

The EU language policy in today's complex societies.

What is a "fair" language policy?

Dr. Vicent Climent-Ferrando

Universitat Pompeu Fabra-Barcelona

European Research Consortium MIME (Mobility and Inclusion in a Multilingual Europe)

vicent.climent@upf.edu

“
EDUCATION IS NOT
THE Why Kids Need To Develop Critical Thinking Skills LEARNING OF FACTS,
BUT TRAINING THE MIND
TO THINK.”
- ALBERT EINSTEIN

Goal of this presentation

- 1) To give you a critical overview of the EU's language policy over the past decades
- 2) To compare the EU's language policy vis-à-vis the language policies related to minority languages

Question:

EU language policy vis-à-vis regional language policies...diverging goals?

- 3) Concluding elements for reflection

Main references used

- **Linguistic neoliberalism in the EU: politics of the EU's approach to multilingualism (Climent-Ferrando, V.) 2016**
- **The EU's Financial Support for Regional or Minority Languages: A Historical Assessment (Gazzola, M.; Grin, F. et.al) 2016**
- **The MIME VADEMECUM. Mobility and Inclusion in a Multilingual Europe (2014-2018)**
Vademecum downloadable at www.mime-project.org
 - ✓ 22 partner institutions in 16 countries
 - ✓ 70 scholars
 - ✓ Transdisciplinary 11 disciplines → political sciences, sociology, economics, law, geography, psychology, sociolinguistics, translation studies, philosophy, education sciences, history

Conference to celebrate EU linguistic diversity in the EU institutions on 19 September 2018



On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the first legal act of the EC/EU, **Regulation 1/58**, the European Economic and Social Committee presents an exhibition entitled

"The EU speaks your language"

The opening of the exhibition will take the form of an open debate with the French philosopher **Barbara Cassin**

at 1.00 p.m.
on **Wednesday 19 September 2018**.

The exhibition is one of the events being held by the EESC to mark the European Year of Cultural Heritage and is being organised in cooperation with the Directorate for Translation of the EESC/CoR.

The EU speaks your Language?



Official language recognition in the European Union

24 official languages

“**Regulation 1/1958** determining the Languages to be Used by the European Economic Community”
What does it mean? It is for each Member State to declare to the Union which language or languages are to be regarded as official for Union purposes, in dealings with that State and its residents.

Question: Why 28 Member States and (only) 24 official languages?

There is another level of **semi-officialdom for 5 languages**: Catalan, Basque, Galician, Welsh and Scots Gaelic → **EU institutions: bilateral agreements with Spain and UK in 2005 and 2008**

Question: are these agreements fully operative in Spain and the UK? How do they work?

Non-official recognition for the rest of languages at EU level other than “recognition of linguistic diversity”.

Each minority language enjoys a different legal status in the different regions across Europe

Co-official regional languages

Welsh, Basque, Catalan (Catalonia, Valencia, Balearic Islands), Galician, etc.

Symbolic official recognition

May, 2013 the Corsican Assembly: Corsican proclaimed by the Corsican Parliament as Corsica's official language → Not recognized by the French state on the grounds of "égalité".

Question: What does this mean in practical terms?

Other cases? Official status of Irish in Ireland? Catalan in Andorra? Luxembourgish? Are these cases minority languages? Why?

Little/no full legal recognition

Breton, Occitan, Catalan (in Southern France), Basque in Southern France.



The language policy of the EU *United in Diversity?*

Analysing discourses versus policies

Analysis of the EU's language policy:

1) 85 different policy documents (2005-2017)

- EU recommendations
- Communications
- European Parliament resolutions
- EU Council conclusions, reports
- Press releases from the main EU institutions

2) Interviews with Commission's officials in the Multilingualism unit

3) Interviews with MEP's (European Parliament's Intergroup for Languages)

4) My ongoing work for the NPLD

EUROPEAN UNION

Discourses on linguistic diversity by the European Union:

“the harmonious co-existence of many languages in Europe is a powerful symbol of the EU's aspiration to be **united in diversity**, one of the cornerstones of the European project. Linguistic diversity is what **best defines** our continent and, at the same time, expresses and reinforces our cultural identity”.

“committed to safeguarding this linguistic diversity and promoting the languages spoken in Europe”.

United in diversity was the motto adopted by the EU to define itself.

European Commission

Four elements cited by the Commission to support languages:

1. For reasons of **cultural identity** and social **integration** and **cohesion**
2. Because multilingual citizens are better placed to take advantage of the **economic, educational and professional opportunities** created by an integrated Europe
3. Because a **mobile workforce** is key to the **competitiveness** of the EU economy”
4. A successful multilingualism policy can strengthen the life **chances** of citizens: it may increase their **employability**, facilitate access to **services and rights**, and contribute to solidarity through enhanced **intercultural dialogue** and **social cohesion**



First-ever Commission's portfolio devoted to Multilingualism (2007-2010)

“multilingualism can give any industry a competitive advantage if it helps them to tap local markets and create new products which also cater for multilingualism”, and paid particular attention to the learning of big hegemonic languages for trade and business "our efforts to support multilingualism are not limited to EU languages; we are also encouraging training in Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Turkish and Russian”.

Leonard Orban
Commissioner for Multilingualism (2007-2010)

Translating the political intentions on languages into concrete **POLICY OUTCOMES**

- ❑ **ELAN report** *Effects on the European Economy of Shortages of Foreign Language Skills in Enterprise* (2007)
Goal → “to provide the Commission and decision-takers in Member States with practical information and analysis of the use of language skills by SMEs and the impact on business performance”;
- ❑ *Creation of **Business Forum on Multilingualism (2007)*** aimed at “exploring how language skills can have an impact on trade and jobs in the European Union, which issued, in turn, a series of **Recommendations**” (2009) and a subsequent report ***Languages Help Businesses*** (2009-2011), encouraging the Commission to embed the business approach on language in its Europe 2020 strategy.
- ❑ The **Business Forum** also resulted in a series of concrete **policy initiatives** focused exclusively on the economy:
 - CELAN Project on ***Language Strategies for Competitiveness and Employability*** (2010),
 - The report on ***Language Management Strategies and Best Practices at European SMEs*** (PIMLICO report, 2011),
 - *The Language Guide for European Business* (2011), to name only a few.

The Council of the EU and Multilingualism (not to be mistaken with Council of Europe!!!!)

- EU Council Conclusions of November 2006 → “foreign language skills are a prerequisite for a mobile workforce and contribute to the competitiveness of the European Union economy”
- May 2008 *EU Council Conclusions on Multilingualism*
- The *EU Council Resolution of 21 November 2008 on a European Strategy for Multilingualism*
- The *May 2014 Council Conclusions on Multilingualism and the Development of Language Competences*

Market oriented approach to languages

“Whereas these recurrent EU rhetoric continues to stress the importance of linguistic diversity as a European value, they **do not translate into tangible policy actions** or a programmatic frame that would provide a set of consistent guidelines on political criteria for promotion of linguistic diversity”.

Three political decisions with a high impact on languages in the 2014-2020 period:

- 1) The new Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, Tibor Navracsics, has not included a specific reference to multilingualism in his portfolio.
- 2) The former unit dealing with Multilingualism Policy, Skills and Qualification Strategy has been transferred from the Directorate-General on Education and Culture to the current **Directorate-General on Employment**.
- 3) One of the latest EU flagship initiatives, the European Digital Single Market, has neglected Europe's multilingual reality, sparking heated reactions across a wide range of stakeholders.

To this, we must add the decreasing financial support to Regional or Minority Languages in the EU:

Gazzola, M.; Grin, F.; Haggman, J.; Morin, T.

The EU's Financial Support for Regional or Minority Languages: A Historical Assessment (2016)

“The EU professes to have a positive policy towards RMLs, as enshrined in Article 22 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. Since the beginning of the 1980s the then European Economic Community has shown some awareness of the issue and has tried to support RMLs in a variety of ways. This support, nevertheless, has **decreased over time, in particular since 2000**”.

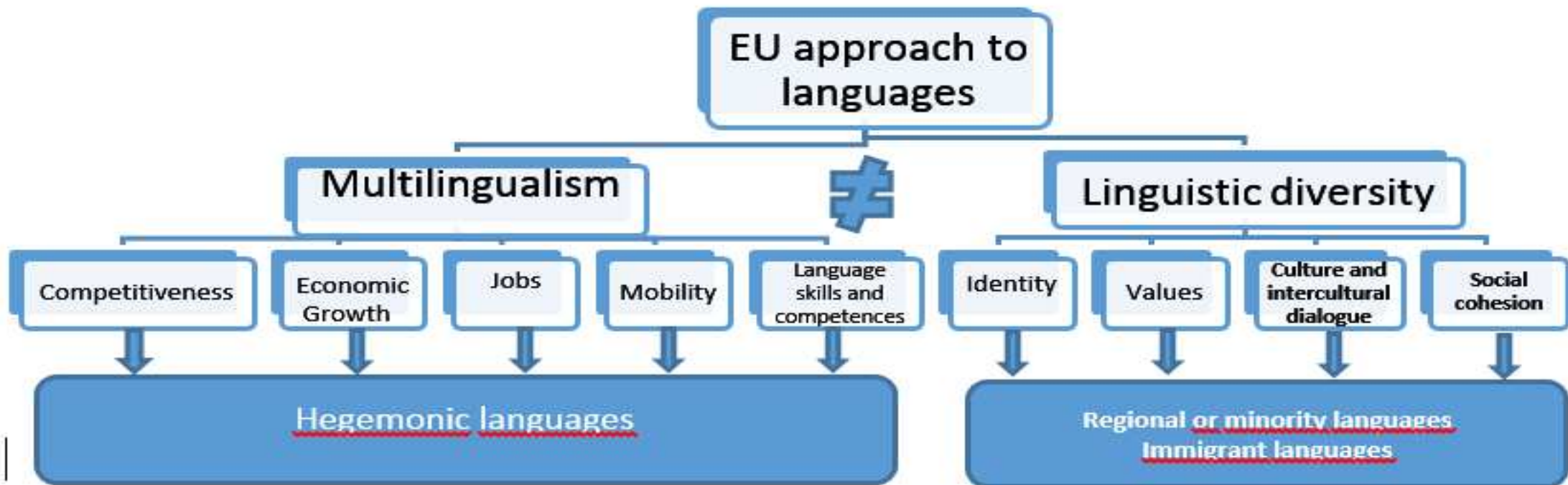
European Parliament, any hope for Regional or Minority Languages?

... since the Arfé Resolution (1984) ...

European Parliament overtly acknowledged the fact that “the importance of multilingualism is not confined to economic and that attention must also be paid to social, cultural and scientific creation and transmission, as well as to the role of languages in shaping one’s identity” (European Parliament, 2009: 61).

Idea was further highlighted by the Parliament in **resolutions, reports...**

Problem? Not legally binding!



Source: Climent-Ferrando, Vicent. «Linguistic Neoliberalism in the European Union. Politics and Policies of the EU's Approach to Multilingualism», *Revista de Llengua i Dret, Journal of Language and Law*, núm. 66, 2016, p. 1-14. DOI: 10.2436/rld.i66.2016.2843

Elements from a **neo-liberal discourse** have been progressively incorporated into the EU's discourse on **language**.

Linguistic neoliberalism → dominant representation and the dominant cognitive frame within the language policy domain of the European Union and is playing a pivotal role in the structuring and development of policies on language in the EU.

Languages, especially hegemonic languages, have gradually become **commodities** → an essential skill from a **market perspective**, equalized to other type of skills needed in the labour market such as numeracy, digital or ICT skills.

“The European Union Strategy on Multilingualism has **not really become an EU policy** field in its own right and the policies it produced mainly became measures supporting the implementation of key provisions from other policy areas”.



What are the **practical consequences** of legal status?

- All Commission's programmes are open to all languages.
- Erasmus Plus (2014-2020: all languages included (theory).
- Juvenes Traslatores Contest: Minority languages of Europe → not included.
- Small language communities compete with hegemonic language communities!



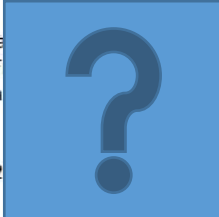
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{ Culture } expo



EU adopting a language policy aimed at achieving a **mobile & competitive workforce**

VERSUS

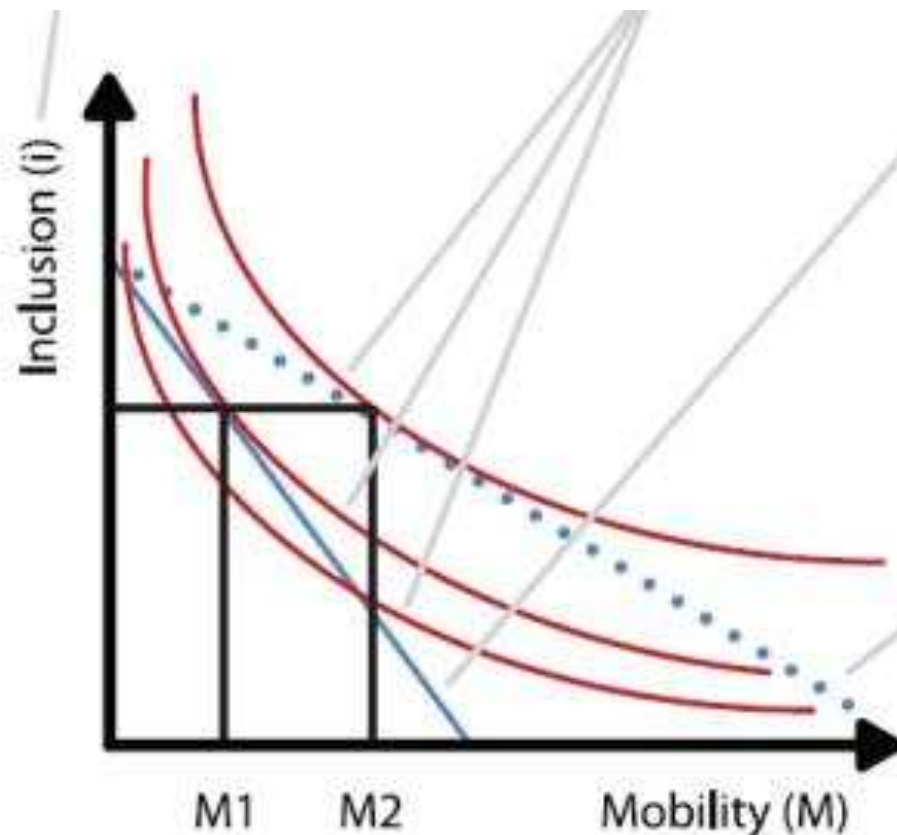
Regional authorities adopting a language policy aimed at **protecting/promoting** their language

CONFLICTING AGENDAS? → MULTILINGUAL CHALLENGE



THE MULTILINGUAL CHALLENGE: THE MOBILITY-INCLUSION TRADE-OFF MODEL (MIME PROJECT)

Meta-level framework in which research can be integrated into a policy analysis perspective



Main idea: language issues confronting European citizens and their authorities can be approached through the prism of a common problem. This common problem is one of **TENSION** between **two objectives**, namely, **mobility** and **inclusion**.

Multilingualism is a challenge precisely because it is linked to **two distinct goals that aren't easily reconciled**: mobility and inclusion.

The **trade-off model** is a **classic policy analysis instrument**. It may be applied to any problem where society has to make decisions and, in particular, needs to balance non-converging goals.

THE MULTILINGUAL CHALLENGE: THE MOBILITY-INCLUSION TRADE-OFF MODEL (MIME PROJECT)

Mobility

Citizens → encouraged to **move** for work, study, leisure or retirement.

Notion of mobility → denotes a broader range of processes than physical migration and captures the growing multiplicity of motivations and modalities associated with the geographical, or sometimes virtual movement of people. Mobility requires easy communication among people with different linguistic backgrounds.

Achieved by combining multiple communication strategies involving language learning as well as various ways of using languages.

Inclusion

The range of languages spoken in Europe is crucial to the definition of its diversity, which is recognised as a core value of the Union. This diversity is manifested in the **linguistic specificity of different parts of the EU**, whose member states have different official languages (state or sub-state level). Inclusion, refers to a **sense of belonging** to the region of residence/birth.

This implies familiarity with the **local language**.

Applying the trade-off model to the analysis of the EU's language policy

MOBILITY

VERSUS

INCLUSION

Multilingualism	Linguistic diversity
Competitiveness	Identity
Employability	Protection
Mobility	Endangered
Growth	Culture
Jobs	Loss

Multilingualism versus linguistic diversity: conflicting agendas?

Practical analysis of regional language policies

Language constellation of today's societies

1. English as lingua franca for transnational communication;
2. National or 'official state' languages of European countries;
3. Regional minority (RM) languages across Europe;
4. Immigrant minority (IM) languages across Europe.

My question to the floor:

Are regional language policies adapting to the rapidly evolving sociolinguistic realities?

Practical analysis of regional language policies

QUESTION 1: MIGRATION AND LANGUAGE POLICIES

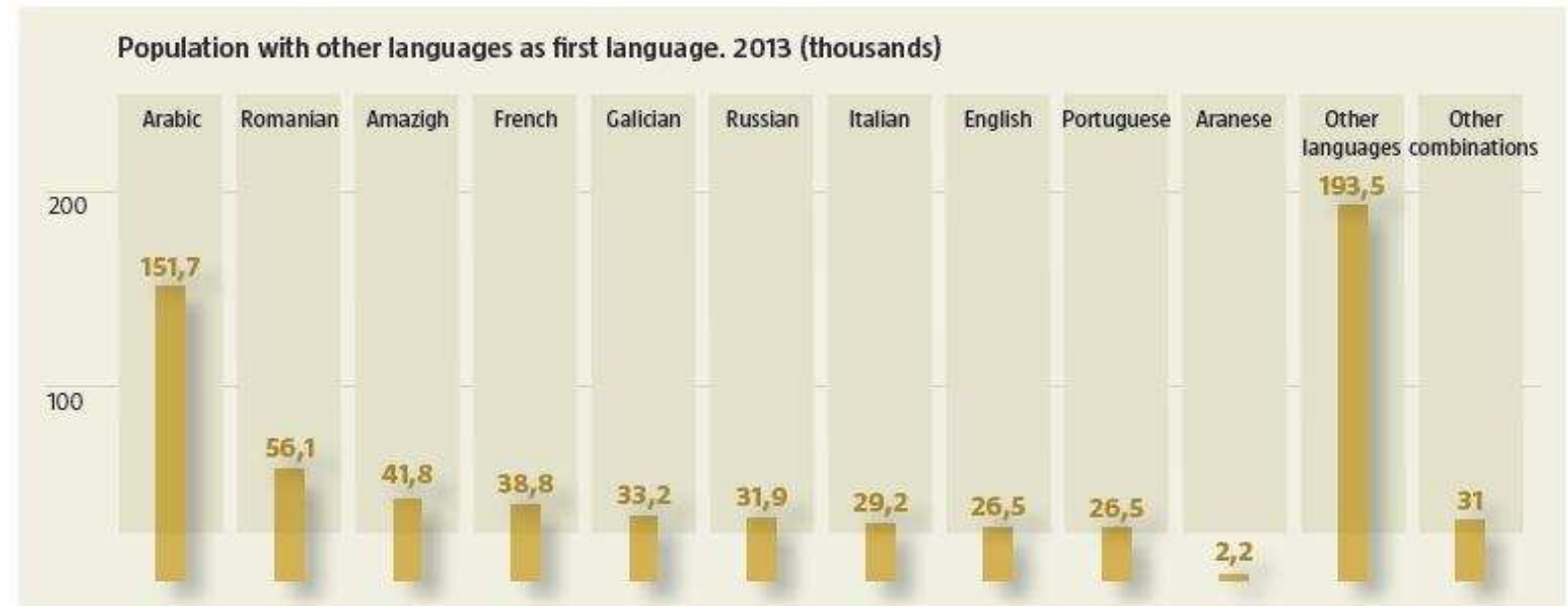
1. Are language policies adapted to cater for the newly-arrived (only in the majority language? Both in the minority/majority language? (inclusion))
2. Are language policies considering the languages of migrants as an element of both recognition (inclusion) and contact with countries of origin (mobility)

Practical analysis of regional language policies

QUESTION 1: MIGRATION AND LANGUAGE POLICIES

Practical case

Catalonia and the
languages brought by
migrants



Practical analysis of regional language policies

QUESTION 2: EDUCATION

*There is a great need for **educational policies** in Europe to take **new realities of multilingualism into account**. Processes of internationalization and globalization have brought European nation-states to the world, but they have also brought the world to European nation-states. This bipolar pattern of change has led to both convergence and divergence of multilingualism across Europe.*

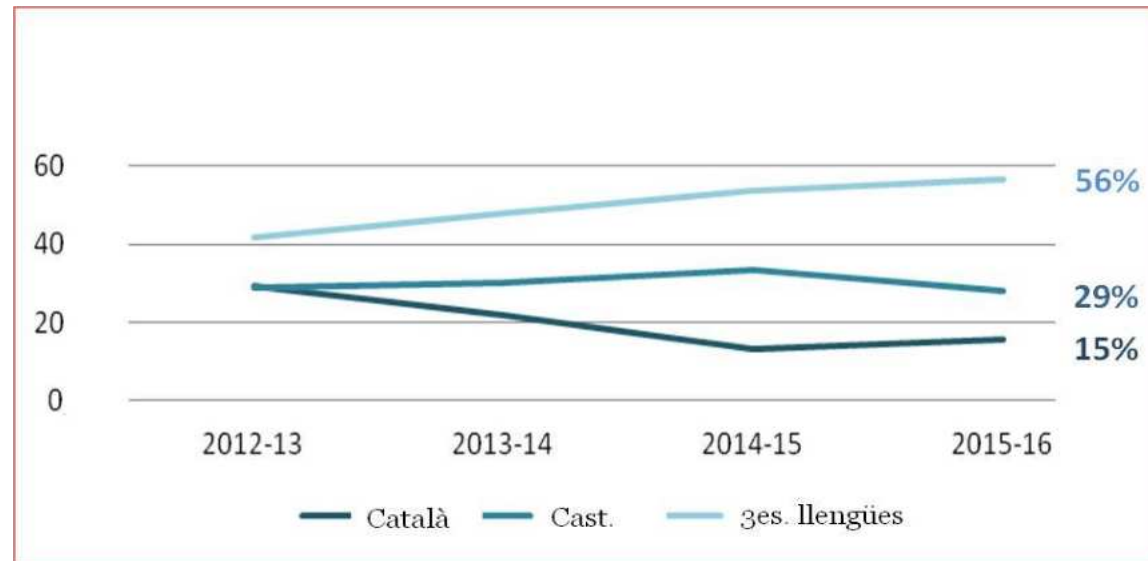
- 1. Are regional language policies adapting to societal/sociolinguistic changes in education? How are they combining the protection/promotion of the regional language with the state language and lingua franca (English)?**
- 2. Are the language of migrants present in school activities? Are they recognized?**

Practical analysis of regional language policies

QUESTION 3: HIGHER EDUCATION

Is English (mobility) replacing both the state and the regional language in higher education? Which language policy measures are being taken?

Practical case
Higher education in Catalonia
Language of instruction in
master's degrees (2012-2016)



Concluding remarks

- Language policy → **language politics**. The need to have a fine-tuned balance between language rights (Constitutional, legal and regulatory arrangements) and language practices.
- Language policy → **public policy**. Multilingualism cannot be left to itself. Languages are intertwined with economic, political, social and cultural processes affecting individuals and groups.
- Language policy → **social policy** which will only emerge from a balanced combination of mobility and inclusion.

Concluding remarks

Any language planning must take into account the growing interconnection of different levels in language issues:

- **Micro level:** individuals and households.
- **Meso level:** organisations, whether non-profit or for-profit, public or private, like universities or private-sector companies.
- **Macro level:** society as whole, whether locally, nationally, or globally influence each other.