Chapter 39: Early Language Education in Luxembourg

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Abstract

This chapter examines recent language education laws in Luxembourg as well as the ways in which early years practitioners appropriated the new policies and put them into practice. The chapter begins with a brief introduction of the linguistic landscape in Luxembourg and a summary of the dynamic development of the country's early childhood education system. Special emphasis is put on recent changes in language education policies, which call for a more inclusive and multilingual early language education. Monolingual practices now need to open up to flexible language use and offer children opportunities to capitalize on their entire semiotic repertoire for communicating, meaning-making, and learning. The central concerns of this chapter are the ways in which policy changes influence educational practices in formal and non-formal settings and how professional development shapes this process. In order to address these questions, the authors review literature on language education policy, translanguaging and professional development and examine studies on early language education in Luxembourg. Next, they discuss recent initiatives of professional development in formal and non-formal early years settings as well as their outcomes. Finally, they present critical issues such as the practitioners' reflexivity and responsibility and the sustainability of professional development. Future research directions include family language policies, partnerships between families and early childhood institutions and children's languaging practices inside and across these institutions.

Keywords

Luxembourg; Language Education Policy; Early Multilingual Education; Multilingual Pedagogies; Translanguaging; Professional Development

Contents

1. Introduction

"Opening children's minds to multilingualism and different cultures is a valuable exercise in itself that enhances individual and social development and increases their capacity to empathize with others." (European Commission 2011, p. 7) This powerful statement comes from the guidelines for early language learning developed by the European Commission. The

document is based on the idea that children develop attitudes towards languages and cultures at an early age and that effective teaching sets the foundations for later language learning and promotes tolerance, understanding and respect. Multilingual programmes have been implemented in early childhood and care (ECEC) in Austria, Switzerland, some federal states in Germany, and, lately, Luxembourg. In order for this education to be inclusive and empowering, professionals need to break with monolingual practices based on monolingual ideologies. However, research studies show that multilingual programmes still focus on the majority language at the expense of home languages (Brandenberg et al. 2017; Kratzmann et al. 2017). Language education policies[1], however, are not translated directly into pedagogical practice in a linear top-down process (Ricento & Hornberger 1996; Johnson 2013). Rather, professionals negotiate and appropriate these policies in active ways (Menken & García 2010). Professional development may support them in the process of developing new pedagogies.

The present chapter presents an overview of the multilingual education system in Luxembourg and presents two education acts in 2017, which called for multilingual education in formal and non-formal early childhood education. It presents the ways in which the policy changes influence practices and in which professional development shapes policy implementation. The professional development was effective in that practitioners deepened their understanding, reflected on practices and began to make changes. The chapter ends with thoughts on reflexivity and sustainability and offers ideas for further studies.

2. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

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[1] With regard to Johnson (2013, p. 9), the notion of language education policy refers to mechanisms, regulations and discourses that impact "the structure, function, use, or acquisition of language" in educational contexts.

The present section presents the linguistic landscape and the education system of Luxembourg with a focus on the early years.

2.1 The language situation in Luxembourg

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is a small country in Western Europe neighbouring France, Germany and Belgium. With its three official languages—Luxembourgish, French and German—as well as 47.9 % foreign residents of a population of 602,000 (STATEC 2018), multilingualism is an everyday reality. The largest immigrant communities are the Portuguese, followed by the French, Italians and Belgians.

The language situation in Luxembourg is very dynamic and has been constantly evolving in the last decades on account of globalisation, migration and information technology (Horner & Weber 2008; Fehlen & Heinz 2016). The triglossic language situation is rooted in the German and Roman sovereignties who governed Luxembourg from the Middle Ages. When Luxembourg gained independence in 1839, it lost the francophone 'Province de Luxembourg' (Luxembourgish Province) to Belgium. As a result, the population was mainly Germanophone. Nevertheless, the state continued to show allegiance to both German and French because the latter was the 'language of the bourgeoisie, of state administration and high culture' (Weber & Horner 2012, p. 7), and the former the language of the majority of the population. Luxembourgish, a Moselle Franconian dialect, was also spoken although it was not recognized as a language in its own right. It was only during the late 1970s and early 1980s, in an era of heightened immigration, that political pressure grew to strengthen the role of Luxembourgish. The language law of 1984 recognized Luxembourgish as the national language. It has equal status with German and French as a language of administration.

The position of Luxembourgish continued to be strengthened in the following years. The language has been standardized and has escaped its earlier confinement to the private and oral sphere. It is now being used in the written media, social networks and in the public sector.

Furthermore, increasingly non-citizens learn the national language. German is used mainly in the print media and official communication. French changed its status from an elite language to a lingua franca used, firstly, between the Luxembourgish-speaking and the non-Luxembourgish-speaking residents, and, secondly, among migrant groups as well as in large segments of the labour market. About 188,000 people commute daily from the neighbouring countries to work in Luxembourg, speaking mostly French. Portuguese is also widely spoken owing to the size of the community. Many Portuguese migrated to take up employment in the steel industry. After the steel crisis of the 1970s, the tertiary sector continued to develop and attract migrants from Europe and beyond. With the growing heterogeneity of the population and at the workplace, English gained importance. According to the census of 2011, the languages most spoken at home, in school and at work are Luxembourgish, French, German, English and Portuguese—with every resident speaking at least two languages on a daily basis (Fehlen & Heinz 2016).

2.2 Languages in the Luxembourgish education system

The Luxembourgish school system has always been at least bilingual. The Education Act of 1843 called for the use of standard German and French, with the aim of promoting elite bilingualism. However, as Weber and Horner (2012) report, French was little taught mainly on account of the lack of qualified bilingual teachers. German, therefore, became the dominant language. It was both the language of alphabetisation and instruction. The Education Act in 1881 made schooling compulsory for 6- to 12-year-olds and introduced French as a subject from Year 2. The end of the 19th century saw a rise of Luxembourgish nationalism partly due to the immigration wave to the steel industry. This led to an emphasis on Luxembourgish, mirrored in the Education Act of 1912: Luxembourgish was introduced as a school subject. As seen in section 2.1, Luxembourgish was not yet officially recognised as a language. This situation had changed almost 100 years later, when the Primary Education Act

of 2009 construed Luxembourgish as the language of integration. Luxembourgish was expected to contribute to school success and social cohesion. It became the principal language of communication during compulsory preschool for four- to six-year-olds and became the language of instruction in non-academic subjects. German remained the language of alphabetisation and the language of instruction in academic subjects. Oral French remained a curriculum subject in Year 2 while children became literate in French in Year 3. Still today, French gradually replaces German as the medium of instruction in most streams of secondary schooling.

This traditional sequential and separative approach and its underlying ideal of the 'threefold native speaker' (e.g., Fehlen 2009) has increasingly been questioned by educationalists, researchers, politicians and parents over the last years—not least because of its failure to meet the needs of an ever more heterogeneous school population (Weber 2016). In 2016/2017, 64 % of the four- to six-year-olds spoke a first language other than Luxembourgish (MENJE 2018a). Large scale assessment studies such as PISA, PIRLS and the national *épreuves standardisés* (standardised tests) repeatedly showed that academic achievement depend largely on students' socio-economic, migrant and language backgrounds (Berg et al. 2007; MENJE 2018b). To reduce the persistent inequalities, the government launched a series of reforms comprising a closer focus on language policies and practices in early childhood education. The new Children and Youth Act of 2017 and changes to the Primary Education Act in the same year require teachers and caregivers to develop children's skills in Luxembourgish, familiarise them with French and value their home languages. To ensure continuity in primary school, oral French is introduced as a school subject in Year 1 alongside German and home languages have a small space in the one-hour language awareness course in primary school. Italian and Portuguese-speaking children can attend 'integrated classes', offered by some municipalities, where they can learn science in their home languages. In general, children of migrant background, whose families wish to further develop home

languages, attend a community school. These classes exist in Portuguese, Italian, Greek, Russian, Japanese and Dutch, to mention a few. They operate out of state-school hours and cater mainly for children from the age of six. An exception is the Russian community school which also takes preschool children. Furthermore, there are several private and international schools with preschool classes, which differ from the language regime of the state schools. The focus in this chapter, however, will be on the state preschools and the childcare centres that adhere to the national framework plan as introduced by the Children and Youth Act of 2017.

2.3 The Luxembourgish system of early childhood education and care

The Luxembourgish system of ECEC for children up to the age of six is divided into formal and non-formal educational institutions (see Figure 1). Quality development in both domains has been monitored by the ministry of education since 2013.

Following the UNESCO's (1998) definition, formal education is organised within the official school system, while non-formal education takes place in out-of-school educational institutions, such as nurseries and day-care centres (MFI & SNJ 2013). In Luxembourg, formal education for young children has a longer tradition with the introduction of a two-year compulsory preschool for four- to six-year-olds in 1992 and of an optional preschool year for three-year-olds, called the *éducation précoce* (early education), in 1998. The Primary Education Act of 2009 integrates both offers into formal schooling and preschool teachers follow the national primary school curriculum.

By contrast, non-formal education in both state and private institutions for younger children is a more recent development and expanded rapidly, especially after the introduction of childcare vouchers in 2009 and the passing of a new Children and Youth Act in 2016 and

2017.[2] The provision of places in day care centres for children until the age of four years has risen more than six fold over the course of the last ten years. In parallel to this massive growth there has been an increasing concern with the quality of childcare services, ultimately leading to the adoption of a series of measures of quality monitoring. These include the implementation of a national curriculum framework for non-formal education (MENJE & SNJ 2018). Early childcare has thus been vested with explicit educational objectives, calling, for example, for the holistic promotion of children's social, emotional, cognitive, motor and language development (Honig 2015).

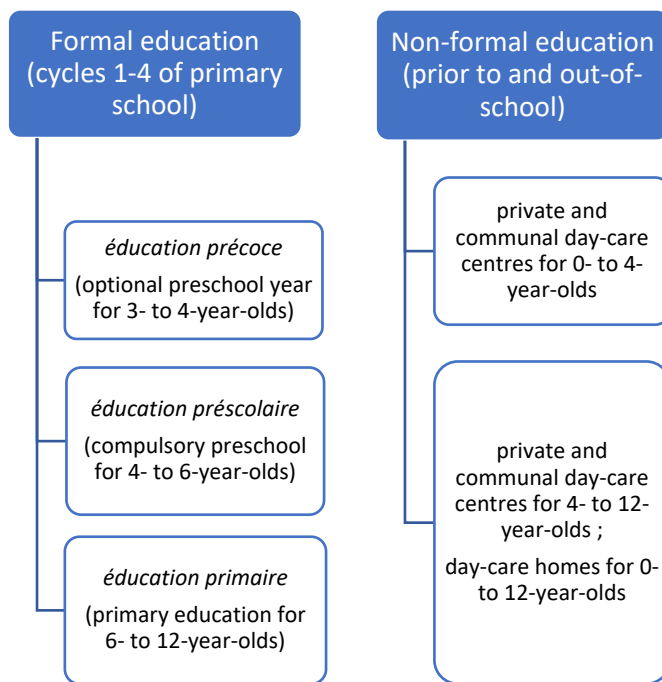Staffing is one main difference between the formal and non-formal education sectors. Teachers operate in the formal sector and caregivers work in the non-formal settings as well as in the *éducation précoce* where they collaborate with a teacher. Most professionals in schools and in state-funded day care are Luxembourgers and speak at least the three official languages. By contrast, the non-formal sector employs a high proportion of non-Luxembourgish speaking staff, especially in the private, for-profit centres, where it is up to 50 % (Honig & Bock 2017, p. 11). Many of these professionals are French speakers. Teachers and caregivers can get their educational degree in Luxembourg or elsewhere such as Belgium, Switzerland, France, Germany or Portugal. They are therefore not specifically prepared for the multilingual situation in Luxembourg.

Figure 1. Formal and non-formal early education in Luxembourg

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[2] Through the system of childcare vouchers, parents' financial contributions for childcare services are state-subsidized according to parents' income. The Children and Youth Act has been modified in 2016 and 2017, now defining quality standards to which all childcare services must adhere in order to participate in the voucher system.

Formal education (cycles 1-4 of primary school)	Non-formal education (prior to and out-of-school)
éducation précoce (optional preschool year for 3- to 4-year-olds)	private and communal day-care centres for 0- to 4-year-olds
éducation préscolaire (compulsory preschool for 4- to 6-year-olds)	private and communal day-care centres for 4- to 12-year-olds ; day-care homes for 0- to 12-year-olds
éducation primaire (primary education for 6- to 12-year-olds)	

2.4 Recent changes in early language education policy

Formal preschool education has been introduced with the explicit aim to of promoting Luxembourgish as the common language of communication and integration, and furthermore as a starting point for the development of literacy skills in German in primary school. Historically, official discourses have focused almost exclusively on the Luxembourgish language, thus leaving little space for the legitimate use of other languages in preschool (see, for example, MENFP 2005). Luxembourgish was construed as the sole language of integration, leading to a monolingual approach, where even during break-time or between peers, children were discouraged from using their other languages conceived as an obstacle to the learning of Luxembourgish. Qualitative studies showed that some teachers nevertheless implemented multilingual practices to address the children's diverse language needs (Christmann 2011; Kirsch 2017, 2018).

Regarding the language use in non-formal early education settings there were no formal policy guidelines until 2017—it has been left to the day care centres themselves to decide on their linguistic profile and pedagogical approaches. Since non-formal childcare is largely a

private sector, much has depended on the composition of staff and the demands of their clientele (see Honig & Bock 2017). As a result, a diverse linguistic landscape has evolved in the non-formal domain over the last years, with structures where French is the dominant language of everyday communication, others where Luxembourgish is so, and yet others with a bilingual or multilingual approach in, for example, French, Luxembourgish, German or English. Earlier ethnographic research in these settings highlighted that multilingualism was a reality in the everyday practice but caregivers nevertheless tended to hold on to monolingual norms and models when planning activities or representing their practice as "language promotion". This was the case even in the bilingual centres (Neumann & Seele 2014; Neumann 2015; Seele 2015, 2016).

Following the critical debates about the continuing inequalities in the Luxembourgish education system as well as the development of multilingual early education programmes on an international level (García, Johnson & Seltzer 2017), there has recently been a paradigm shift in Luxembourg's early language education policy. The legal changes in 2017 made multilingual education mandatory in the formal and non-formal sector. The new curriculum frameworks in both sectors call for multilingual approaches, drawing on children's home languages as resources and giving space to both Luxembourgish *and* French—although differently weighted in the different settings[3] (see MENJE 2018c, d; MENJE & SNJ 2018). The framework for non-formal education demands centres to integrate multilingual education into their pedagogical concepts, document its implementation and further qualify their staff through professional development. Similarly, teachers and educators in the formal sector have to attend further training on multilingual pedagogical approaches (see sub-sections 4.2 to 4.4). These recent developments attest to a shift from fixed to flexible multilingual education in

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[3] In preschool for example, Luxembourgish remains the primary language of communication, while there is only a minimum of thirty minutes per week envisaged for the familiarisation with French. In day care, however, all centres are obliged to hire at least one full-time staff (40 hours) with a high level of proficiency (C1 of the European framework of reference) for each language, Luxembourgish and French. French is therefore much more prevalent in the non-formal education sector.

Luxembourg (Weber 2016). There is, however, still little understanding, firstly, of the ways in which educators appropriate these policy changes and implement them in their daily practice and, second, the challenges the professionals face in this process.

3. Main theoretical concepts

<u>3.1 Language education policy in practice</u>

Many authors agree that language education policies are multi-layered, dynamic and processual rather than being static products that are simply implemented in a linear, top-down manner (Ricento & Hornberger 1996; Hélot & Laoire 2011; Johnson 2013). Shore and Wright (2011, p. 1), for example, state that 'policies are not simply external, generalised or constraining forces, nor are they confined to texts. Rather they are productive, performative and continually contested.' Language education policies are therefore not limited to official legal texts and documents but also include the practiced classroom policies (Bonacina-Pugh 2012), where certain rules and routines are established in both implicit and explicit ways and influence the actors' language choices and practices. By interpreting and appropriating policies and translating them onto the local level, educators play a crucial role and. become policy makers themselves (see also Menken & García 2010; Bonacina-Pugh 2012; Kirsch 2018 as well as Palviainen & Curt-Christiansen in this handbook).

Johnson (2009) highlights the agentive role of local educators in responding to and shaping the language education policy inherent in the No Child Left Behind Act in Philadelphia. He insists that 'educators are not helplessly caught in the ebb and flow of shifting ideologies in language policies—they help to develop, maintain, and change that flow' (ibid., p. 155). Similarly, Young and Mary (2016) describe how a preschool teacher in France resists the prevailing monolingual ideologies and succeeds in implementing a more multilingual and inclusive language policy in her classroom. These examples attest to the flexibility and variability of policy appropriation at various levels of practice. They show that policy

discourses may have both constrictive and enabling effects on the actual educational practice and that educators may become active agents of social change in this process (see also Gort & Pontier 2013; Hickey, Lewis & Baker 2014).

3.2 Translanguaging as part of a more inclusive and socially just pedagogy

Flexible and dynamic educational approaches such as 'multilingual pedagogies' (García & Li Wei 2014; Weber 2014) are inclusive, empowering and supportive of social justice. These pedagogies call on practitioners to provide all learners with equal opportunities to participate, draw on their resources and develop their multilingualism. Furthermore, they build on social-constructivist theories which ask for dialogue, collaboration and co-construction of knowledge (García & Li Wei 2014). They are learner-centred and offer spaces for flexible language use. Although multilingual pedagogies have been shown to raise student achievement (García & Li Wei 2014), they are underdeveloped and research on them in ECEC is scarce.

Translanguaging is a pillar of multilingual pedagogies as it allows educators and learners to make meaning 'across' languages. In this chapter, the authors understand translanguaging as the interconnected and coordinated use of a speaker's whole semiotic repertoire to communicate and make meaning (Otheguy, García & Reid 2015). Going beyond the view of language as a resource, García and her colleagues think of translanguaging as a theory which holds that all language users have a singular linguistic repertoire and that they select and combine linguistic and non-linguistic resources to suit their communicative situation. It looks at language use from the perspectives of the speakers rather than focussing on the languages per se. However, it also acknowledges the effects that named languages and language ideologies have had and continue to have on learners. For instance, many students of migrant background cannot access the curricula given the language barriers (García & Seltzer 2016).

Of particular relevance for this chapter is the notion of translanguaging as a pedagogy, defined by García and Seltzer (2016, p. 23) as "the strategic deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire to learn and develop their language repertoire, and at the same time work toward social justice by equalizing positions of learners". This pedagogy recognizes the existence of multiple languages in educational institutions and leverages the students' dynamic languaging in teaching and learning. García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017) identified three components of a translanguaging pedagogy: stance, design and shifts. The *stance* is the belief that students can capitalize on their diverse language practices for learning. The *design* refers to the exposure to languages offered and the planned curriculum and activities. Finally, the *shifts* denote the teachers' flexibility to adapt their teaching to the students' needs, for instance, through translanguaging. These three components are applicable to formal and non-formal early childhood institutions albeit the learning being less formal in the latter. For instance, the preschool teachers studied by Garrity et al. (2015) and Kirsch (2017) had a positive stance in that they embraced multilingualism and encouraged the use of languages other than the majority languages. They designed a multilingual classroom environment and offered a range of activities that enabled children to capitalize on their diverse linguistic resources. Finally, they used languages flexibly to address the children's needs. Like early childhood practitioners in other studies, they deployed translanguaging to get and sustain children's attention, communicate, provide input, develop understanding, develop communicative skills, build relationships, and facilitate transitions (see also Velasco & García 2014; Young & Mary 2016; Gort & Sembiante 2015).

Translanguaging as a pedagogy can be transformative because it can challenge hegemonic forces and ideologies, empower individual learners and teachers, and promote dialogic teaching within an inclusive classroom. However, studies show that practices do not automatically change on account of European or national appeals or requirements to adopt

multilingual approaches (Brandenberg et al. 2017; Kratzmann et al. 2017). Professional development can help practitioners implement new policies and transform practices.

3.3 The role of professional development in early multilingual education

Professional development (hereafter PD) has been defined by some scholars as the systematic effort to ensure that professionals are adequately qualified when working with children and parents, and to provide them with opportunities to enhance their professional learning (Egert et al. 2018; King 2014; Peeters et al. 2014). There are several models of PD ranging from training models, where practitioners update their skills or learn to implement policy changes, to communities of practice models and transformative models. In communities of practice, professionals collaboratively decide on what they want to develop and they may engage in mentoring and coaching. Transformative models of PD encourage professionals to enter in dialogue with relevant stakeholders, raise their awareness of social and political issues, and promote enquiries or action-research to make changes. In each of these models, the practitioners take on more or less active roles. PD is more likely to lead to sustainable change if the approach is collaborative, inquiry-based and performance-based, and encourages reflection (Kirsch & Aleksić 2018; Peeters et al. 2014).

There is consensus from several meta-analyses that PD in language education in ECEC can influence the practitioners' knowledge, attitudes and practices to some extent (Egert et al. 2018; Peeters et al. 2014; Peleman et al. 2018). Among these studies, few examined language education and those that did, tended to focus on children with a language delay (Buschmann & Sachse 2018; see also the chapter by Alstad in this handbook). In the United States, for instance, Hamre et al. (2012) demonstrated that the early childhood teachers learned effective interactional strategies. While the correlation between this training and the teachers' knowledge and skills was high, the correlation between the teacher outcomes and teacher-child interactions in the classroom was modest. In other words, the practitioners did not

manage to systematically apply their knowledge in their daily practice and improve the quality and quantity of the interactions with children. By contrast, the studies by Girolametto et al. (2012) in the US and Buschmann and Sachse (2018) in Germany revealed more encouraging results. After the training, the professionals used more language-modelling strategies (e.g., questions, expansion) and the children spoke more and more frequently. A similar study was conducted with bilingual children and the findings show that the teachers changed their interactional practice and that the children improved their skills in German (Sachse, Schuler & Budde-Spengler 2016). Apart from changing knowledge, skills and attitudes, practitioners have also been shown to develop a sense of professional identity and develop confidence in interacting with other stakeholders (Trodd & Dickerson 2018).

In sum, recent ECEC policies have called for more flexible language approaches, which may include translanguaging. The implementation of policies is not straightforward, and practitioners may benefit from participating in PD. However, PD can only influence attitudes, knowledge and skills to some extent and the influence on practices may even be less important as there is no direct relationship between beliefs and practices (Pajares 1992). For instance, the belief that multilingualism is an asset and that the use of home languages in the classroom promotes the learning of the majority language, does not result in professionals implementing multilingual approaches in education (Alisaari et al. 2019; Kirsch & Aleksić 2018; Kratzmann et al. 2017).

4. Major contributions in Luxembourg

The following sections provide both an overview of past research studies in Luxembourg as well as some insights into current initiatives of professional development in multilingual education and their outcomes.

There is little research on early years education because ECEC has only recently taken foot in Luxembourg and the research interest in this field in general is a rather new phenomenon. A noteworthy exception is the ethnographic study by Davis (1994) on language practices in schools and families. Regarding preschools, she states that Luxembourgish is the dominant language and that neither the language practices of children with lower socioeconomic status nor those of children with 'migration background' find much consideration. Other qualitative studies in primary education confirmed this strong monolingual orientation, indicating in particular that the language of Portuguese children is often devalued and excluded in schools (e.g., Maurer-Hetto 2009; Gómez Fernández 2011). Case studies by Christmann (2011) and Kirsch (2017, 2018) show that exceptions nevertheless exist and that individual preschool teachers implemented multilingual practices, where they welcomed and explicitly included children's home languages. The teacher in the study of Kirsch encouraged children to use home languages and capitalised on these, for instance in storytelling activities on the iPad App iTEO. Much seems to depend on the teachers' practiced language policy and on their efforts and willingness to transcend the institutional monolingual habitus. This conclusion is supported by a quantitative survey on the optional preschool year indicating that all practitioners agreed that home languages were important, but, nevertheless, only a few of them also used them in class (MENJE & INSIDE 2015). Only 25 % of the professionals reported that they told stories and 23 % that they sang songs and chanted rhymes in home languages.

In the non-formal early education domain, some ethnographic studies pointed out a similar dilemma between monolingual norms and multilingual practices (Neumann & Seele 2014; Neumann 2015; Seele 2015, 2016). Caregivers used many different languages when talking to parents or when children felt sad, distressed or simply did not understand. However, when their explicit aim was the promotion of Luxembourgish, the caregivers tended to exclude

these other languages and perceived them as an obstacle for the children's learning. Even in bilingual centres, languages were strictly separated, and the professionals held on to monolingual norms (Neumann 2015).

4.2 A pilot study on multilingual education in non-formal early years settings prior to the 2017 legal changes

4.2.1 Aims and design of the pilot study

The programme of early multilingual education introduced in 2017 for day care centres (Chambre des Députés 2017) rests on three pillars: encouraging an early contact with Luxembourgish and French through everyday high-quality interactions; valuing children's home languages, especially through an educational partnership with families, and networking with schools, medical and therapeutic services and cultural or other local associations to facilitate transitions and enrich children's linguistic and cultural experiences.

In order to take account of the diverse local contexts of the crèches (e.g. staff composition, linguistic and cultural diversity of families, organisational and structural features) the programme only provides a general framework that is open to local adaptation. Before its nationwide implementation, the Ministry of Education conducted a pilot study from January to December 2016 to further develop the first draft of framework in the light of the local conditions, build on existing practices, and identify potential needs and challenges.

The project design consisted of four interconnected domains (see also SNJ 2017): the local language profiles with statistic information on the specific language situation of the centres; local action plans, where the professionals decided on future actions and documented their implementation; professional development and coaching with regular expert input and meetings to reflect on their respective practices; evaluation through a continuous dialogue between the professionals, centre directors, parents and children about the different expectations and understandings of quality in early language education. The eight centres that

participated in the project provided insights into their varying local situations and needs as well as their promising practices and innovative strategies in dealing with multilingualism in their everyday experience.

4.2.2 Professional learning outcomes

One important finding of this pilot project was the identification of similarities among the centres despite their many differences. There have always been multilingual practices—for example through songs, books and conversations with parents or other actors in diverse languages. But most of the educators had neither consciously reflected on their multilingual practice nor included it in their pedagogical concept. A main concern for them was therefore to find ways in which to integrate multilingual approaches more systematically into their professional practice and deal with language education in a more conscious and focused way. The practitioners agreed that children's linguistic resources should be valued and that the introduction to other languages should occur in a sensitive, playful and non-formal manner. Their aim was not to reach specific, pre-defined levels of competence, but to foster awareness and openness towards linguistic and cultural diversity as well as pleasure in communicating in different languages.

However, the educators also expressed some needs and prerequisites—for example, time for preparation, reflection, documentation and exchange, development of professional knowledge and skills as well as appropriate observation tools and pedagogical material. They were unsure of how to develop working partnerships with the diverse parents and with formal educational institutions. These questions, needs and experiences fed into the further development of the various official policy documents as well as into the design of professional training programmes for formal and non-formal early childhood education sectors.

<u>4.3 Mandatory professional development in formal and non-formal early education</u>

To enable all professionals to better comprehend and implement the policy changes, the Ministry of Education offered PD to all actors. While the PD draws on existing models of multilingual education like the language awareness approach (MENFP 2010), translanguaging pedagogy (García & Seltzer 2016) and the notion of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Cavalli et al. 2009), the trainers adapted them to the specific multilingual context of Luxembourg and the early childhood domain.

4.3.1 Aims and design of the professional development in formal early education

Since 2016, approximately 1500 teachers and caregivers from state preschool classes have deepened their knowledge about the theory and practice of early multilingual education during four to nine hours of training. The PD focuses on overarching pedagogical principles and concrete didactic strategies. The principles include an emphasis on interaction and meaning-making, an orientation towards children's resources and needs as well as a transversal and holistic approach that encompasses all languages and spheres of life. Didactic strategies comprise the distinction of monolingual and multilingual moments, planned activities and everyday routines, and ways to integrate children's home languages. Besides the mandatory training, the education ministry elaborated and disseminated pedagogical documents and materials (MENJE 2018c, d), and continues to offer optional complementary modules. The latter are in high demand, which attests to the educators' continuing desire to further develop their knowledge and skills.

4.3.2 Aims and design of the professional development in non-formal early education

In the non-formal education sector, the ministry offers thirty hours of professional development with national and international experts to the so-called '*référents pédagogiques*' (specialised educators). These specialised educators are named by their institution and should

act as multipliers in their team, passing on knowledge and stimulating reflection and exchange. Their training consists of six modules including information on the national framework plan, theories related to language development and multilingualism, multilingual pedagogies and approaches, observation and documentation of practices, partnership with parents and networking with other institutions. In 2017 and 2019, more than 700 educators completed the PD. The ministry also organises regular exchange meetings, where these specialised educators can discuss their practice, share resources and ideas, and collaboratively work on solutions to common challenges.

The following example of a recent research project at the University of Luxembourg draws on the same basic pedagogical principles as the two mentioned training programmes and brings together practitioners from both education sectors for a longer time period.

4.4 Developing multilingual practices through the project MuLiPEC

4.4.1 Aims and design of the professional development

The project MuLiPEC ("Developing multilingual pedagogies in early childhood") addresses the call for multilingual early childhood education in Luxembourg. Funded by the National Research Fund and the Ministry of Education, the research project aimed to help teachers and caregivers develop multilingual education through professional development. The PD had three parts: training sessions, network meetings and coaching. The 15-hour-long training sessions run in the Summer of 2016 and were delivered to 46 teachers and caregivers. Seven of these continued for another year and took part in six network meetings organized from September 2016 to September 2017. The participants were also coached in their institution by Kirsch. At the time of the PD, the law on multilingual education had not been voted yet but was vividly discussed in the media.

The following qualitative and quantitative methods were used to evaluate the influence of the PD: a questionnaire; observations in the institutions, observations during the PD, video-

recordings of language activities and interviews. Videos of activities and practices as well as more information on the project are displayed on the project's website http://mulipec.uni.lu. The aims of the PD were to further the professionals' understanding of multilingualism and language learning, and help them implement activities in several languages. The topics covered included perspectives on multilingualism, theories of language learning, pedagogical principles, literacy activities around books, songs and rhymes as well as language-supporting strategies. Furthermore, the practitioners and the researchers discussed activities which they had video-recorded in the institutions.

4.4.2 Professional learning outcomes

The findings of the 5-point Likert-style questionnaire completed by 44 practitioners before and after the training sessions indicated that the professionals had further developed their knowledge and understanding of language learning. For instance, they realized that the use of languages other than Luxembourgish was not detrimental to the learning of Luxembourgish (García 2009). Furthermore, they had begun to question their focus on Luxembourgish and open up towards multilingual education. Finally, both their interest in activities in languages other than Luxembourgish and the number of actual activities in other languages increased over the course of the PD (Kirsch & Aleksič 2018). Nevertheless, such activities remained rare.

The interviews and the observations of the seven professionals, who were followed over a whole academic year, provided evidence of change in their daily practices. The practitioners moved away from a practiced monolingual policy and implement multilingual activities (Kirsch & Aleksič 2018). While all seven professionals suggested activities in Luxembourgish, German, French and the children's home languages, only five designed a child-centred and holistic language learning environment where children encountered multiple languages both in daily interactions and in guided activities such as dialogic reading,

story retellings, games, songs and rhymes. To support children in their learning process, all seven practitioners deployed a range of language-supportive strategies such as listening carefully, repeating, suggesting alternatives, asking open and closed questions, elaborating, rephrasing and giving corrective feedback. They also made good use of mime, gesture, intonation and visual support to ensure comprehension. The use of similar strategies has been reported in other ECEC studies (Andúgar & Cortina-Peréz 2018; Gort & Pontier 2013; Kirsch 2017; Mifsud & Vela 2018).

Translanguaging, another scaffolding strategy found in the above-mentioned studies, was also dominant in the Luxembourgish settings. All practitioners switched to home languages to communicate, make meaning, instruct and discipline. Very few of the children enrolled in three of the four settings spoke Luxembourgish and, therefore, the use of the home language was an important communication tool. The findings furthermore indicated that translanguaging developed into a pedagogy in the preschools. From February 2017, thus, nine months into the PD, the three practitioners begun to use translanguaging more strategically. They spoke some French, Spanish and Portuguese to French-speaking, Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking children when they judged that this switch promoted learning (Mård-Miettinen et al. 2018; Milsud & Vella 2018; Palviainen et al. 2016). Translanguaging enabled the teachers to increase the quantity of input and improve the quality of the adult-child interactions. The three professionals reported that the flexible language use strengthened the relationships between the adults and children, which, in turn, contributed to language learning.

The findings of the project indicate that the PD had influenced the professionals' practices but that not everybody moved at the same pace. The professionals' learning depended, among others, on their experiences and the children's linguistic backgrounds. The two teachers and the one caregiver who worked in the preschools were more used to monolingual policies compared to the caregivers in non-formal settings. However, the former also enjoyed more

independence than the latter and therefore, found it easier to implement change and transform their practice. Furthermore, the teachers were more at ease with planning holistic and meaningful language activities than the caregivers. Finally, professionals who worked in settings with a higher number of children of migrant background found it easier to use languages more flexibly compared to those who worked in settings where more children had already learned to communicate in Luxembourgish.

4.5 Major accomplishments of the professional development initiatives

The following table summarises the respective target audience and design of the recent professional development initiatives in Luxembourg.

Table 1: Summary of the professional development initiatives

Provider	Target professionals	Design and time frame
Education Ministry	Approx. 1500 teachers and caregivers in the formal education sector (preschools)	Four to nine hours of basic training; optional complementary modules
Education Ministry (National Youth Service)	Approx. 700 caregivers in the non-formal education sector (day care centres)	Thirty hours divided into six modules; optional exchange meetings after the completion of the PD
University of Luxembourg	46 teachers and caregivers from both sectors; seven of these were followed long-term as part of the research	15 hours of basic training; six network meetings with the focus educators; coaching during one academic year

Considering the findings of the project MuLiPEC, the researchers concluded that their enquiry-based and performance-based model of PD in combination with the coaching had been effective. It had contributed to the development of multilingual pedagogies, where practitioners offered activities in multiple languages and where children and adults could use languages flexibly. Translanguaging enabled the professionals to value home languages, develop a good rapport with the children, accommodate for their needs and contribute to their

learning and development (García, Johnson & Seltzer 2017). The systematic use of language-supporting strategies and the flexible use of languages across guided and spontaneous activities were indications that the professionals—at least those in preschools—had internalized the strategies which had become part of their practice. Through the PD, the professionals became aware of their views, collaboratively analysed their beliefs, constructed new knowledge, reflected on their practice and transformed it to some extent, similarly to practitioners elsewhere (Buschmann & Sachse 2018; Egert et al. 2018; Pedder et al. 2015). The influence of the PD organised by the Education Ministry was equally positive. The feedback of the participating educators indicated that they became more aware of their own linguistic practice and developed knowledge and a better understanding of language acquisition, multilingualism, and language-promoting strategies. They appreciated the exchanges with other professionals and experts because they received valuable suggestions, new ideas and inspiration for their own practice. Little is known, however, about the extent to which they transferred this knowledge into their daily routine and how sustainable these accomplishments are in the long run. Continuous coaching, as offered in the MuLiPEC project, may be a promising model of PD on early language education in the future.

5. Critical issues and topics: reflexivity and sustainability

A major discussion point in the MuLiPEC project became the flexible language use. In all settings, the teachers and caregivers translanguaged and translated to gain and sustain attention, facilitate communication, ensure comprehension, or make children feel secure (Mård-Miettinen et al. 2018; Milsud and Vella 2018). Yet, the practitioners in the formal settings monitored their language use more carefully than those in the non-formal sector and their translanguaging resembled the 'responsible code-switching' described by García (2009) and Palviainen et al. (2016). By contrast, the practitioners in the non-formal educational institutions in Luxembourg switched to the child's home languages without always

considering the need for such a switch. One focus of the coaching and the PD sessions was, therefore, a reflection on the use and purposes of translanguaging. The spontaneous and not carefully monitored use of translanguaging as a scaffolding strategy may lead to exclusive rather than inclusive practices where the more widely-spoken languages in Luxembourg such as Luxembourgish, German, French, English and Portuguese are used and, thus, valued over others. Giving more status to some languages may mean that children with other linguistic resources may feel 'othered' (Thomauske 2017). Translanguaging is central to an inclusive approach to multilingual education, but practitioners need to use it responsibly and, in general, monitor the language use in daily interactions. Hamman (2018), for instance, showed that the flexible language use in a dual language context in the U.S. led to unequal participation: the English-dominant children had more opportunities to develop and show their expertise than the Spanish-dominant ones. Having analysed the PD initiatives, the authors argue that a reflexive language use is essential is to avoid a highly formalised language-separating and normative approach to early language education. At the same time, they advise against an unconscious and arbitrary mixing of languages void of pedagogical objectives because this may lead to exclusive practices.

Further challenges concern the sustainability of the newly developed educational practices and the ways in which opportunities for change relate to possibly unequal opportunities for agency that the practitioners exert in their respective settings. The authors noticed that the learning experience and the change of practice depended on the professionals' linguistic and educational background, their professional experience and the educational setting. Those working in formal settings were alone in their classroom or worked in a team and seemed to have more agency (Dubiner et al. 2018; Priestley et al. 2012) than the professionals in non-formal settings. The latter worked in a bigger team, had stricter hierarchical structures and experienced many changes in the student and the staff rolls over the year.

The authors conclude that PD can contribute to changing knowledge, attitudes and practices to some extent but for this to be sustainable, it is important to involve the management team. This conclusion is in line with studies that have shown that PD is likely to be effective and sustainable if it is long-term, collaborative, includes coaching, involves the management, and is based on a dynamic view of systems (Buschmann & Sachse 2018; Egert et al. 2018; Peleman et al. 2018; Peeters set al. 2014). Besides the need for adequate training, it is of particular importance that all professionals independently of the educational sector have the necessary time and resources both to exchange and collaborate with their team and external actors, and to document and reflect on their educational practice.

6. Future research directions
The experiences of the diverse trainings and the findings of the project MuLiPEC have shown that the practitioners began to reach out to parents in order to include home languages in their institutions in more meaningful ways. Some of them produced books in the children's home languages with the help of the parents, some a multilingual dictionary, some invited the parents to tell stories, sing songs or perform dances, others had parents record stories on iPad and again others organised festivities with and for the parents and children (Kirsch 2019). However, these were irregular activities rather than an established practice. By contrast, collaboration with parents was a distinctive part of a preschool teacher's practice observed over several years by Kirsch (2018). Partnerships with parents and networking with other institutions are part of the national framework of non-formal education and a key development area for the Ministry of Education from 2018. These calls for partnerships are based, among others, on research findings showing that collaboration with parents can contribute to emotional, social, language and identity development and raise school achievements (Betz et al. 2017; Cummins 2009; Taguma, Litjens & Makowiecki 2012). In

response to these needs, Kirsch, Neumann and Aleksić will carry out a project focusing on partnerships with parents and multiliteracy practices in day care centres.

Further areas for future research include the children's diverse experiences and practices in the differing institutional settings that constitute their complex care and education arrangements (following, for example, Bollig, Honig & Nienhaus 2016) as well as the connections and transitions between early years and primary school settings and their effects on children's language biographies and learning experiences. Ethnographic perspectives might be particularly promising to shed light on the ways in which professionals actively put the national curriculum frameworks into practice and on the opportunities and challenges that arise when they attempt to realise a more inclusive and participatory educational practice.

7. Conclusion

This chapter summarises the history as well as recent developments in multilingual education in the formal and non-formal early education sectors in Luxembourg. Of central importance were two education acts of 2017 which led to a policy change calling for multilingual education. To help implement the policy, the Education Ministry and the research project MuLiPEC organised professional development, thereby offering practitioners theories, documents, ideas and a space for reflection. The chapter shows the ways in which the practitioners and their teams negotiated and appropriated the new policy and concepts. They thereby became agents of social change (Menken & García 2010). What this chapter has additionally revealed is the speed with which this change has happened over the last few years. The next years will need to be dedicated to consolidating and further developing the promising practice based on these first experiences and research findings.

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