

University of Groningen

Language policy and diversity management for social justice

Mazzoli, Maria; Joubert, Aurélie; Lee, Seonok; Eiró, Flávio

Published in:
Journal of Language and Discrimination

DOI:
[10.1558/jld.26516](https://doi.org/10.1558/jld.26516)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2023

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Mazzoli, M., Joubert, A., Lee, S., & Eiró, F. (2023). Language policy and diversity management for social justice: An introduction. *Journal of Language and Discrimination*, 7(2), 127-143.
<https://doi.org/10.1558/jld.26516>

Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

The publication may also be distributed here under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license. More information can be found on the University of Groningen website: <https://www.rug.nl/library/open-access/self-archiving-pure/taverne-amendment>.

Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.

Language policy and diversity management for social justice: An introduction

Maria Mazzoli, Aurélie Joubert, Seonok Lee and Flávio Eiró

Introduction

Diversity management and inclusive language policies aimed at social equality have emerged as significant challenges in today's societies. The global rise in people movement, the flexibility and the mobility required by the job market, and the digitalisation of communication have created new outstanding complexities, especially in urban contexts. Contemporary urban superdiversity (Vertovec 2007; Duarte and Gogolin 2013; Grin, Marácz and Pokorn 2022) defies traditional approaches to social cohesion and justice, resulting in the need to modernise long-established policies, also in the light of current debates on decolonising practices (Tuck and Yang 2012).

State institutions established in modern societies through processes of nation-building are increasingly at odds with the rapid and dynamic changes that demand adaptability and flexibility (Eriksen 1991). When looking at language issues, while public administrations dedicate significant efforts to implementing policies that teach the national language of

Affiliations

Maria Mazzoli: University of Groningen, the Netherlands

email: m.mazzoli@rug.nl

Aurélie Joubert: University of Groningen, the Netherlands

email: a.d.e.joubert@rug.nl

Seonok Lee: University of Groningen, the Netherlands

email: seonok.lee@rug.nl

Flávio Eiró: University of Groningen, the Netherlands

email: feiro@rug.nl

the host country to newcomers, further action is needed to promote social inclusion through language policies.

In relation to the educational domain, for example, the student population often brings in dozens of languages (and varieties) from local and migrant minorities, leading some administrations to adopt restrictive policies about language use in class and in the school premises. The PISA reports testify that pupils whose home language differs from the school language attain lower outcomes compared to their monolingual peers (Cummins 2018) and minority students are often expected by the community of educators to underperform academically (Gershenson, Holt and Papageorge 2016), with long-lasting and transgenerational effects on children's life paths and career development. This leads to a pattern of discrimination which, in the education sector, is determined by the need for native-like linguistic competence in national languages in order to be able to access academically-oriented schools or higher education (Ng 2007).

Linguistic discrimination is also known as glottophobia, highlighting the fear of linguistic otherness, a common yet sometimes unnoticed form of discrimination (Blanchet 2021). It comprises the acts of stigmatising individuals or groups based on the use of a non-standard variety or a minoritised language, and of excluding or limiting the group in question from a variety of domains such as adequate medical care or success at a job interview. It is rampant in the housing markets, to the extent that discriminatory practices of real estate agents and owners determine segregation patterns (Baugh 2008). In the commercial sector, private managers and shop owners in multilingual contexts make everyday choices regarding the languages used in commercial advertisements, banners and products on store shelves. These practices, often discriminatory, are challenging to regulate through official policies, although there are instances where public policies have successfully influenced the private sector, as shows the interventionist language planning in Québec (Bourhis, Ehala and Giles 2019).

Whether in education, the housing market, health or the commercial sector, linguistic discrimination emerges from a process of hierarchisation of linguistic practices which serves to favour and maintain the privileged position of powerful group(s) (Blommaert 2010). It is therefore crucial to approach diversity policies critically, challenging vague promises of equality which do not explicitly name and tackle power hierarchies, and therefore flatten experiences of perceived difference, risking the reproduction of inequalities by not properly understanding and managing the relation between privilege and linguistic subordination (Piller 2016).

This special issue contributes to the current debate about managing diversity with the aim of fostering social justice, and is informed by

a selection of research articles offering critical viewpoints on the role of linguistic and cultural diversity in the educational sector, public health, the media and the commercial sector. We conceive of 'social justice' as fairness manifested in society, thus including equal access to healthcare, education, employment, housing, participation and social mobility. We approach linguistic diversity as one of the foundations for social justice (Piller 2016), and language 'management' and 'policy' as the actions undertaken to influence or intervene on language and cultural practices in specific environments (Ricento 2006; Spolsky 2004, 2012). 'Managers' are understood as policy-makers or frontline workers, stakeholders with gatekeeping functions, or leaders within their respective groups or organisations, able to influence the ideologies and attitudes or practices thereof (Eiró 2022, Spolsky 2019).

Meaningful impact and the successful implementation of inclusive policies can be achieved through self-reflectivity and close collaboration between academia, key actors in the civil society with gatekeeping roles, political representatives and public administrations. How to realise this collaboration is a challenge for current language policy development, especially because the behaviour of many of the key actors shaping contemporary sociolinguistic dynamics are difficult to regulate through public policies. Moreover, policies need to reflect the positionality of the group in a position of power, and critically engage with decolonial practices. In the two following sections, we develop these ideas and bring attention to specific theories and concepts that we consider fundamental to achieve inclusive language policies.

Bridging the gap: engaging gatekeepers and private actors for equitable language policy design and implementation

Inadequate diversity management contributes to widespread discrimination and marginalisation across multiple levels, particularly where gatekeeping figures hold influence, such as in housing and employment searches (Du Bois 2019; Grogger 2011), doctor-patient communication, and educational contexts and courtrooms (Cummins 2018; Rickford and King 2016). Higher education managers, teaching and non-teaching school staff, estate agents, private company managers, media broadcasters, public employees and administrators, are among the professional groups that play a role in developing and implementing (more) inclusive policies. Each paper of this special issue, based on research findings from a wide array of sociological and sociolinguistic approaches, aims at surveying the potential of specific professional groups to enact inclusive policies. Targeting specific professional groups helps bridge the gap between research and practitioners. In

this section, we provide examples that demonstrate how both the broader scholarship and the papers in this issue emphasise the necessity of transforming the perception and treatment of diversity by individuals in gate-keeping roles within society.

Assessing language abilities is one of the most widely used tools in contemporary post-migrant societies for controlling migration and residence permits and for granting citizenship status (Bonotti and Willoughby 2022). Indeed today, for most EU countries and beyond, the knowledge of the official language is one fundamental requirement to qualify for citizenship. In this context, the main aim of language assessment should be to ensure the development of the migrants' language abilities to facilitate their integration in the host community and promote their participation in everyday and civic activities (Pochon-Bergen and Lenz 2014). However, these tests have been criticised in the way they are currently set, for example in their (often acritical) adoption of the Common European Reference Framework (CEFR) and its threshold proficiency levels (usually A2 or B1) to grant citizenship. The CEFR was originally created to establish a common framework for recognising language qualifications across nations, and these tests have not been designed to assess individuals' capacity to engage in democratic society (Bonotti and Willoughby 2022). Rather, the test results are known to be greatly determined by the applicants' academic aptitude, which is closely tied to their socioeconomic background. Shohamy (2005) argues that this is an example of language policies having a hidden agenda. By now, the academic scholarship on language assessment for migration and citizenship is a well-developed subfield in sociolinguistics and can inform and impact the choices of policymakers within nation-states, local administrations and test providers.

Language has a prominent role in procedures of hiring and promotion as well, and plays a role in multiple attested cases of discrimination in the workplace, as numerous research papers have shown. Munro (2003), for example, attested accent discrimination against Polish and Iranian accents in Canada in the context of hiring decisions. Ura, Preston and Mearns (2015) used matched guises to show that US experiment participants, who were instructed to act as employers, systematically rated Chinese and Japanese accented speakers less 'competent' and less 'employable' than Standard English speakers, despite the same employment history. Zentella (2014) attested multiple cases of accent discrimination against Latinx in the United States speaking Spanish on the workforce, even when they were hired because of their bilingualism.

Similarly, the gatekeeping role of language is increasingly evident in the higher education sector. Lee (this volume) focuses on the University of

Groningen and argues that language requirements tend to generate negative perceptions and unease especially among international staff. According to Lee, this glass ceiling is not the result of interpersonal discrimination or individual unfair treatment, but rather a case of institutional discrimination. Making sure that the language requirements do not become an institutionalised tool of discrimination is therefore the responsibility of staff holding managerial positions within the university (hiring committee members, HR, faculty/department directors and deans, supervisors and line managers).

Both Dekker *et al.* and Joubert and De Jong (this volume) focus on a different group of managers of diversity, namely school teachers in primary and secondary schools. This professional group serves as a gatekeeper, significantly influencing students' educational attainment and playing a primary role in shaping their academic paths and career choices.

Joubert and De Jong elicited language teachers' explicit beliefs and attitudes towards multilingualism in secondary education. The authors note that teachers, as managers of classroom interactions, appear threatened by the lack of comprehension of some less familiar languages in the classroom, which often triggers control responses. This is not uncommon. In Germany, the citizen science project *Bremen spricht* (Rojas Loa *et al.* 2022) shows how some schools in the region regulate language use on tablets lent out to students, through the implementation of a contract requiring students to write messages 'only in German.' This provision aims at preventing the exchange of messages who cannot be understood and controlled by the school staff. These examples demonstrate how both teaching and non-teaching staff, especially in highly multilingual educational contexts, need support in developing strategies alternative to control of language practices in the classroom and school.

However, developing these strategies is far from obvious. Although research is addressing this issue, there is no settled consensus as to what solutions work best. For example, the results provided in this volume by Dekker *et al.* are encouraging in terms of the potential impact of specific translanguaging strategies on multilingual language dynamics in the classroom, but they also indicate that important work still needs to be done within the educational field, in terms of improving teacher training and developing effective strategies for a socially just education able to value linguistic diversity and overcome linguistic barriers.

Public administration is indeed another key sector of diversity management for the promotion of social inclusion. Public workers and public policies have the potential to make a difference on how minorities are portrayed, addressed and represented in official policy documents or public

campaigns. Davis and Heinrichs (this volume) present a felicitous case of diversity management in the public health sector from the Australian context. Language management in healthcare is of particular importance as poor communication can have life threatening consequences. Language policies in some public (and private) healthcare systems have been forced to adapt to multilingual contexts due to the pressure of governments and threat of legal action against medical services, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom, for failure to communicate with patients (Spolsky 2009: 128).

Among the group of actors responsible for implementing inclusive practices in society, there are several professionals who function as private citizens with societal influence. For example, real estate agents have a key role in denying or conceding appointments for apartment viewings, based on their (most times mainly auditory) impressions about the applicants' status and reliability, and ultimately based on their racial and linguistic profiling (Baugh 2008; Du Bois 2019). This practice perpetuates the maintenance of ethnolinguistic boundaries and contributes to segregation within the city.

A similar situation is that of private company managers who make decisions about the use of languages on their product packages, and for advertisement purposes in commercial ads, banners and flyers. Ganayim and Mazzoli (this volume), in their analysis of the use of Palestinian Arabic and Hebrew in the productscape of milk carton packages in Israel, argue that the domain of commercial products and especially basic necessities is a pivotal domain in terms of visibility and therefore vitality of languages within multilingual societies. The authors point to the social responsibility of private dairy company managers and the impact of their choices on language visibility, especially when they work in a conflictual multilingual environment.

One of the most urgent challenges faced by the field of language policy and diversity management lies in bridging the gap between theoretical concepts of social justice and practical implementation, particularly in reaching out to specific sectors of the population who hold decision-making power and gatekeeping roles, but remain beyond the reach of public policy interventions.

Unpacking intersections: race, gender and language in diversity management

Delving deeper into the theorisation of language diversity management and policies, one needs to explore the multiple layers of social identities in contemporary societies, encompassing race, class, gender and more. In this multi-layered world, one category of social stratification competes

or intersects with the others (Bourdieu 1987:7). However, race, class and gender as forms of social stratification share some commonalities. They are all relational concepts which help determine one's experience of privilege and oppression. Even if these concepts have different ontological relations to the social sphere, they cannot be understood separately from one another. Crenshaw's concept (1991) of intersectionality has made it essential to discuss how social inequalities interact with one another.

First of all, race is a social construct that categorises individuals into groups according to their physical and cultural characteristics. Although not a biological category, assumed or imagined inherent physical characteristics such as skin colour and facial features are usually taken to be strong racial markers (Miles and Brown 1989). Class, in the simplest Marxist formulation, is a social division that distinguishes the group controlling the means of production and the group which must sell its labour power to survive (Wolpe 1986). While race is considered a group position within racial hierarchies (implying a relatively deterministic nature when it comes to assigning a position, Blumer 1958), class, in contrast, is a more fluid category, allowing for greater variability in individual positions (Anthias 1993).

Second, gender is the hierarchical social organisation of the relationship between sexes in relation to patriarchal institutions (Scott 1986; Miles and Brown 1989), and is embedded in both social institutions and social practices (Jackson 2005). According to Jackson (2005:16–7), 'gender is thus a social structural phenomenon, part of the social order, but it is also lived out by embodied individuals who 'do gender' in their daily lives, constantly (re)producing it through habitual, everyday interaction.' For example, conventional frameworks which consider race and gender as separate domains are limited in how they can explain the experiences of women of colour who are doubly marginalised by racism and sexism simultaneously, not as separated events (Crenshaw 1991). In the outdated *additive* model, 'women are viewed solely in terms of gender, while women of colour are thought to be "doubly" subordinated by the cumulative effects of gender plus race' (Glenn 1992:1). An intersectional approach to understanding this relationship consists of prioritising 'the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations' (Crenshaw 1991:1244). There is a noticeable trend of expanding the concept of intersectionality beyond its original focus on race, class and gender to analyse various forms of discrimination and address social justice issues, such as sexual orientation, disability, immigration status and so on. In this issue, for example, Davis and Heinrichs demonstrate how intersectional identities are used in outreach public health campaigns thus making the case for

an intersectional (and multimodal) approach as a useful tool in language policy measures found in public outreach events.

Individuals who belong to marginalised groups often face compounded disadvantages due to language-related discrimination. Languages are also *racialised*, positioned as separate and bounded entities of colonised populations (Makoni and Pennycook 2006). Language plays an essential role in constructing one's identity. Efforts to challenge language hierarchies, where European languages have often been positioned as superior to non-European languages, perpetuating ideologies of linguistic superiority (Piller 2016), should integrate an intersectional analysis of language.

To better understand this relation, raciolinguistics has emerged as a field of study that explores the intersection of race and language (Alim, Rickford and Ball 2016), offering a critical lens through which we can understand language practices, policies and ideologies in relation to racial dynamics. Through the focus on racialisation processes, highlighting the ways in which language practices and ideologies both reflect and perpetuate systems of racial inequality and oppression (Rosa and Flores 2017), raciolinguistics allows us to recognise that language – as a tool – is deeply embedded in racialised power structures. This is particularly relevant if we consider how languages in diversity management and policies are depoliticised, stripped of their political significance and treated as apolitical or neutral, obscuring the ways in which language can be a site of contestation, resistance and identity formation.

A particularly productive aspect of raciolinguistics is the inversion of the causality relationship between language (practices) and discrimination. Put simply, linguistic practices should be understood as another aspect of cultural life that can be racialised (Dick and Wirtz 2011; Rosa and Flores 2017). The stigmatisation of languages, accents, expressions and even words does not occur because these are devalued, with their speakers being stigmatised as a consequence. On the contrary, such expressions become devalued precisely because they are used and uttered by racialised individuals and groups (Flores and Rosa 2015). Emphasising such an aspect helps understand that, as much as race is not biologically determined but a culturally constructed phenomenon influenced by historical, cultural and power dynamics, so is the hierarchisation of linguistic practices (see Bakker, this volume).

When it comes to diversity management, raciolinguistics allows the examination of language ideologies and policies that impact racialised communities, by focusing on how linguistic discrimination and biases affect access to resources and opportunities. Language policies, such as English-only initiatives or standardised language tests in majority languages in

areas where Indigenous or minority languages are also used, can reinforce racial inequalities by privileging dominant languages and marginalising non-dominant or heritage languages spoken by racialised and minoritised communities. The focus on language as a supposedly neutral factor for hiring and promotions (Lee, this volume) disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities. Language – or the perception of its mastering through accent attitudes – can thus reproduce racism by gatekeeping valuable resources for social mobility.

In practical terms, raciolinguistics can be of support to address social and educational inequities. By recognising the often hidden racialising aspects of language policies, policymakers, educators and activists can work towards more inclusive and equitable practices. Inspired by the articles in this volume, these actions may involve valuing and supporting diverse linguistic representation in products (Ganayim and Mazzoli) and media (Bakker, Wing and Jerca), challenging linguistic biases in educational settings (Joubert and De Jong; Dekker *et al.*) and in the public sector (Davis and Heinrichs), and promoting linguistic inclusion by disassociating language proficiency from the distribution of valuable resources (Lee).

By doing so, we see diversity management as a tool for delinking from the ‘colonial matrix of power’ (Mignolo’s 2007), through a radical denaturalisation of linguistic hierarchies and dismantling practices of exclusion based on seemingly objective technical factors. While the spectrum of decolonial requirements is much wider and consequential in countries with a colonial past, Europe is not devoid of colonial-type ideologies in the existing language policies. Decoloniality therefore takes a transformative force and begs to adopt effective leadership and a sense of initiative. As Setlhodi and Ramadikela (2020: 223) argue, ‘the understanding of decolonial thought calls for an understanding of our future’. A decolonial outlook is also one of freedom and respect in the hope of creating a better society for tomorrow. This way of envisaging a decolonised or a socially just language policy is also one that comes to terms with its historical legacy. Indeed, language policies are embedded in history. Neo-colonial covert policymaking has thrived for European dominant languages and especially for English as it has turned into the international language through mostly soft power in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (see Bakker in this issue; Tupas 2021). ‘The plurality of multilingualisms’ as expressed by Tupas (2021:111), which has been erased by colonial memory, is recalled through the design of ‘language-making projects’ or inclusive language policies. This focus on the act of remembering encompasses higher levels of consciousness of diversity.

In this context, an applicable concept while acknowledging its origin and importance for its culture is the practice of Ubuntu in South Africa. Ubuntu is a Nguni Bantu concept used to describe the essence of shared humanity and a sense of respect and individual responsibility for the well-being of the self and others (Moyo 2021). It proves useful when conceiving of alternative and decolonised views on multilingualism because it connects languages with humans and not with representations of groups or nation-states. In relation to the articles compiled in this issue, Ubuntu is also useful because it allows an ethical discussion on the place of the individual in (re)claiming their position. Positionality through a process of recognition and accountability helps and supports the furthering of Ubuntu practices. Indeed, positionality has emerged as one of the most important attributes of a decolonial practice that can inform policymakers outside Indigenous and postcolonial settings.

The articles in this volume

This special issue brings together articles that focus on different aspects of diversity management and language policy in education, public health, media and the commercial sectors. Every sector possesses its own challenges and opportunities when it comes to embracing linguistic diversity.

The first set of articles focuses on the educational sector. The first paper, by Suzanne Dekker, Laura Nap, Hanneke Loerts and Joana Duarte, tests the effectiveness of the 3M intervention (Duarte and Günther-van der Meij 2018), aimed at stimulating primary school teachers to engage in translanguaging practices ranging from language awareness to full immersion. The article assesses the presence of dialogic empathy, as well as the evolution in the quantity and quality of multilingual language use during intervention. Dekker and colleagues' qualitative assessment concludes that without linguistic shared common ground between teacher and pupils, notwithstanding the intervention, translanguaging activities remain mainly symbolic (e.g. translation of isolated words in the migrant language). However, active (multilingual) student participation increases with the intervention, although the number of multilingual interactions seems to reduce progressively with the complexification of the study materials.

Aurélie Joubert and Karlijn De Jong's paper focuses on teachers' explicit beliefs and attitudes towards multilingualism in secondary education in monolingual, officially bilingual and highly linguistically diverse contexts in the Netherlands. The findings reveal a mix of monolingual/national language ideologies as well as more progressive and flexible categories in the teachers' conceptualization of multilingual competence. Previous

exposure to multilingualism and individual personality traits (such as tolerance to reduced control on classroom interactions) have emerged as important factors in the implementation of multilingual practices such as translanguaging.

Seonok Lee analyses language requirements in both English and Dutch for hiring procedures and career advancement of international lecturers and researchers at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Lee makes a case for understanding language requirements used within higher education as a mechanism of labour control, which can limit career advancement opportunities for non-native speakers who are on occasion kept to lower-paying and less secure positions.

Next, Emily Davis and Danielle Heinrichs investigate the public health sector, through the analysis of a COVID-19 outreach campaign tailored to Indigenous Australian audiences in New South Wales Health. The analysis examines the ‘Keep Our Mob Safe’ campaign on Facebook as an illustrative example of effective multilingual and multimodal public health communication, which is also culturally appropriate and clearly youth-oriented, thanks for example to the incorporation in the videos of Australian Aboriginal English, Dhurga and Gumbaynggirr (Pama-Nyungan Aboriginal languages respectively of the Yuin and Gumbaynggirr people). According to Davis and Heinrichs, the choices behind this campaign act as a covert language policy, by strategically employing multimodality, humour and intersectionality to define culturally responsive language use and empower community members.

The next part of this collection examines cases in the media sector through intersectional and postcolonial lenses. Dakota Wing and Ana-Maria Jerca delve into the intricate interplay of language, race and the lasting colonial legacy within ice hockey, Canada’s beloved winter sport. Their study focuses on the Twitter discourse surrounding Harnarayan Singh, a trailblazing figure as the first non-white ice hockey sportscaster. Singh, a Sikh individual, achieved a milestone by providing English play-by-play commentary on a national Canadian broadcast. Against the backdrop of enduring racial imprints stemming from the sport’s colonial origins, predominantly represented by white players and sportscasters, Wing and Jerca scrutinise viewers’ reactions to Singh’s broadcasts. While most of the responses express support for Singh and advocate for inclusivity in hockey, their findings reveal a recurrent incidence of race-related ideological assumptions, underscoring the persistent tensions between initiatives to promote diversity in the sport and the acknowledgement of its historically entrenched culture of racism.

Continuing with the media sector, Iris Bakker provides an intersectional analysis in the discourse surrounding ‘good’ and ‘bad’ migrants in a racial, linguistic and cultural sense within the East Asia context. Bakker examines three South Korean TV shows and argues that preferences for migrants are influenced by factors such as perceived intelligence, high social status, likability and cosmopolitanism, which are judged based on skin colour, appearance, fluency, accents in Korean, and educational backgrounds. In essence, white migrants with higher education are preferred over non-white migrants. Bakker’s findings also shed light on the seemingly contradictory social and linguistic expectations imposed on migrants in South Korean society. While migrants are expected to culturally assimilate to Korean values, ways of life, and speak fluent Korean, they are simultaneously expected to sound clearly non-native in their Korean speech because they cannot be considered fully Korean.

One last article, dedicated to the commercial sector and written by Deia Ganayim and Maria Mazzoli, examines the relationship between the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Arabic language and the linguistic landscape of dairy products in Israel. This specific domain of use forms parts of a commercialised type of linguistic landscape which is labelled the ‘productscape’ of milk products. Based on the analysis of ethnographic data of printed language on dairy products and advertising campaigns of three different companies, collected in Israel between 2015 and 2023, the authors argue that the domain of commercial products and the decisions of company managers have a key role in shaping the symbolic capital of languages within multilingual societies.

Moving forward

Recognising the significance of positionality in scholarly pursuits, we, as editors of this special issue, emphasise the importance of disclosing our individual disciplinary perspectives and backgrounds to the readers of this special issue. These factors not only guide our methodological and theoretical choices but also shape our scholarly networks, and therefore the selection of articles included in this compilation. By providing this transparency, we aim to foster a deeper understanding of the multifaceted influences and perspectives that inform the content presented in this collection. The editorial team comprises scholars representing distinct academic fields, namely sociolinguistics, sociology of language, sociology and anthropology, and encompasses a range of cultural and national origins (Italy, France, South Korea and Brazil). However diverse our backgrounds are (white, brown and Asian, with different sexual orientations and

gender identities (all cis-gender)), we share a common affiliation with the Minorities and Multilingualism programme at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. Even if our employment in a Western European university is not secure for all of us, we share a relatively high socioeconomic status. We also share awareness of social inequalities stemming from our research on various ethnolinguistic minority groups. Additionally, as non-Dutch academics working in the Netherlands, our own experiences contribute to inform our understanding of the complexities surrounding linguistic discrimination in certain contexts.

Our case for social justice in diversity management and language policy revolves around three main action points. The first one is for policymakers, frontline workers or societal actors in gatekeeping positions and positions of power to reflect on and express their positionality. This reflexive approach aims at debunking existing myths and presuppositions about language or racial superiority by recognising relative or concrete authority certain actors hold over others. An emphasis on positionality also helps increase the visibility of minorities and enhance support given to them.

Second, theories of diversity management and language policy face the challenge of involving private actors and societal stakeholders in the design, implementation and evaluation of their policies. In contemporary post-immigrant multilingual societies, the actors contributing to shaping ordinary experiences with languages are countless, and their backgrounds and aims are extremely varied. Multiple agents and managers need to actively partake in the design and implementation of policies targeting different sectors and domains. For this to be successful and not just a tick-the-box exercise, a level of commitment to social justice is necessary through policies that include a clear and measurable process of monitoring their impact.

Also, it is essential to raise critical awareness about multilingualism in general and denounce hegemonic language ideologies that come across as a 'normal' state of sociolinguistic affairs (Blommaert 2010). Indeed, hegemonic language ideologies gather together to erase or stigmatise diversity: standard language ideologies suppress accented forms, national language ideologies segregate against dialects and non-official varieties, monoglot ideologies stigmatise multiplicity and language mixing and raciolinguistic ideologies create discriminatory barriers (Joubert 2022). It is only through critical awareness of the system of ideology-inducing and ideology-reproducing mechanisms that inclusive language policy can become real and effective. The exploration of the origins of linguistic discrimination, which connects neoliberal ideology to language use and representations (Piller and Cho 2013), highlights the inclination to manipulate linguistic

practices or assimilate minority groups to the majority ‘for their own good.’ This special issue sheds light on the ideological mechanisms that legitimise this manipulation, accounts for examples of inadequacy in language policy design and diversity management and points out some recommendations to achieve better inclusivity and a practice-based commitment to social justice.

About the editors

Maria Mazzoli is a linguist. She is an assistant professor at the University of Groningen (Faculty of Arts, Minorities and Multilingualism) and is affiliated with the Research Center on Language and Cognition (CLCG). Her research focus is on sociolinguistics, language contact and Algonquian morphology. She is particularly interested in (socio) linguistics research that engages with societal issues relevant to communities.

Aurélie Joubert is an assistant professor at the University of Groningen (Faculty of Arts, European Languages and Cultures and Minorities and Multilingualism). Her area of research specialism is on language minoritisation, endangerment and revitalisation. She has worked on language attitudes and ideologies especially on the notion of prestige for minority Romance languages.

Seonok Lee is a sociologist and a lecturer at the University of Groningen (Faculty of Arts, Minorities and Multilingualism). Her expertise is in global labour migration, inequality, racial hierarchies, class and gender. She recently expanded her interest in (digital) platforms and the gig economy.

Flávio Eiró is a sociologist and an assistant professor at the University of Groningen (Faculty of Arts, Minorities and Multilingualism). He is a political ethnographer researching anti-poverty policies, policy implementation and the politics of identities, with a special focus on Brazil.

References

- Alim, H. S., Rickford, J. R. and Ball, A. F. (2016) *Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race*. Oxford University Press.
- Anthias, F. (1993) *Racialised Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-racist Struggle*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Baugh, J. (2008) Linguistic discrimination. In H. Goebel, P. Nelde, Z. Starý and W. Wölck (ed.) *1. Halbband: Ein internationales Handbuch zeitgenössischer Forschung* (709–14) Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Blanchet, P. (2021) Glottophobie. *Langage et société* HS1: 155–159. <https://doi.org/10.3917/ls.hs01.0156>
- Blommaert, J. (2010) *Language Ideological Debates*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110808049>
- Blumer, H. (1958) Race prejudice as a sense of group position. *Pacific sociological review* 1(1): 3–7.

- Bonotti, M. and Willoughby, L. (2022) Citizenship, language tests and political participation. *Nations and Nationalism* 28(2): 449–64. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12799>
- Bourdieu, P. (1987) What Makes a Social Class? On the theoretical and practical existence of groups. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 32: 1–17.
- Bourhis, R. Y., Sachdev, I., Ehala, M. and Giles, H. (2019) Assessing forty years of group vitality research and future directions. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 38(4): 409–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X19868974>
- Crenshaw, K. (1991) Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of colour. *Stanford Law Review* 43: 1241–99. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>
- Cummins, J. (2018) Urban multilingualism and educational achievement: Identifying and implementing evidence-based strategies for school improvement. In P. Van Avermaet, S. Slembrouck, K. Van Gorp, S. Sierens and K. Maryns (eds.) *The Multilingual Edge of Education* 67–90. London: Macmillan.
- Dick, H. and Wirtz, K. (2011) Racialising discourses. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 21(s1): E2–E10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1395.2011.01094.x>
- Duarte J. and Gogolin I. (2013) (eds.) *Linguistic Superdiversity in Urban Areas: Research Approaches*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins
- Duarte, J. and Günther-van der Meij, M. (2018) A holistic model for multilingualism in education. E-JournALL, *EuroAmerican Journal of Applied Linguistics and Languages* 5(2): 24–43. <https://doi.org/10.21283/2376905x.9.153>
- Du Bois, I. (2019) Linguistic discrimination across neighbourhoods: Turkish, US-American and German names and accents in urban apartment search. *Journal of Language and Discrimination* 3(2): 92–119. <https://doi.org/10.1558/jld.39973>
- Eiró, F. (2022) Translating politics into policy implementation: Welfare frontline workers in polarised Brazil. *International Journal of Law in Context* 18(3): 303–316. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1744552322000258>
- Eriksen, T. H. (1991) Linguistic hegemony and minority resistance. *Journal of Peace Research* 29(3): 313–32.
- Flores, N. and Rosa, J. (2015) Undoing appropriateness: Raciolinguistic ideologies and language diversity in education. *Harvard Educational Review* 85:149–71. <https://doi.org/10.17763/0017-8055.85.2.149>
- Gershenson, S., Holt, S. B. and Papageorge, N. W. (2016) Who believes in me? The effect of student–teacher demographic match on teacher expectations. *Economics of Education Review* 52: 209–24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2016.03.002>
- Glenn, E. N. (1992) From servitude to service work: Historical continuities in the racial division of paid reproductive labour. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society* 18(1): 1–43. <https://doi.org/10.1086/494777>
- Grin, F., Marác, L. and Pokorn, N. K. (eds.) (2022) *Advances in Interdisciplinary Language Policy*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Grogger, J. (2011) Speech patterns and racial wage inequality. *Journal of Human Resources* 46(1): 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jhr.2011.0017>
- Jackson, S. (2005) Sexuality, heterosexuality and gender hierarchy: Getting our priorities straight. In C. Ingraham (ed.) *Thinking Straight: The Power, the Promise, and the Paradox of Heterosexuality*, 15–37. New York/London: Routledge.
- Joubert, A. (2022) Decolonising minority languages through language revitalization: The case of Occitan new speakers in France. *Journal of Postcolonial Linguistics* 6: 186–208.

- Makoni, S., and Pennycook, A. (2006) *Disinventing and reconstituting languages* (Ser. Bilingual education and bilingualism, 62 Multilingual Matters).
- Mignolo, W. D. (2007) Delinking. *Cultural Studies* 21(2): 449–514.
- Miles, R. and Brown, M. (1989) *Racism*. New York/London: Routledge.
- Moyo, O. N. (2021) Africanity and ubuntu as decolonising discourse (Human rights interventions). Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-59785-6>
- Munro, M. (2003) A primer on accent discrimination in the Canadian context. *TESL Canada Journal* 20: 38–51. <https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v20i2.947>
- Ng, S. H. (2007) Language-based discrimination: Blatant and subtle forms. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 26(2): 106–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X07300074>
- Piller, I. (2016) *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice: An Introduction to Applied Sociolinguistics* (1st edn). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Piller, I. and Cho, J. (2013) Neoliberalism as language policy. *Language in Society* 42(1): 23–44. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404512000887>
- Pochon-Berger, E. and Lenz, P. (2014) *Language Requirements and Language Testing for Immigration and Integration Purposes. A Synthesis of Academic Literature*. Fribourg: Istituto di Plurilinguismo.
- Ricento, T. (2006) *An Introduction to Language Policy: Theory and Method* (Language and Social Change, 1). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Rickford, J. R. and King, S. (2016) Language and linguistics on trial: Hearing Rachel Jeantel (and other vernacular speakers) in the courtroom and beyond. *Language* 92(4) : 948–88. <https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2016.0078>
- Rojas Loa, V., Mazzoli, M., Dell'Aquila V., Tolotti E. and Heins, L. (2022) 'Bremen spricht'. *Karten und Datensammlung zur Sprachvielfalt der Bremer Schulbevölkerung*. Bremen: Senatorin für Kinder und Bildung
- Rosa, J. and Flores, N. (2017.) Unsettling race and language: Toward a raciolinguistic perspective. *Language in Society* 46 (5): 621–47. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0047404517000562>
- Scott, J. W. (1986) Gender: A useful category of historical analysis. *The American Historical Review* 91(5): 1053–75. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1864376>
- Setlhodi, I. I., and Ramadikela, P. M. (2020) Transforming leadership: Towards the advancement of decolonisation and social justice. In V. Msila (ed). *Developing teaching and learning in Africa: Decolonising perspectives* 223–39. Stellenbosch: African Sun Media.
- Shohamy, E. G. (2005) *Language Policy: Hidden Agendas and New Approaches*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Spolsky, B. (2004) *Language Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spolsky, B. (2009) *Language Management*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Spolsky, B. (2019) A modified and enriched theory of language policy (and management). *Language Policy* 18: 323–38. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-018-9489-z>
- Tuck E. and Yang, W. K. (2012) Decolonization is not a metaphor. Decolonization: indigeneity. *Education & Society* 1(1): 1–40.
- Tupas, R. (2021) Remembering as a decolonising project in language policy. In K. Heugh, C. Stroud, K. Taylor-Leech, K. and P. De Costa (eds.) *A Sociolinguistics of the South* (Routledge Critical Studies in multilingualism) 110–22. Abingdon: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315208916>
- Tuck, E. and Yang, W. K. (2012) Decolonization is not a metaphor. Decolonization: indigeneity. *Education & Society* 1(1): 1–40.

- Vertovec, S. (2007), Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(6): 1024–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465>
- Wolpe, H. (1986) Class concepts, class struggle and racism. In R. John and D. Mason (eds) *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations* 110–30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zentella, A. C. (2014) TWB (Talking while Bilingual): Linguistic profiling of Latina/os, and other linguistic torquemadas. *Latino Studies* 12: 620–35. <https://doi.org/10.1057/lst.2014.63>