



The  
Global Citizenship  
and  
Multilingual  
Competences  
Toolkit

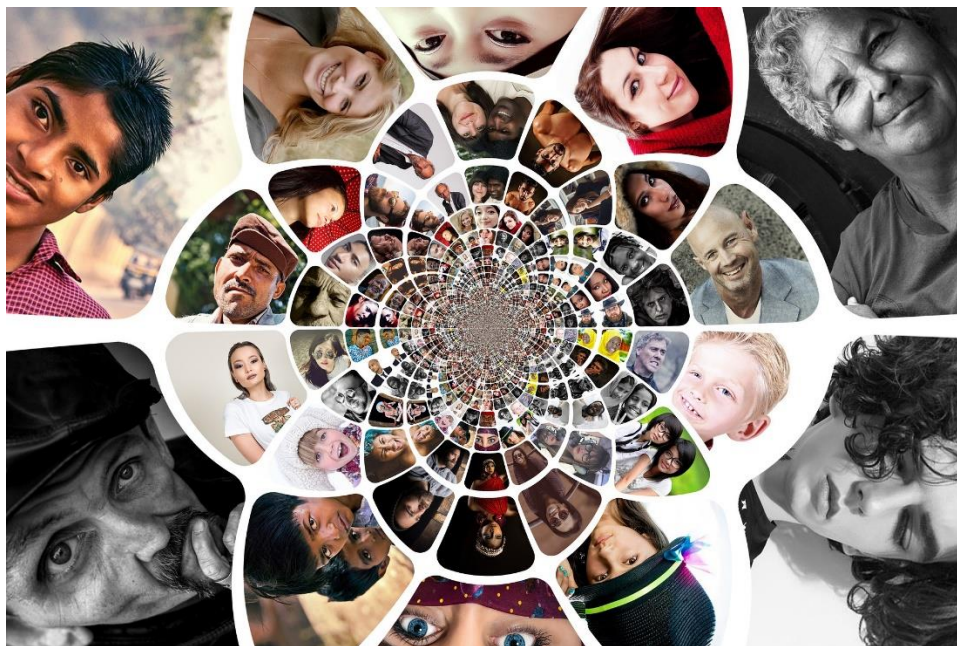


Teaching module

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## **Unit 4:**

# **Recognising diversity: Towards inclusive, multilingual practices**



## **Teaching Module**

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## Unit 4: Focus on teaching

# Recognising diversity: Towards inclusive, multilingual practices in secondary classrooms

## Introduction

The aim of this unit is to provide you with examples and ideas on how to familiarise your students with the topic of linguistic diversity and language policies as well as rights, especially with regards to minority languages. The focus of this unit is to raise your students' awareness of linguistic diversity and how power and status can play a role in that. The aims of the activities in this unit are to broaden students' understanding of language diversity and to encourage them to reflect on their own experiences regarding multilingualism. Students will also explore the situation of minority languages with regards to their protection and visibility. The exercises are designed to give students the possibility to examine questions from different points of view and to stimulate discussions.

## Learning objectives and outcomes

<b>Learning objectives</b>  This unit aims to:	<b>Learning outcomes</b>  At the end of the unit, your students can:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. [Values, n. 2] raise students' awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity</li> <li>2. [Skills, n. 8] promote multilingualism, including regional, minority and <u>migration languages</u></li> <li>3. [Skills, n. 9] have students critically reflect on issues of power and status in languages and language use</li> <li>4. [Knowledge, n. 9] provide students with strategies to draw on their multiple languages in the classroom for social and for learning purposes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. [Values, n. 2] Be aware and appreciate linguistic and cultural diversity both in class and in society</li> <li>2. [Skills, n. 8] Be acquainted with the basics of language rights and policies and the differences and similarities between regional, minority and migration languages</li> <li>3. [Skills, n. 9] Detect linguistic power and status differences and critically reflect on that</li> <li>4. [Knowledge, n. 9] Draw on their multiple languages and apply concepts such as translanguaging in the classroom for social and for learning purposes</li> </ol>

## Activities

### Activity 1: Warm up: Bringing up the representations about linguistic diversity and linguistic inclusion

*Estimated time: 45min.*

#### Learning objectives:

- Provide students with an introduction to the topic of language diversity.
- Help students share their existing knowledge of languages and learn more about languages in the world.
- Help students to reflect on their own language repertoire.

#### Resources needed:

- Projector (if not available, print the questions on paper and hand out in class).
- A3 papers.
- Markers in different colours.
- Blackboard.

### Exercise 1: Warm up quiz

Rationale: Taking a quiz is an accessible way for students to get introduced to the topic of multilingualism and linguistic diversity in the world. Discussing the answers afterwards provides them with basic knowledge that enables them to execute the following exercises of the unit.

A: Introduce students to the world of multilingualism by doing the following quiz. Most discussion is provoked by doing the quiz not individually but with all students in class, while the questions are presented on a screen in front of the class. *You can also use the handout attached to this unit.*

#### **How many of the world's 7.000 languages are in danger of becoming extinct by 2100?**

- About 10% of the world's 7.000 languages are endangered
- About 25% of the world's 7.000 languages are endangered
- About half of the world's 7.000 languages are endangered
- About 85% of the world's 7.000 languages are endangered

[GCMC answer: Numbers vary in different studies, but probably about half of the world's seven thousand languages are in danger of disappearing. According to a recent study, about 1.500 of them are likely to become extinct by 2100. Source: [https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-021-01604-](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-021-01604-y)

[y.epdf?sharing\\_token=5FxwvZJzesv0IJvjRz4XUNRgN0jAiWel9jnR3ZoTv0OuQZ\\_IzCr6S9RKO8tUDnMDqRPIPM1uA7p7LBcV4UD7QDNIPX\\_hMzFSb-JQ449ZakoeSx99UMf4fUctwF0pkvVk-lA9mRH5PTmLsBps8733KB6qop5xesp5PxV3G0hYUfifxoUbVNXbYh1VahoCM6T0eNESKZBV8Qcx7pdia0yiykmNREsKQFcfp1SYgXpFE8%3D&tracking\\_referrer=www.cbsnews.com\]](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-021-01604-y)

**What percentage of the world population speaks two or more languages?**

- a. 20 percent
- b. 40 percent
- c. 60 percent
- d. 80 percent

[GCMC answer: According to estimates, 40 percent of the world population is monolingual. 43 percent is bilingual, 17 percent speak three or more languages. Source: <http://ilanguages.org/bilingual.php>]

**Which is the most widely spoken first language in the world?**

- a. English
- b. Mandarin Chinese
- c. Spanish
- d. Hindi

[GCMC answer: According to Ethnologue, Mandarin Chinese is spoken as a first language by 921 million people globally. Second is Spanish (471 million people), third is English (370 million) and fourth is Hindi (342 million). Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_languages\\_by\\_total\\_number\\_of\\_speakers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_languages_by_total_number_of_speakers)]

**Which language has the most speakers in the world, including non-first language speakers?**

- a. English
- b. Mandarin Chinese
- c. Spanish
- d. Hindi

[GCMC answer: According to Ethnologue, English is spoken by 1.35 billion people, Mandarin Chinese by 1.12 billion people. Hindi (600 million) and Spanish (543 million) rank third and fourth. Source: <https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/ethnologue200>]

**Which of the following statements about multilingualism is NOT true?**

- a. Research indicates that having learned multiple languages may delay memory loss (known as Alzheimer's disease)
- b. Learning multiple languages as a child complicates learning either of them properly
- c. Being multilingual enhances empathy and understanding of other cultures
- d. Having skills in more than one language increases job opportunities

[GCMC answer: Learning multiple languages as a child is no problem at all. Children are able to learn more than one language perfectly well. The other statements are true indeed.]

**What is the main difference between a language and a vernacular dialect?**

- a. A dialect is more similar to other language varieties, a language is more different
- b. A dialect is only spoken by few people, a language by relatively many people
- c. A language has gained higher prestige than a dialect, thanks to for example grammars and dictionaries, literature, and an official political status
- d. A dialect is just the flawed pronunciation of a real language

[GCMC answer: the difference between a language and a dialect is an issue of historically acquired prestige. Written standards and governmental language policies often play a big role. The distance between language varieties (answer A) does not determine whether they are different dialects or different languages. Norwegian and Swedish for example, or spoken Serbian and Croatian, are mutually intelligible, yet they are labelled as different languages. On the other hand, quite a few English L1 speakers may not be able to understand language varieties spoken in parts of the US, yet they are all considered to be speakers of English. Number of speakers (answer B) do not matter: a dialect may have many more speakers than certain languages. A dialect also is not a flawed pronunciation of what people may call a 'real' language (answer D), it is a language variety equally real and valuable as any other variety.]

**Which country has the largest number of native Spanish speakers?**

- a. USA
- b. Colombia
- c. Spain
- d. Mexico

[GCMC answer: There are more than 109 million native Spanish speakers in Mexico. Source: <https://www.worlddata.info/languages/spanish.php>]

**Which continent has the most indigenous languages?**

- a. Asia
- b. Europe
- c. Africa
- d. The Americas

[GCMC answer: Asia has the most indigenous languages, closely followed by Africa. Source: <https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/continents-most-indigenous-languages>]

B: Discuss in class:

- Which answers were surprising for the students and why?
- Were any concepts used in the questions unclear? Explain them to the students.

**Exercise 2: The language passport**

Rationale: Creating a language passport gives students insight in their language repertoire and raises awareness about linguistic diversity and the different ways in which they use different languages, even if it is just a few words. It helps to make students feel comfortable with and positive about the languages in their lives. It also encourages students to critically reflect on issues of power and status in language use.

A: First, make students aware of what it means to ‘know’ a language. It entails being able to understand and speak a language, and it may also include the ability to read and write it. One may know a language because one was raised in it, or one may have learnt it as a second language later on, for example in school. One can have different levels of fluency in different languages. There are most likely also languages you know only a few words in: ‘foreign’ terms that are commonly used in the sports you do, catchy terms from video games or advertisements, loanwords that are originally from another language, words you remember from a vacation abroad, etc.

Students might also be proficient in a non-standard or vernacular dialect of a language. That is a language variety that deviates from what is commonly considered to be the standard variety of a language. Usually even young children are (subconsciously) aware of these often very subtle distinctions between what is considered to be the normative standard and what is not. Try to convey the message to students that all language varieties are of equal value.



B: Hand out pieces of A3 paper to all students. They write their name in the middle of the paper, and around that they write down all the languages they use. Be clear that they don't need to be fluent; just a few words they use in a particular context are enough. Encourage them to also include vernacular dialects.

C: Ask students to add:

- a. In green: people with whom they speak each language (for example: grandparents; friend X or Y, the doctor, etc.);
- b. In red: places where they speak each language (for example: at home, the schoolyard, in church, during karate lessons);
- c. In blue: words that they associate with each particular language, especially feelings and emotions (for example: trendy, cool, old-fashioned, beautiful, ugly, difficult, shame, pride, being myself, comfortable, etc.);
- d. In purple: how often they use each language (almost never, sometimes, often, almost always).

D: Ask students to evaluate their skills for each language by:

- Drawing a green circle around the language they feel strongest in for speaking
  - Drawing a red circle around the language they feel strongest in for reading
  - Drawing a blue circle around the language they feel strongest in for writing
- (NB. So if they feel strongest for speaking, reading and writing in the same language, this language gets three circles around it.)

E: Show the following questions on large screen, or write them down on blackboard. *You can also use the handout attached to this unit.* Pair the students (whatever their linguistic background) and ask them to discuss together which language they use in the following situations. Each fills in their personal answer behind the following questions:

- In what language(s) do you think
- What language(s) do you use when angry
- In what language(s) do you calculate
- In what language(s) do you talk to animals
- In what language(s) do you read
- In what language(s) do you type (online) messages
- In what language(s) do you watch TV
- In what language(s) do you search the Internet
- In what language(s) do you play online games
- In what language(s) do you speak to a doctor



- In what language(s) do you call a help-desk
- In what language(s) do you listen to music

F: Explain to students that their answers can be seen as a measure for the social prestige of languages: the more a language is used in formal domains of society, the higher its social prestige. Discuss in class how we can assess a language's social prestige. Based on their ideas and your own input, write down on blackboard a set of criteria for determining a language's social prestige.

[GCMC answer:]

Possible arguments for ranking languages by social prestige:

- Number of speakers in society (many: high; few: low)
- Official state language (yes: high; no: low; more institutional support, higher status)
- Domains where language is typically used (up to formal domains: high; only at home: low; only spoken: low; spoken, read and written: high)
- Switching language in a group (people switch to this language: high; people switch to another language: low)
- Attitudes (positively regarded as valuable cultural heritage: high; negatively regarded as, for example, belonging to a socio-economically underperforming migrant community: low)

G: Based on their answers to the previous exercise, ask students to order the languages they wrote down on their A3 paper from most to least prestigious: which ones have a high social status in the society they live in and which ones have a low status? Let students compare their results in groups of four and then discuss in class.

H: (OPTIONAL): Discuss the results of the language passports in class. For example:

- What did students learn about their language repertoire?
- How do they feel about the different functions each language fulfils in their life? (one's mother tongue may not be the language of instruction, for example; they may feel more comfortable speaking language A while they are educated in writing language B)
- Would they like this to be different?

*\*Exercise adapted from Steunpunt Diversiteit & Leren and Ghent University (n.d.).*

## Activity 2: Exploring language rights and policies

*Estimated time: 45-60min (depending on choice of exercises)*

### Learning objectives:

- Raise students' awareness of minority languages.
- Help students to critically reflect on the situation of minority languages in general and in particular (by providing concrete examples).

### Resources needed:

- Pens and paper.
- Laptop.
- Internet access.
- Beamer/printed handouts.

### Exercise 1: Background knowledge of minority languages

Rationale: Teaching about minority languages can help learners to become aware of language diversity in general and minority-majority dynamics in particular. It will foster positive attitudes towards regional minority languages, which helps students in class who speak such a language feel accepted and valued.

A: Watch the following video on minority languages, indigenous languages and endangered languages: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxAeuoSgN5c> (watch until 06:45)

While watching, students should make notes about what the concept of 'minority language' entails.

B: Ask students to write down their definition of the term "minority language".

[GCMC answer:]

Aspects of a correct answer are:

- Numbers: the language is spoken by a minority of the population in a state
- Policy: It is not the state's (main) official language
- Status: It has a lower cultural, economic, political and social status than the state's dominant language
- History: It is an 'indigenous' language (as opposed to a migration language), i.e. it is traditionally spoken in a certain area (or in scattered spots, like Roma or Yiddish)



NB. Not all aspects necessarily apply to all minority languages. Irish for example, *is* an official language in Ireland. Based on the percentage of Irish speakers and social status, it can still be regarded as a minority language.

C: Ask students to compare in groups of four what they noted from the video and their own definitions of a minority language. Get them to work as a group to provide their own definition and/or list of characteristics. Below are some questions to spark a possible discussion.

Discussion questions:

- Is it possible that a minority language in a state is spoken by a majority of people in a certain part of the country? If so: give an example; if not: why not?
- Is it possible that a minority language in a state is spoken by a majority of people in another country? If so: give an example; if not: why not?
- What makes the difference between a minority language and a (minority) dialect?

[GCMC answers to discussion questions:]

1. Sure. Regional minority languages are usually spoken by a minority of the state's population, while in a particular region within this state, these languages may well be spoken by the majority of this region's population.
2. Yes. We usually call them national minorities: these are languages spoken by a minority in a given state, while it's the national language of another, often neighbouring state. Examples are German in Belgium, Mongolian in China or Spanish in the United States.
3. Minority languages reached a higher level of social status and standardisation than minority dialects. As discussed earlier, the level of linguistic difference from other language varieties does not determine whether it is regarded as a language or dialect.

D: Ask students to list three or four minority languages spoken in the country where they are in class now or in neighbouring countries. Discuss in class why these languages can or cannot be considered to be minority languages.

## **Exercise 2: Minority languages – the case of Irish**

**[AGE GROUP 10-14]**

Rationale: In this exercise, students watch a video in which different people from Ireland explain what the Irish language means to them. Learning about a specific minority language gives learners an idea about the ways in which minority languages in general may function in society and what they mean to its speakers, especially in times of globalisation. Students are prompted to think about the importance of language to people's identity. It will foster positive attitudes



towards regional minority languages, which helps students in class who speak such a language feel accepted and valued.

*Note.* This exercise could also be adapted for a geography class. Such a lesson could simply focus on the country of Ireland, but the exercise could also be part of a lesson on the social, cultural and economic dynamics of centre versus periphery in Europe, or even on the tension between the local and the global in this era of globalisation.

Moreover, this exercise could also be adapted for a history class, focusing either simply on the Modern history of Ireland and Irish-British relations, or the exercise could be included in a class on decolonisation or on processes of nation-building.

A: Provide students with some basic facts about the country of Ireland. Make clear to them that most people in Ireland have English as their mother tongue, but for 40.000 to 80.000 people, Irish is their mother tongue. Originally, Irish was the common language of all people in Ireland, but over the centuries and due to English dominance, the English language has replaced Irish more and more. However, Irish is recognised as an official language in Ireland, next to English. Irish is taught in school in the whole of Ireland, but most students never become fluent in it.

B: Show them the following video in which different people from Ireland explain what the Irish language means to them. Ask students to make notes about people's answers to that question and then ask them to underline the most relevant terms/phrases in the interviewees' responses. *You can use the handout attached to this unit.* (Pause or repeat the video if it goes too fast for students to follow.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ownuljqxCHM>



[GCMC answer: I speak it every day and it's very important to maintain it. We should use it more often in everyday life. We have to make bigger noise about Irish and be proud of it.]



[GCMC answer: It's one of the oldest languages in Europe and has a richness that other languages don't have. It relates to the nature of the people here. There is nothing wrong with English, but bilingualism is a rich thing to have. We should be proud of Irish.]



[GCMC answer: Irish is important to me because I'm a proud speaker of Irish. You have to be proud of it, otherwise people don't speak it anymore and the language is at risk of disappearing.]



[GCMC answer: Language is communication, but language is also about culture and attitudes. We realise only since people from Eastern Europe come to Ireland and have different languages and cultures. Irishmen abroad are proud of their Irish heritage. People used to be embarrassed about speaking Irish, but not anymore.



[GCMC answer: The lack of Irish I have myself is quite embarrassing. My girlfriend's Estonian-English bilingualism encouraged me to improve on my Irish. My mother is almost fluent and she teaches me now.



[GCMC answer: We understand the importance of language as part of culture and history. Government isn't doing enough to support Irish. It isn't taught properly in school.]



[GCMC answer: My children speak Irish and go to Gaelic school. I am from Belfast (Northern Ireland, UK) and for me it is extra important to have the Irish language next to English. A country without a language, is a country without a soul.]

C: Ask students to name a term they underlined in their notes. Write the terms down on the board and discuss what these terms tell us about Irish as a minority language. For example: Irish is considered to be part of the Irish identity. It is not just about communication, but also about a sense of belonging, of culture and history. Probably more so than in the case of an 'unthreatened' language like English, Irish is associated with 'heritage' and 'history', as if it is mainly something from the past that people feel needs to be 'maintained' to avoid the risk of 'loss'.

D: Discuss in class:

- Why would it be difficult to maintain a minority language like Irish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- Do students think the language should be preserved; why (not)?
- Think of ways in which this could be tried. Discuss the possible role of education, (social) media, and what could be done to encourage parents to speak Irish to their children. Write ideas down on blackboard.

### **Exercise 3: Putting language rights into practice: application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages**

**[AGE GROUP 14-18]**

Rationale: One way of protecting and promoting linguistic diversity is by adopting international treaties and government policies on language rights. In Europe, an important treaty on this issue is the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Teaching about such a treaty makes students reflect on the pros, cons and challenges of (minority) language policy and the role of government in protecting languages. It also raises questions about differing attitudes towards regional minority languages on the one hand and migration languages on the other.

*Note.* This exercise could be adapted for a geography class, focusing either on European topography (e.g. having students study European linguistic maps online) or on European frameworks of cooperation (teaching students about the European Union and its institutions, the Council of Europe and its treaties, etc.).

Moreover, this exercise could also be adapted for a history class, focusing on the post-War process of European cooperation and integration.

A: Recapitulate in class that minority languages run the risk of losing speakers because of their weaker position in society compared to majority languages. Explain to students that governments can make policies to protect and support minority languages and their language communities, for example because they cherish linguistic diversity and cultural heritage. A group of countries can make international agreements about minority language rights. This can also be a way of accommodating possible cultural and political conflicts between linguistic groups. States then make policies to fulfil these international agreements.

Now let students have a look at Article 1 of the Charter (Council of Europe, 1992), in which minority languages are defined: <https://rm.coe.int/1680695175> (This document is also available in other languages).

It says: 'For the purposes of this Charter, **a.** "regional or minority languages" means languages that are: (i) traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population; and (ii) different from the official language(s) of that State; it does not include either dialects of the official language(s) of the State or the languages of migrants;

(...) **c.** "non-territorial languages" means languages used by nationals of the State which differ from the language or languages used by the rest of the State's population but which, although traditionally used within the territory of the State, cannot be identified with a particular area thereof'



B:

- Let students compare the definition of a minority language they came up with in exercise 1 to the definition in the Charter. What are differences and similarities?
- Ask students to give an example of a language that fits the Charter's definition of a 'non-territorial language'.

[GCMC answer:]

- Compare to exercise 1.
- Examples in Europe are Yiddish and Roma. They are traditionally spoken in scattered spots across the continent.

C: Let students have a look at the objectives of the European Charter:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-charter-regional-or-minority-languages/the-objectives-of-the-charter->

Ask students to write down two arguments in favour of protecting minority languages by government policies and two arguments against it. Discuss in class.

[GCMC answer:]

reasonable arguments in favour could be:

- Due to processes of globalisation and pressure from majority languages, regional minority languages tend to decrease in number of speakers. Language diversity is valuable in itself and therefore minority languages deserve government support.
- Minority languages are part of a country's cultural heritage and therefore deserve protection.
- Policies protecting and promoting minority languages increase the social status of this language, which helps speakers to feel accepted and valued.

(more or less) reasonable arguments against it could be:

- People have individual rights to be treated equally, irrespective of their language. Collective language rights go against the notion of individual equality.
- Minority languages may undermine the unity of the state and may thus be seen as a threat to its stability.
- Granting minority language rights creates too much fuss in society, i.e. the need to make government communications bilingual, introduce bilingual education, law, media, etc.

D: Have students check out this overview per country of the languages protected under the Charter, as well as the level of protection.

<https://rm.coe.int/languages-covered-en-rev2804/16809e4301>

Ask students to search in the list for the country they currently live in [if they are in a member state of the Council of Europe; otherwise, ask students to pick a random country from the list]. Ask them to write down the languages protected under the Charter in this country.

E: Let's debate together! As we have seen, the Charter cover regional, minority and non-territorial languages that have been historically spoken in Europe, while it explicitly does not cover languages of immigrants. These are languages spoken within immigrant communities of people who moved to Europe over the past decades, for example for job opportunities or because they fled a conflict zone. Examples of these languages are Turkish, Berber, Arabic and Kurdish.

Instruct your pupils to write down (individually) pro and contra arguments for the exclusion of migration languages from the Charter. Afterwards, split the class into two groups, with one group defending the position that this makes sense and the other group defending the position that this is unfair. The two groups debate about their respective positions with a 1 minute pitch on each side and a 5 minute further exchange of arguments.

[GCMC answer:]

Possible arguments for the position that excluding migration languages from protections under the Charter makes sense:

- History: regional and national minority languages deserve protection because they were historically spoken in this particular area. Migration languages have their historical roots elsewhere.
- Uniqueness: regional languages deserve protection because they tend to decrease in number of speakers and these languages are spoken nowhere else. The heartland of migrants' languages is elsewhere. If their language is in need of protection, it should be protected in its linguistic heartland. It is up to migrants themselves to decide whether they want to pass on their language to the next generation; this is not the government's responsibility.
- Integration: protecting and promoting migration languages may inhibit the integration of migrants in their new home country.
- Practical: the number of regional and national minorities in a given country is limited, whereas there will be at least some speakers of many dozens of migration languages. It is simply not feasible to meet the obligations under the Charter for so many languages.



Possible arguments for the position that excluding migration languages from protections under the Charter are unfair:

- History is a non-argument. There is no reason why a language should be protected on the basis of having been spoken in this particular area for a long time. All languages are equal and history is no basis for unequal levels of protection.
- Protecting and promoting migration languages helps migrants feel welcome and appreciated and creates an environment in which migrants feel safe to participate in society.
- If diversity and multilingualism are truly regarded as an asset, migration languages should be included in protective language policies too.

### Activity 3: Linguistic diversity in the classroom

*Estimated time: 45min.*

#### Learning objectives:

- Raise students' awareness of the linguistic diversity in their immediate school surroundings.
- Provide students with strategies to make use of their own but also their peers' languages in a school setting.

#### Resources needed:

- Blackboard.
- Pens and papers/notebooks or an application like Mentimeter or Quizlet.
- Posters.

#### Exercise 1: Translanguaging in the classroom

Rationale: Translanguaging – actively using different languages in class - encourages students to use their full linguistic repertoire and maximises their learning potential, as they may be more fluent or feel more comfortable in a home language that is not the usual language of instruction. Translanguaging makes students aware of their flexibility in switching languages and helps create positive attitudes towards their own and other students' multilingualism.

##### *Option 1: The word wall*

*Note.* This exercise could also be used in an English or other language class focusing on linguistic diversity and translanguaging.

A: Before doing this exercise, we would advise teachers to accept switching languages in practice in class, so that students have grown accustomed to translanguaging already (otherwise they may be reluctant to switch). In this exercise with the entire group, ask students to name, in the usual language of instruction, an object in the classroom that is related to learning (for example: book, chair, table, pen, paper). Write down the terms on the board. This exercise could also be done via applications like Mentimeter or Quizlet, if all students have access to this.

B: Ask students (one by one) to come to the blackboard (or use an application) and write down the name of one of these terms in another language they know (like their home language, if that is different from the language of instruction). If possible, use different colours for different



languages. Make use of the full potential of all students: try to come up with translations in as many languages as possible. Be open to dialectal forms as well.

C: The exercise can be expanded to other words concerning the classroom (verbs like 'to teach, to learn, to sit', adverbs like 'interesting, dull', etc.).

D: Discuss in class:

- What similarities and differences do students see between the words from different languages (script types, vowels/consonants, etc.)?
- Return to the notion of 'language families' also introduced in the first unit. Do they notice certain languages looking fairly similar and thus belonging to one language family?
- To what extent did students with speaking skills in a certain language have a hard time writing this language (for example, a home language that mainly functions as a spoken language)?
- How do they feel about this; would they like to be able to write it better?
- How does it make them feel to use their home language or other (foreign) languages in class?
- Do they think this translanguaging helps their learning; why?

If students indicate they benefit from translanguaging, show them how they can keep a glossary – in a notebook or online – in which they collect important or difficult terms in the language of instruction, while they can add the word in their home language themselves.

**NB.** This exercise can be adapted for all classes, from geography and history to maths, science and music, by having the students translate relevant terms in these subjects.

### *Option 2: Cultural artefacts*

*Note.* This exercise could also be used in an arts education class.

A: In this exercise, which works best in medium-sized classes, students will give a short presentation about an object from home that is meaningful for their own social or cultural identity (for example, a piece of clothing, a music instrument, a book, a flag, a football shirt, etc). First, explain to the students what an artefact is. You can do so by bringing a cultural artefact from your own that is meaningful to you. Ask students what they think it is, what it is for, and why it might be culturally important to you. In order to give them inspiration as to what artefact to bring to class themselves, prompt them to identify different types of social and

cultural artefacts and list them on the blackboard. Make sure that after this, they have a fair idea of what a social or cultural identity entails.

B1: As a homework task, ask students to bring a social or cultural artefact from home to share in the next class. Encourage them to involve their parents or other family members (or caregivers). Instruct the students to prepare a short presentation (2 minutes) about the artefact in which they elaborate on:

- What is it?
- What is it used for?
- Where did they get it from?
- Why did they choose this particular artefact?
- Why is the artefact important to them and/or to their family; what does it mean to them?
- How does the artefact represent their culture?

If students' home language is different from the school's language of instruction, encourage students to make use of their home language in the presentation. They can translate to the school's first language when necessary. Encourage students to ask questions about the presented artefact and invite students who share a common background with the presenting student to add their knowledge about the artefact and what it means in their family.

B2:[OPTIONAL FOR A VERY MULTILINGUAL GROUP]: If the group consists of students with a wide variety of linguistic backgrounds, it would be fun to create a multilingual glossary. Before the presentations, instruct presenting students to write down on the board, during or at the end of the presentation, five key terms or phrases regarding the object, both in the school's first language and in their home language. Ask the other students in class to also write down these terms or phrases in their notebooks, both in the school's first language, in the presenter's home language and in their own home language. By doing so, students create a multilingual glossary that reflects the linguistic diversity in class.

C: Afterwards, discuss in class:

- Which artefacts surprised them most and why?
- If they were to trade each other's artefacts, which one would they choose to bring home and why?
- What did they learn from the exercise when it comes to appreciating diversity?



## Activity 4: Languages in society

*Estimated time: 75-90min.*

### Learning objectives:

- Raise students' awareness of the linguistic diversity in their immediate surrounding, including online spaces.
- Encourage students to critically reflect on the use of minority languages online and the obstacles to their visibility.

### Resources needed:

- Mobile phones.
- Notebooks and pens.
- Laptop with shared folder.
- Beamer.
- iPads or laptops for students, with internet access.

### Exercise 1: Linguistic landscape

**Rationale:** Linguistic landscape studies is the investigation of displayed language in a particular space, generally through the analysis of advertisements, billboards, and other signs. Exploring linguistic landscapes in students' own neighbourhood raises their awareness about multilingualism and linguistic diversity in society. It fosters discussion about the functioning of different languages in their own living environment and how this influences people. This exercise is most fruitful in surroundings where multiple languages are all over the place. However even in seemingly monolingual areas, you may find more linguistic diversity than expected.

**A:** Prepare the students for an outdoor walk, for example, in the school's neighbourhood or a market place or shopping centre nearby. Before the walk, discuss in class the following questions.

- What languages do they come across on their way to school?
- What sort of places do they expect to see different languages and why?
- How do they feel about these different languages being visible; different emotions connected to different languages? Or is it so natural that they hardly ever noticed?



B: Let's take a walk. Depending on the circumstances and your preferences, students can either be asked to do this on their own as a homework exercise, in groups of two or four during class or it could be done with the whole class accompanied by you.

- Ask students to make pictures of signs they come across. This can go from road signs and advertising to street art, clothing, and posters. (If one particular language is everywhere, they can, of course, be selective in picturing those signs).
- For every picture, ask them to write down notes about what type of sign it was and where they found it (for example: street sign in X street; print on a shirt; advertisement of a hairdresser's; message on a notice board).

C: Create a shared folder online in which students can upload their pictures. Make a selection of the pictures, order them in categories (street signs, advertisements, street art, government notices, etc.) and then show them in class.

D: During the slide show, ask students to reflect on the signs and languages they came across and discuss the following issues:

- What did they learn from this exercise?
- To what extent were they surprised by the number of different languages they came across, or maybe disappointed by the lack of diversity? Why?
- Did they notice any pattern in the choice of language for different types of signs (for example: road signs always in the official state language, advertising mainly in English, names of certain local shops in a local language; etc.)? What does this tell them about the social status and power of these languages?
- Did they come across any bi- or multilingual signs; why were these signs bi- or multilingual?
- If they had a shop or delivered a service in this area, which language(s) would they display and why?
- What are students' personal preferences, which language(s) would they like to see more in the streets and why?

## **Exercise 2: Language diversity online**

Rationale: This exercise confronts students with the (under)representation of minority languages in the digital space. It prompts them to critically reflect on linguistic power and status issues in society. The exercises draws on and raises their digital awareness.





A. Introduce the issue of language diversity online by discussing the following questions:

- Which language do you usually use online on social media or when searching for information? Why?
- Have you ever encountered that the online translator you used did not support the language you were looking for? How did you overcome this obstacle?

B. Ask students to write down online tools they use for translations. If they run out of examples, suggest to them the following online tools:

*Google Translate*

*DeepL*

*Yandex Translate*

*Bing Translator*

*Linguee*

*The Free Dictionary*

*iTranslate (Android app)*

Let them check the list of languages supported by the translator. Which languages they can think of are missing? Encourage students to also investigate if their home languages are supported by the online translation tools.

C. (AGE GROUP 10-14)

Divide the group into pairs of two students who have different mother tongues (if you run out of bilingual pairs, you can allow groups of three or four students). Ask students to write each other a short e-mail (or another online message, like a tweet, Facebook post or WhatsApp-message). Student A uses an online tool to translate this message into the home language of student B. Student A sends this translation either online to B or writes it down on paper. Student B reads out loud this translated message and discusses with A the quality of the translation. If things are unclear, A explains what they meant to say and B clarifies what the translation actually says. After this, roles change: B writes a message and uses an online tool to translate it into the home language of student A, etcetera. Encourage pairs to use different online translation tools.

If the great majority of students have the same mother tongue which is also the language of instruction, you could ask them to translate their messages into a language they learnt in school and thus have some proficiency in.

After some back and forth messaging, discuss in class:

- How did they like this translation exercise; was it fun and why (not)?
- What did they learn about the quality of the translations?
- Which online tools produced the best translations?



- To what extent do online tools make learning another language superfluous?

D. (and the rest: AGE GROUP 14-18)

Hand out the article 'The twitch streamers fighting to keep minority languages alive — Entertainment meets activism' (Sinclair, 2021) to your students

(<https://www.theverge.com/2021/6/16/22533319/twitch-streamers-minority-languages-basque-gaelic>). Let them read the article and subsequently discuss the following questions with the whole class:

- Which languages are mentioned in the excerpt?

[GCMC answer] Basque, Galician, teo reo Māori, Welsh, Breton.

- Did your students know these languages? Where are they spoken? If students have internet access: how many people speak these languages (let students search online)? Collect your findings on the board.

- The design of the streaming platform Twitch makes it difficult for many to use their native language on the platform. What is the reason?

[GCMC answer] Twitch uses tags, this includes language tags so users can search for content in a particular language. But many languages, especially those with smaller speaker numbers than languages like Spanish, English or Japanese, do not have their own tag. This means that you cannot filter to find content in these smaller languages unless you know streamers who are using them.

- What are the streamers' reasons for using their minority languages during their streams?

[GCMC answer] They use their languages to connect with other speakers and to enjoy gaming in their own language; Basque: survival and visibility of the language, for Iruñe, not being on the internet means not existing; teo reo Māori: for New Zealand streamer it is only natural to stream in teo reo Māori since it is the language he lives in, it connects him to his culture, his ancestors, his family, his environment, and helps to navigate the world he lives in, through his use he is trying to normalise the use of Māori on the online gaming platform.; Welsh: The group of Welsh language streamers say it is important to be able to express yourself in the language you feel most comfortable in. Breton: the Breton streamer's statement synthesises what also the other games say: The (minority) language needs to be everywhere the minority language speakers are. And that includes online spaces.

E. With the whole class, think of a number of different social media platforms and websites the students use, like Twitch, TikTok and Instagram. Write them down on the board. Have the students form expert groups (4-6 students per group) on social media platforms. Each group focuses on a particular platform. It may be desirable to have at least one student in each group

that is subscribed to the platform the group investigates. They know the platform and can access all parts of the platform. Ask the groups to visit their platform on iPads or laptops and to answer the following questions:

- Which languages are given in the settings? Which languages they can think of are missing? As a starting point they could check if the minority languages mentioned in the Verge article are available on the platform under investigation. If the students are speakers of a minority language, ask them to check if this language is available or not.
- Which languages that are not available, do they think *should* be available on the platform and why?
- How can you look for content in a certain language? In what ways is it easy or difficult to find the content?

F. Get back together with the whole class. Let a student from each group report on their main findings. Discuss with the whole class:

- Which online platform turned out to be most 'open' to minority languages being included? How could that be explained?
- What could be the consequences for minority languages if they are effectively barred from social media platforms?

[GCMC answer:]

- Explanations might be: a platform may include more minority languages if it is cheap to do so, or if users can add languages themselves.
- If minority languages are not present on social media platforms, it means they are invisible and not represented in an increasingly important societal domain. This reinforces the dominance of 'bigger' languages and increases the likelihood of younger generations of minority language speakers to lose interest in their language and stop caring, seeing it as something of the past.

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