



**ALTE PARIS 2014**  
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# Multilingualism in the context of globalization

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# Outline

- Current trends
- Monolingual ideologies –policies – practices
- Challenges of multilingualism in contexts of globalization
- Multilingual assessment
- Conclusions

# Current trends

- Globalization
  - Localisation
  - Mobility (factual and virtual)
  - Super diversity
  - Glocalised super diverse and mobile spaces
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- Polarisation
  - Binary thinking
  - Ideological thinking

# Language ideologies-policies-practice

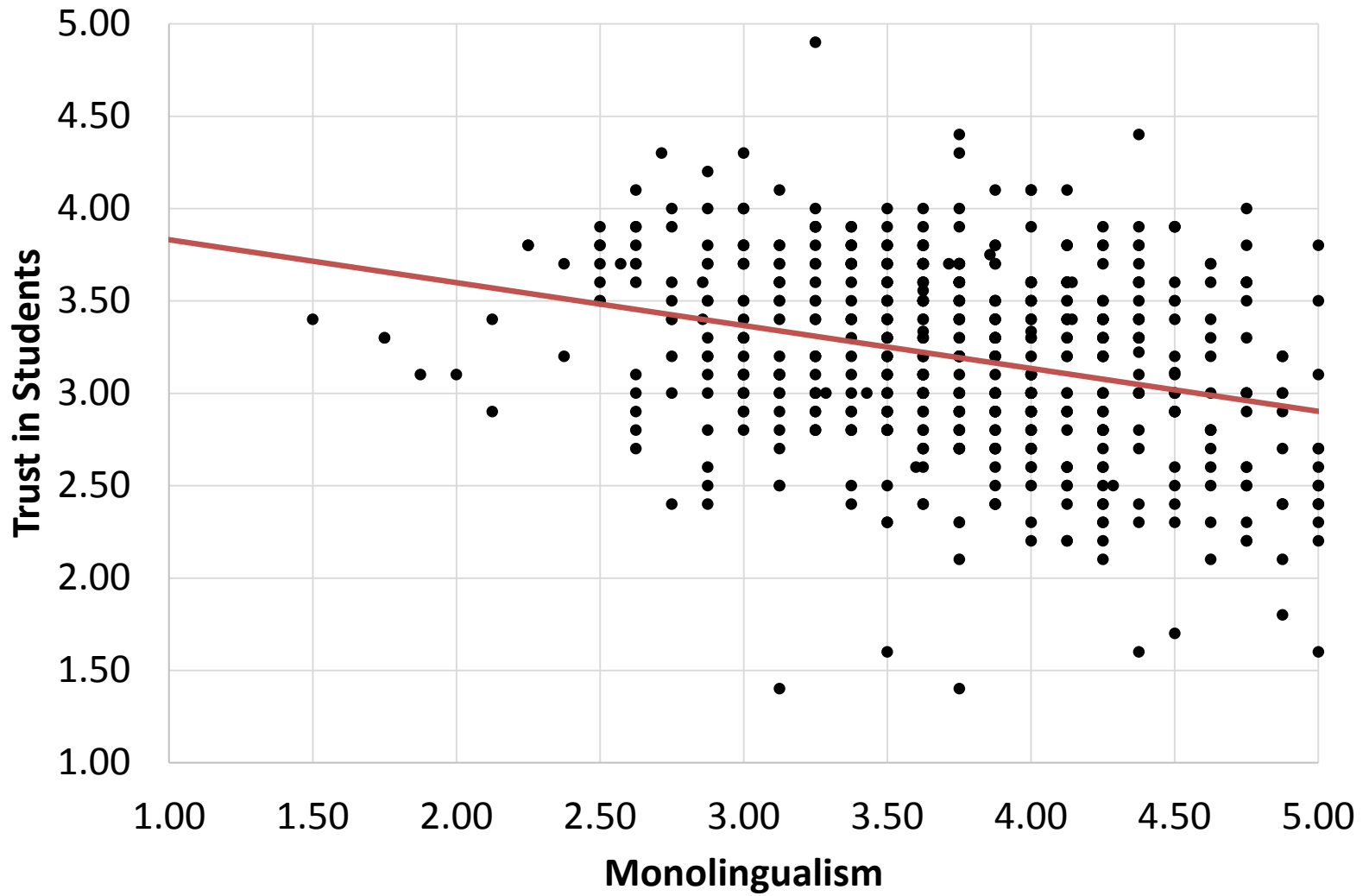
- Language ideologies:
  - Set of beliefs about role of language in cultural, social, political contexts and thus anchored in these contexts
  - Linked to processes of (national) identity building and to lay down power relations in societies
- Language policies:
  - Never neutral nor objective
  - Legitimize ideological choices
  - Powerful instruments
  - Implemented through curricula, language tests and programmes

# Monolingual ideologies

- Official national language: powerful index of group belonging and its mastery as pivotal for the well keeping of the national order;
- Language: the lever or lubricant (i.e. condition) for school success, social participation, the cohesion of the nation state, the well keeping of the national order and finally of becoming a 'citizen of the nation';
- Ideologically driven language policies not only developed and implemented in societal domains, but also strongly persevered, often averse of scientific dissonance;
- Monolingual policies interact with practices, perceptions and individual beliefs (field-habitus).

## 'BET YOU' project (Pulinx, et al. 2013)

Assertion	% (compl) agree.
1. Non-Dutch speaking pupils should not be allowed to speak their home language at school.	77.3%
2. The most important cause of academic failure of non-Dutch speaking pupils is their insufficient proficiency in Dutch.	78.2%
3. The school library (classroom library, media library) should also include books in the different home languages of the pupils.	12.8%
4. Non-Dutch speaking pupils should be offered the opportunity to learn their home language at school.	6.8%
5. By speaking their home language at school, non-Dutch speaking pupils do not learn Dutch sufficiently.	72.1%
6. Non-Dutch speaking pupils should be offered regular subjects in their home language.	3.2%
7. It is more important that non-Dutch speaking pupils obtain a high level of proficiency in Dutch than in their home language.	44.7%
8. It is in the interest of the pupils when they are punished for speaking their home language at school.	29.1%



# Policy-practice interaction

- Shows opposite of aim of monolingual policies:
  - increase cognitive outcomes of students
  - Same holds for integration policies: no or limited social impact

Monolingual policy <> monolingual beliefs > low trust > low expectations > low outcomes



# Challenges of multilingualism in contexts of globalization

Within a context where 'super diversity' is becoming the norm it is important to reflect on the boundaries of the current language recipes that are being used in societal (e.g. educational) spaces.

As concepts like language, citizenship, learning, ... are social constructs we have to consider reconstructing them, in the light of new and emerging social contexts.

# Innovative answers to urgent language education issues

- ❑ Inequality in society and unequal outcomes in education are a tenacious problem;
- ❑ Language spoken at home is often invoked as an explanatory variable (e.g. PISA);
- ❑ Causal reading of correlations;
- ❑ Language (i.e. the standard variety of the dominant language) is seen as pivotal and thus conditional to social participation or school success (in contrast with current insights in processes of L2 learning)

# Beyond binaries

- Given:
  - Social context: superdiverse spaces
  - Practicalities: feasibility of customary bilingual education in urban heterogeneous contexts?
  - Theoretical insights: new sociolinguistic conceptions of multilingual communication in today's complex world (translanguaging)
  - The counter productive and highly ideologized L1-L2 binary discussions in society at large and education in particular
- Move beyond the binaries towards a new approach to learning (in contexts of school or integration programmes) that integrates ML education and L2 learning

# Functional multilingual learning

- ❏ Exploiting multilingual repertoires as didactical capital for learning: functional use of home languages in multilingual, L2-dominant learning environments;
- ❏ A ‘multilingual social interaction model for learning’ as alternative for a ‘language learning model’

# Multilingual realities

- ❑ Multilingualism is a reality in social spaces: neighbourhoods, schools, ...
- ❑ Multilingualism is a reality in each person: multilingual repertoires
- ❑ Multilingualism is not by definition 'full proficiency' in each language or repertoire
- ❑ Multilingualism is contextually organized. The 'dominant' language has a specific place in the different contexts
- ❑ Everybody does 'translanguaging' (Garcia, 2009)

# Multilingual assessment

- ☐ Translanguaging
  - as reality
  - As pedagogy
- ☐ Multilingual education
  - Good practices
  - Empirical evidence
- ☐ Multilingual assessment



# Multilingual assessment

- Assessment practices: monolingual
  - Disfavors minorities and immigrants (hierarchical order of repertoires): e.g. PISA
  - We accept variation in language practice (e.g. ELF), however not in assessment (Shohamy). We penalize variation.
  - Experiments of bilingual assessment: positive outcomes (Heugh)

# Multilingual assessment

- ❑ Test constructs are monolingual
  - We focus on how (stats, scores, ...)
  - Less focus on what we are testing (construct)
- ❑ What is a multilingual construct?
  - E.g. translanguaging
- ❑ Is dynamic assessment (Poehner) alternative?
  - Bilingualism as norm and bilingual scaffolds to support them in working in zone of proximal development (Vygotsky)
- ❑ What about standardization?



# Multilingual assessment

- ❏ Three types of ML assessment (McNamara, AAAL 2014):
  - Assessment of multilinguals (e.g. for identifying ML repertoires)
  - Multilingual assessment (e.g. translation)
  - Translanguaging assessment (language repertoires used in assessment)
  
- ❏ Theory building and further research needed

# To conclude

- ❑ In super diverse contexts the translanguaging reality of people is taken as an asset, a resource for learning
- ❑ More multilingual awareness and involvement of different stakeholders: teacher; immigrant, children, test developer, test taker, ...
- ❑ Contesting ineffective and counter productive monolingual policies and reconstructing monolingual beliefs and practices from below
- ❑ Move beyond the binary L1-L2 opposition
- ❑ Translanguaging as reality and pedagogy
- ❑ Exploit ML repertoires in assessment

# To conclude

- Accept how integration processes really take place
  - that it varies across individuals;
  - That ML is a life long reality;
- Accept how language acquisition really takes place and adapt our teaching (formal/informal, explicit/implicit) policies/practices to these ML realities;
- Accept assessment as an inclusive part of language and integration, in which we start from what people can (ML repertoires) instead of what they cannot;
- Change current policies towards an inclusive, facilitating, dynamic, longitudinal and interactive process in which ML is accepted as a reality in interaction, teaching/learning and assessment

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**THANK YOU**

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