the unique skills students or their families bring to society through their migration histories. All models would profit greatly if they were embedded more consistently in a curriculum which uses plurilingual didactics and teaches students about the advantages language competence in all languages.
4. Thoughts on direction for future multilingualism policy goals for heritage languages

Based on state of European multilingualism policy and the existing models for HL integration, what sorts of policy changes could improve the status of HL in European education? The policy recommendations discussed above (European Parliament 2016) seek to acknowledge the linguistic reality that characterises many areas of Europe. Many Europeans have dynamic, multi-layered, and complex linguistic biographies, certainly much more nuanced than the Barcelona Objective can do justice to. But should the EU try and replace 1+2 with a framework which attempts to reflect this complexity? How can the 1 + 2 framework be reworked to include “rich repertoires” without losing its structure entirely? The risk is clearly that such an approach would result in a model which is either too complex or too vague to have any lasting impact on education policy. Perhaps a two pronged-approach is the most promising, workable route, and it could e.g. consist of the following changes:

1) It would likely be beneficial both to European multilingualism and to the promotion of HL if the 1 + 2 approach not be replaced by a less-clearly structured, more radically pluralistic model, but rather be changed to explicitly include either a heritage language or a regional or minority language as the third language (or +2). For a time 1+2 policy documents included gentle recommendation that the third language be a regional or minority language, but has been conspicuously omitted in more recent policy documents. Rather, the EU should go back to nudging citizens in the direction of smaller languages such as HL or other regional and minority
languages. At the same time, students and administrators should be presented with arguments how these languages offer both “hard” and “soft” benefits from both sides of the multilingualism coin, as discussed in section 2.4. Europeans should still aim for a solid command of at least three languages, including the majority language of the country of residence. However, students should be made aware that anything more than that is even better, even if the competence is only receptive or partial and would not be enough to meet the lowest level of A1 on the CEFR.

At the same time, a multilingualism policy in education which values diversity in language repertoires should be promoted more aggressively. Though the plurilingual framework was established roughly 20 years ago, too many have never heard of it, nor have they been learning languages which use plurilingual didactics. There is much room for improvement in terms of awareness and promotion of concepts such as multilingualism and plurilingualism in Europe and it can be done within the framework of Barcelona Objective. The development of both presents an opportunity for greater standing for HL within the European linguistic mosaic, but it is a potential which has yet to be fulfilled.

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