

Identifying space for mainstreaming multilingual pedagogies in European initial teacher education policies

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Abstract

This study sought to explore the ideological and implementational spaces for mainstreaming multilingual pedagogies (MPs) in initial teacher education (ITE) policies and curricula across the European Union. The concept of linguistically sensitive teaching (LST) was used as a lens to examine inclusive, equity-centred MPs in ITE. A multi-sited comparative case study was conducted to collect data in nine locations. As a result, a general trend of ideological spaces was observed for MPs in language-in-education policies at the European and (sub)national levels. However, this ideological space was not always implemented in ITE. As a second result, explicit mentions of MPs and LST were identified in the ITE curricula of seven sites, and in each of the nine cases, a

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potential space for implementation was observed. As a third result we found that the greatest potential for opening implementational spaces for MPs lies in courses that aim to develop general pedagogical and sociolinguistic knowledge as well as professional beliefs in future teachers. In conclusion, we contend that the linguistic ecology and the organisational structure of education systems (decentralisation) are factors that help explain the successful mainstreaming of MPs in ITE institutions.

Keywords

Initial teacher education, multilingual pedagogies, linguistically sensitive teaching, ideological spaces, implementational spaces, European Union

Introduction

Multilingualism is an inherent aspect of the histories of European societies because of the longstanding presence of regional and minority languages (Extra and Gorter, 2007). About 40–50 million people in the European Union (EU) speak one of its 60 regional and minority languages (Pasikowska-Schnass, 2016). Furthermore, globalisation has spawned unprecedented cross-border mobility and in-migration, resulting in an ever-growing linguistic diversity in the populations of EU member states. Between 2003 and 2015, the share of students who had either migrated or had at least one parent who had crossed an international border to settle elsewhere grew by seven percentage points across EU countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019). Therefore, educators meet children and youth who make creative use of increasingly complex and fluid linguistic repertoires as they navigate through the various environments of their everyday lives (Crul, 2016; De Backer et al., 2019; Sierens and Van Avermaet, 2017; Spotti and Kroon, 2017). European key policy documents state that education plays a central role in educating the youth and contributing to sustainable social cohesion (Lähdesmäki et al., 2020). There is strong evidence that the dominant cause of underachievement in school is the interaction of three factors: families' socio-economic status; cultural capital; and language (Beacco et al., 2016). For example, the Programme for International Student Assessment 2018 results indicate that not speaking the language of instruction represents an additional barrier to attaining high proficiency in reading, which is a challenge that would require support beyond the home environment (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019). In this article, we look for ways to support the preparation of future teachers so that they will be able to provide educational environments where all students can succeed.

The present article aims to explore how initial teacher education (ITE) as institutions either support or contest the implementation of the above-mentioned European-level policies promotes multilingualism as an asset for all children. This is done by exploring *ideological space* and *implementational space* (Hornberger, 2005) for mainstreaming multilingual pedagogies (MPs) in ITE in nine locations in seven European countries. It is necessary to take on such an endeavour of finding space for multilingualism, as monolingual bias is still considered the norm today (Gogolin, 2013; May, 2014). The monolingual bias has been – perhaps unconsciously – translated into monolingual pedagogical approaches. In turn, these approaches have helped to uphold the myth of the 'native' monolingual learner as the ideal (Pekarek-Doehler, 2011; Strobbe et al., 2017). This risks the mainstreaming of all learners, regardless of their linguistic, ethnic and social backgrounds, in the dominant language(s) of schooling (Young, 2014) rather than supporting the balanced growth of the multilingual language repertoire of each individual.

As our point of departure for this article, we argue that a multilingual paradigm shift in pedagogical thinking is also needed in ITE institutions to promote MPs for all and to establish a more

profound and lasting systematic change in the norms and ideals of the whole educational system. This endeavour is a challenging one because it requires a shared understanding among higher education institutes of the importance of MPs for mainstream education *beyond* language subjects. Therefore, we turn our focus on ITE curricula to identify the ideological and implementational spaces they provide for mainstreaming MPs in Europe. We use the concept of linguistically sensitive teaching (LST) as a lens to view the current state of MPs in ITE.

MPs and LST

In this article, we focus on the initial training for future teachers in mainstream education. Rather than defining MPs as any unified methodology, we conceptualise them as a paradigm shift in the pedagogical thinking aimed at creating socially just learning environments for all pupils despite their linguistic backgrounds. In practice, it may include teaching and use of multiple languages in all school subjects, but it also is about understanding how learning and teaching of instructional languages can be enhanced for all learners. The task of mainstreaming MPs requires reconceptualising the role of mainstream teachers and teacher educators in understanding the linguistic dimension in all subjects (Council of Europe, 2015). As a first step, teachers and teacher educators should not only be aware of the language in their subject but also of the languages and varieties in their classrooms and in the surrounding society. This requires sensitivity to the language dimension of education (Alisaari et al., 2019; Lucas and Villegas, 2013; Markic, 2018; Tajmel, 2010). This sensitivity is about acknowledging and understanding the role of languages of schooling, foreign/regional/minority languages taught in school and languages brought to school by the students, staff and the surrounding linguistically diverse society for learning and identity. Therefore, this umbrella term of LST is closely aligned with European policies in which the co-existence of multiple languages in everyday school operations is considered a resource rather than a problem (Rúiz, 1984). Conversely, it considers monolingual practices to potentially hinder the learning opportunities of all students. Therefore, it approaches the learning and use of languages from the perspective of inclusive education (Le Pichon-Vorstman et al., 2020).

Although LST is often referred to in connection with a whole-school approach both in individual classrooms and schools, we aim to focus on another level of education system change. We examine the essential role of ITE in making this mainstreaming of MPs happen. What kind of opportunities are there and what kind of opportunities could there be to support all future teachers in ITE to raise their awareness of LST? Previous research has shown that teachers are the primary agents in implementing MPs, but changing monolingually framed school policies and school-wide practices remains a serious challenge (Menken and García, 2010). The need for more training for teaching in a multilingual and multicultural setting is now the third-highest area of need for professional development (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019). From 2013 to 2018, there was a global increase in the share of teachers expressing a high need for training in teaching in a multicultural or multilingual setting, suggesting that teachers see this as a phenomenon likely to rise in importance in the future, if it was not already a pressing issue for them. The data are alarming, as more than 50% of teachers in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries reported that they were not prepared to teach in a multicultural or multilingual setting. Only 35% of teachers were prepared for it during ITE, and 22% were recently trained in their professional development (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019). Without adequate support, teachers may continue their teaching in a 'business as usual' manner; that is, pursuing monolingual classroom practices that are taken for granted without further reflection (Farr and Song, 2011). Everything that teachers do is filtered through their prior experiences and knowledge in addition to their beliefs, attitudes and perceptions

(Biesta et al., 2015; Kirsch et al., 2020). If we intend to bring about the desired multilingual shift in teachers' pedagogical thinking and day-to-day practices, the initial education of future teachers and the professional development of in-service teachers need to take a multilingual turn and assist in changing beliefs about multilingualism (Alisaari et al., 2019; Le Pichon-Vorstman et al., 2020; Lucas and Villegas, 2013).

Mainstreaming MPs in and through ITE is a problematic endeavour because despite the widely acknowledged need for redesigning ITE to better equip future teachers in meeting the challenges of linguistically diverse school populations, the current provision of MPs in ITE remains insufficient and fragmented (European Commission, 2017). According to an analytic report by the European Commission (2017), diversity education is usually treated as an isolated 'add-on' and offered in separate courses or additional modules by ITE institutes and providers of in-service professional development. This means that it is not necessarily an obligation of the ITE for all future teachers.

We argue that following the European commitment to better education and a just society, (future) teachers and teacher educators need opportunities to reflect upon and revise monolingually biased views and educational practices. Communication and interaction – and thus *languages* – are cognitive tools in all subject lessons (Bailey et al., 2010). Therefore, it is important to address and support all teachers and teacher educators in meeting this interactional challenge. A heightened sensitivity to content-specific language and plurilingual communication, as well as bilingual development and multicultural orientation, may raise specific concerns among subject/content teachers who may not have been previously educated to adopt a linguistically sensitive perspective in their content teaching. The same goes for initial teacher educators who should help future teachers adopt this approach (Cammarata and Ó Ceallaigh, 2018; Leavy et al., 2018; McPake et al., 2017). We argue that the idea of mainstreaming MPs in and through ITE should be based on the general pedagogical principles and knowledge shared by all teachers and that the basic theoretical frameworks should showcase teachers' general pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, professional beliefs, self-regulation and motivation (Blömeke and Delaney, 2012; Blömeke et al., 2015; see also Lucas and Villegas, 2013). By identifying existing ideological space and potential implementational space for mainstreaming MPs, it is possible to initiate policy change in the ITE curriculum.

Identifying ideological and implementational spaces in ITE

In approaching LST from the viewpoint of systemic change within the education system, there is a need to critically examine aspects of the general language-in-education policy. Johnson and Pratt (2014) explain that studies on language-in-education focus on how language policy creation, interpretation, and appropriation in schools' impact educational processes and pedagogy, with particular attention to opportunity for minority and Indigenous language users. They define language-in-education policy as the official and unofficial policies that are created across multiple layers and institutional contexts (from national organisations to classrooms) that impact language use and education in schools. This process of interpreting and appropriating the above-mentioned European educational language policies can be conceptualised using the conceptual framework of *ideological and implementational spaces*, as we do in this article. This framework was introduced by Hornberger (2002) and further explored by Hornberger (2005), Hornberger and Johnson (2007), Johnson (2011) and Willans (2016). This ecological framework helps identify factors that either enable or hinder mainstreaming MPs and those that lie on the continuum between macro-level policy discourses and micro-level educational practices. As Willans (2016) points out, the concept of 'space' has become a popular way of thinking about policy and planning. Its conceptualisation ranges from almost physical (e.g., university) and semi-physical spaces (e.g., committee meeting

and teacher development workshop) to the metaphorical sense of ‘space,’ where artefacts, such as the ITE curriculum, can be imagined as a space within which policy is enacted by institutional administrators, teacher educators and student teachers in the present case.

Ideological spaces involve dispositions to MPs that are primarily conveyed in legislative instruments, such as laws, core curricula and other prescriptive legal documents. Innovative multilingual views, discourses and practices can take advantage of the ideological space that is opened by a new language-in-education policy. A recent example is the Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages (Council of the European Union, 2019).

Implementational spaces allow for practices conducive to the fostering of MPs and may, in turn, alter or re-appropriate the ideological space (Willans, 2016). Implementational spaces can encompass spaces beyond the learning environment at every level, from face-to-face interaction in schools and communities to national educational policies and beyond (Hornberger, 2005). However, carving out implementational spaces requires awareness and understanding of the possibilities and restrictions of the ideological space. In fact, open spaces provide only *potential* opportunities for change and require active occupation (i.e., appropriation, interpretation and resistance) to establish alternative views and practices (Johnson, 2011; Willans, 2016). This calls for the active agency of teacher educators and student teachers alike; that is, they can create their own agentive ideological and implementation spaces from the bottom up (Johnson, 2011).

The current European educational policies and practices show traces of a growing ideological and implementational space for MPs at the national level, even if they are not yet fully mainstreamed. Localised solutions have emerged time and again in the day-to-day practice of teachers and schools, with students’ multiple languages being valued as a resource for learning. The local development of multilingual approaches has led to a variety of small-scale experiments and even educational programmes addressing various students’ linguistic backgrounds across diverse social and educational contexts (Barwell et al., 2016; Busch, 2011; Reljić et al., 2015; Sierens and Van Avermaet, 2017). In many EU countries, content and language integrated learning (CLIL), additive language immersion education and bilingual education targeting dominant languages have been set up to promote multilingual learning (Bergroth, 2016; Cenoz et al., 2014; Hélot and Cavalli, 2017; Nikula, 2017). However, they tend to be educational programmes or approaches that caretakers can opt for, and ideally, teachers should have received at least some specialised training for this type of teaching.

Initiatives to promote language programmes aimed at enriching students are gaining importance at the national policy level (Eurydice, 2019; Nikula, 2017). Moreover, such concepts as *language awareness* (Cenoz et al., 2017; Hélot et al., 2018), *pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures* (Candelier, 2008) and *plurilingual competence* (Coste et al., 1997) have gained a foothold in European educational policy discourses, rendering the ideological space visible. In short, the multilingual turn that has been noted in research (Conteh and Meier, 2014; Cummins, 2017; May 2014) and education (García and Flores, 2012; Meier, 2017) is also emerging in the national education policies of many EU states.

However, regarding students from socio-economically disadvantaged immigrant backgrounds who often lack experience in the academic register of their first languages (L1s), the received framework of ‘parallel monolingualism’ (Heller, 1999) continues to underlie many macro-level education policies in Europe (Sierens and Van Avermaet, 2017). Parallel monolingualism means that languages are kept separate in the core curriculum and classroom teaching. By assuming the ‘native’ monolingual learner as the societal norm, many teacher educators may simply fail to include the specific needs of multilingual pupils, especially those from poor immigrant backgrounds, in their preparation as pre-service teachers. Therefore, newly qualified teachers with no proper introduction may consider these students as problematic or as a deviation from the natural

monolingual classroom reality (Leung et al., 1997; Llompарт and Nussbaum, 2018; Pekarek, 2011). In addition, many teachers and teacher educators who usually have a majority-language background themselves may hold the belief that supporting maximum exposure to the language(s) of schooling is in the best interest of students' futures, thus consciously or subconsciously excluding their L1s (Alisaari et al., 2019; Clyck et al., 2014; De Angelis, 2011; Llompарт et al., 2019; Pulinx et al., 2017). Therefore, mainstreaming MPs requires time for working with teacher educator beliefs (Lucas and Villegas, 2013).

In some countries or regions, minority/immigrant students are educated in the regional language or may need to acquire more than one national/regional language during their education, as is the case in Catalonia (Catalan/Spanish), the Basque Country (Basque/Spanish) and Finland (Swedish/Finnish), which are three cases represented in this study. This additional aspect demonstrates that the link between different languages and language positioning (power and status) is not always so clear-cut (see Bonnin, 2013). This highlights the continued need to promote language support in linguistically and culturally diverse environments across Europe for learning in and through the school language(s) and a variety of L1s (Eurydice, 2019). These different aspects show that ideological and implementational spaces may require different methods for mainstreaming MPs. Local educational demands should be considered when looking into the implementational space for MPs in policies.

Changing education requires transforming the structures that support current educational practices (Kemmis et al., 2014). Even in cases in which implementational space has been successfully identified, it can prove to be challenging to upscale and further develop the local-level implementations of mainstreaming MPs if the policy structures are against the implementation (e.g., Barwell et al., 2016; Blackledge and Creese, 2010, 2014; Busch, 2011; Conteh, 2015; Van Avermaet et al., 2018). Upscaling and mainstreaming successful local practices may be constrained by dismissal or even opposition from the macro-policy levels in the education system. At the (sub)national education level, decision-makers outline the main policy lines regarding educational aims, funding and support for schools and teachers. However, the power emanating from policy-makers and ideologies at the macro-level is far from total and encompassing in shaping micro-level educational practices. Similarly, the uptake of centralised policy intentions supporting MPs can be resisted by teachers and teacher educators, thus hindering the stated policy from becoming a practised policy. This resistance may be due to a conscious choice or to the fact that several policies are in conflict with each other, leaving teachers and education providers to navigate the policies and decide on their internal power relations (Bergroth and Palviainen, 2017). In accordance with the 'transformative agency' perspective (Béhague et al., 2008), local school actors do have a certain amount of autonomy in (re)shaping educational practices and identities, resisting top-down policies and overcoming structural constraints (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; French, 2016). Language-in-education policies can be seen as living and dynamic rather than two-dimensional due to the individuals involved in their development and implementation. Another reason for the dynamics is the fact that policies may be often numerous and competing in education. Especially meso-level policies are negotiated, interpreted and ultimately implemented by agents at different levels (Bergroth and Palviainen, 2017; Llompарт, 2016; Menken and García, 2010). Owing to this power and equally strong collegial relationships (Robinson, 2012), opportunities in everyday educational practice arise to develop bottom-up, counter-hegemonic discourses and practices. Accordingly, teachers and teacher educators may be the primary agents in transforming monolingual pedagogies into MPs in mainstream classrooms and schools (Menken and García, 2017).

When considering the actors who are in a position to find and implement space for MPs, professional agency not only pertains to individuals at the micro-level but also to ITE institutions at the meso-level. Classroom practices and general training that use students' languages as a resource are

in the minority due not only to ideological reasons but also to the difficulty in finding a place for a bottom-up method, including involved and willing parties at the institutional level (Auger et al., 2018). In their interdisciplinary conceptual framework of factors shaping multilingual education, Kirss et al. (2020) explicitly include the levels of education (i.e., micro, meso and macro) to observe their vertical coherence. This means that if the European educational policies and (sub)national policies claim that the inclusion of MPs is an everyday concern and that students with varied linguistic backgrounds are welcomed with appropriate support systems and tolerant attitudes at school, then it should be possible to trace whether this policy is reflected in the ITE institution's curricula and courses. Meso-level input on curriculum development independent of macro-level policies is important, as it can directly or indirectly contribute to opening the ideological spaces required to positively change the socio-political discourse and action both at the macro and micro levels. In other words, ITE institutions, through their 'institutional agency' (i.e., individual or joint actions taken by institutions; see Ludwig, 2017), may be expected to play an active and transformative role in policy-making and carving out implementational space for MPs.

The present study

The purpose of the present multiple case study is to map the ideological and implementational spaces for mainstreaming MPs in the current ITE policies and curricula and, by doing this, to initiate reflections about the possibilities of change within the case studies. We used the concept of LST as a lens through which MPs can be examined.

This study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1. What kinds of explicit ideological spaces and potential implementational spaces are identified in existing ITE curricula for mainstreaming MPs?

RQ2. To what extent are (sub)national policies and the local ITE curriculum development aligned with regard to MPs?

Setting and participants

Data were collected through an action research project entitled Linguistically Sensitive Teaching in All Classrooms (LISTIAC) (listiac.org), which has been set up within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme (Key Action 3: Support for Policy Reform) of the EU. This three-year project (2019–2022) aims to bring forth educational change at multiple levels. It primarily targets teacher educators and teachers, both pre-service and in-service, by developing and experimenting with a theoretically informed reflection tool aimed at making (future) teachers linguistically more sensitive in their beliefs, attitudes and actions in mainstream classrooms. The participants in the project include nine European universities, three public ministries and one international organisation. For this study, the university participants in the project were each asked to select one case study ITE, preferably an ITE programme provided in their own university.

This study used *multi-sited comparative case study research*. This method follows the comparative case study approach (CCSA) proposed by Bartlett and Vavrus (2017). The CCSA promotes a multi-sited fieldwork model used to examine through and across sites and scales. It focuses on the macro, meso and micro dimensions of case-based research. The CCSA engages two logics of comparison: (a) the more common compare-and-contrast logic (horizontal axis); and (b) 'tracing across' sites or scales (vertical axis). The transverse axis (i.e., comparison over time) was not considered in this study.

Table 1. Presentation of the nine study cases.

Country/region	Linguistic demographics	Main instructional language(s) of the case study	Initial teacher education provision for primary education (2019)
Belgium/ Flemish Community	28.7% of the children born in 2017 in Flanders spoke other languages than Dutch at home	Dutch	Professional bachelor degree for primary education, first stage, 180 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)
Finland	Basic Education 2016 Non-Swedish 94%	Swedish	Master of Education, 300 ECTS
Finland	Basic Education 2016 Non-Finnish 11%	Finnish	Master of Education, 300 ECTS
France	Population 2018 Immigrants, 9.7%	French	Master of Teaching, Education and Training Professions, 300 ECTS
Lithuania	Population census 2011, Lithuanian: 84.2%	Lithuanian	Primary education and early language learning, 240 ECTS
Portugal	In primary education, Portuguese: 96.5%	Portuguese	Master's programme, 300 ECTS
Slovenia	Elementary education 2018, Slovenian: 95.5%	Slovene	Master of Teacher Education, 300 ECTS
Spain/Basque Country	Non-Basque population 2018, 28%	Basque/Spanish (at choice)	Bachelor degree in Primary Education School Teacher, 240 ECTS
Spain/Catalonia	2018 place of birth Catalonia 85.8%	Catalan	Bachelor degree in Primary Education School Teacher, 240 ECTS

In Table 1, we present the background information for each project partner setting.

Nine locations from seven countries, including three regions, are represented in the project: Belgium/Flemish Community; Finland (Jyväskylä (Finnish-medium); Vaasa (Swedish-medium)); France; Lithuania; Portugal; Slovenia; Spain/Basque Country; and Spain/Catalonia. Table 1 shows the linguistic demographics of primary schools or at the national level, the main instruction language in the case ITE chosen and a short description of the ITE provision.

Across the nine sites examined by the study, two linguistic profiles can be roughly distinguished. First, there are five countries/regions with large or strongly growing ethno-linguistic minorities from an immigrant background: Belgium/Flanders; France; Portugal; and the Basque and Catalonia regions in Spain. These immigrant minorities are substantial except in Portugal, which has a more ethnically and linguistically homogeneous population. Typical for France, Portugal, Spain/Basque Country and Belgium/Flanders is the presence of post-colonial immigrant groups in addition to labour immigrant and refugee populations. Of note is the presence of regional language minorities in France, the Basque Country and Catalonia. Second, there are two states where regional (indigenous and non-indigenous) language minorities exist in large sizes: Lithuania (e.g., Polish, Russian); and Slovenia (e.g., Bosnian). The Basque Country and Catalonia in Spain have a special linguistic position, as their regional languages (Basque and Catalan, respectively) are formally recognised languages in accordance with Spanish law. Finally, Finland is an official bilingual country with two national languages (Finnish and Swedish), which share equal linguistic rights as stated in the constitution. Minority languages (e.g., Sámi languages, Finnish and Finnish–Swedish sign languages, and Romani) are also acknowledged as having linguistic rights according to the constitution. Similar to the rest of the cases, immigration is also increasing in Finland.

The cases have various teacher programmes with either 240 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) or 300 ECTS. Nearly all cases in this study pertain to ITE academic programmes provided by universities. The one exception is Belgium/Flanders, as it focuses on a non-academic higher education institute. At the university level in Flanders, the ITE is currently being reformed, with new educational master's programmes being implemented from 2019–2020 onwards.

In five locations, the language of instruction in ITE is the dominant national or majority language (Belgium/Flanders, France, Lithuania, Portugal, and Slovenia). The specific linguistic-political situation of the Basque Country in Spain results in ITE programmes that are offered by choosing between the regional language (Basque) and the national language (Spanish). In Finland, future teachers for Swedish medium schools participate in ITE in Swedish, and teachers for Finnish medium schools participate in ITE in Finnish. In some contexts (e.g., Spain (Catalonia) and Finland (both Finnish medium and Swedish medium)), specialisations in English are offered.

Data collection and analysis

The main unit of analysis in this study is the *local site*, which is an ITE institute in each of the nine cases. The local site is a space that is considered embedded in a larger (sub)national context. This *horizontal* axis of comparison and contrast compares how similar policies or phenomena unfold in locations that are connected and socially produced.

The action research methodology utilised in the LISTIAC project entails the active participation of the project partners in analysing and developing their own professional community (for more details on the action research of the project, see Bergroth et al., in press). During the first stage of the LISTIAC project (February–September 2019), all project partners were requested to collect data in their own local and (sub)national contexts by gathering and consulting available documents on (sub)national educational policies, such as the local core curriculum. The partners were also asked to select a case study ITE and explore the course descriptions in that specific ITE. The partners were specifically asked to focus on courses that are obligatory for all student teachers (primary education) irrespective of the elections they can make in their studies. We selected *obligatory* courses because we were mainly interested in course contents considered relevant/mandatory for every future teacher. Teaching about multilingualism in optional or extra courses may suggest that it is not considered a central subject but something of a secondary order. Furthermore, the partners were asked to exclude courses on language learning and language didactics in Table 1, as such language teaching was not the primary focus at this stage of the study. However, despite the request to exclude courses on language learning and didactics, all the obligatory courses suggested by the partners were included in the analysis.

With regard to RQ1, the partners were asked to identify whether LST or any similar concept (e.g., linguistically responsive teaching, language awareness or plurilingualism) was *explicitly* mentioned in the course descriptions. As another task, they were asked to identify a *potential* implementational space for promoting such educational aspects that could promote mainstreaming MPs, thus leading to the desired change in teacher education. Thus, the first part was based on documented mentions of LST (i.e., facts), and the other part focused on imagining a possible future. The partners were encouraged to reflect on the possible implementational space in the courses together with the teacher educators organising the course, if possible. If they would not be able to do this, they could just provide their own individual professional view of the possibilities. In the analytical phase of processing the collected data, we were interested in exploring which cognitive abilities (i.e., professional knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge)

Table 2. Obligatory initial teacher education (ITE) courses in the nine study cases with explicit mentions of linguistically sensitive teaching (LST).

Country/region	Obligatory ITE courses with explicit space for LST
Belgium	Language, Expression, Communication (Primary Level, Years 1/2) Didactics French/Multilingualism (Primary Level Year 2) Diversity (Primary Level, Year 3) Cross-Cultural Communication (Secondary Level, Year 2) Subject Didactics/Project Non-Dutch Home Language (Secondary Level, Years 2/3)
Finland/Swedish-medium	Intercultural Education (in English)
Finland/Finnish-medium	Introduction to Multidisciplinary Studies, 5 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) (part of the course) Constructing Scientific Knowledge: Teacher as Researcher 2 (5 ECTS) (part of the course)
France	–
Lithuania	–
Portugal	Language Policies and Language Teaching (Year 1 master's, 6 ECTS) Psychology of Education (Year 1 master's, 6 ECTS)
Slovenia	English Across the Primary School Curriculum (Year 4)
Spain/Basque Country	Fundamentals of Language Didactics for Primary Education in Multilingual Contexts
Spain/Catalonia	Centre Language Project and Plurilingualism (Year 3, general)

and affective-motivational dispositions (i.e., motivation, self-regulation, professional beliefs about teaching and learning and the subject content) were addressed in the courses that were deemed to pertain to implementational space for mainstreaming MPs.

Macro-level language-in-education policies at the (sub)national level can open and fill in ideological spaces, enabling innovative multilingual views, discourses and actions (Hornberger, 2005). By specifically analysing the notion of LST in macro-level policy documents, we used the *vertical* axis of comparison, which examines influences at different levels. We studied the interrelation between the local (meso) and the (sub)national (macro) levels by focusing on the consistency between the policy documents at the (sub)national level (macro) and the local ITE curriculum development at the meso level. Therefore, RQ2 is answered by using the vertical axis of comparison.

Results

RQ1 Explicit ideological spaces and potential implementational spaces in ITE curricula

We asked the partners to provide information on course descriptions in which explicit mentions of LST were identified. The list of these courses is presented in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2, obligatory ITE courses mentioning the concept of LST or their equivalents were reported for seven project sites: Belgium; Finland/Swedish medium; Finland/Finnish medium; Portugal; Slovenia; Spain/Basque Country; and Spain/Catalonia. LST was often indirectly linked to concepts more or less akin to LST (e.g., language awareness, plurilingualism and language development teaching). In cases in which explicit mentions of LST were not identified in obligatory courses, explicit mentions were found in optional courses, as was the case in Lithuania. In France, LST was only represented in education options pertaining to French as a foreign or a second language.

The courses that mentioned LST related to a wide range of themes in education: pluri-/multilingualism (Lithuania, Spain/Basque Country and Spain/Catalonia); intercultural education/awareness/communication (Belgium/Flanders, Finland/Swedish medium, France, Lithuania and Slovenia); diversity (Belgium/Flanders and Portugal); inclusion (Portugal, Slovenia and Spain/Basque Country); language didactics (Belgium/Flanders, Slovenia and Spain/Basque Country); language policy (Portugal); multidisciplinary studies (Finland/Finnish medium); and scientific knowledge (Finland/Finnish medium). The most common themes (mentioned more than once) in the obligatory courses explicitly referring to LST or their equivalents were the following in descending order: language didactics (7); pluri-/multilingualism (3); interculturalism (2); inclusion (2); and diversity (2).

Table 2 also shows that mainstreaming MPs is connected to instructional language English in two cases, Finland/Swedish medium and Slovenia. *English Across the Primary School Curriculum*, which is offered in the ITE programme at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, is an example of such a course. The learning objectives include student teachers learning about CLIL and its benefits in different school subjects. Student teachers are also expected to read, listen, watch, write, analyse and evaluate texts in the elementary school curriculum in English. They examine texts of different difficulty levels to see how they can be used in practice. Furthermore, student teachers learn how to transfer the acquired knowledge and principles to other languages present in the school environment. The course places emphasis on the techniques that facilitate the understanding of subject knowledge when the language used is not the students' L1, such as scaffolding.

Although a connection with language didactics or instruction in foreign languages can be found in some courses, not all courses bear such a clear linguistic connection. An example of an obligatory course in which LST is mentioned is *Constructing Scientific Knowledge: Teacher as Researcher*, which is offered at the Finnish medium University of Jyväskylä, Finland. After the course, student teachers are expected to understand the foundations of conducting research as a teacher. This includes recognising and knowing the central qualitative and quantitative approaches for research on education and teaching and knowing the research methods for teaching, learning and learning guidance. The course also requires students to reflect on the reasons for their own thinking and actions concerning education and teaching. Finally, the learning objectives for the course mention the need to *understand the role of language* in meaning-making and support learning, language development and multilingualism in their own subjects through pedagogical solutions.

We also asked the partners to provide information on course descriptions in which they saw potential for adding mentions of LST. The partners provided far more course names in which a *potential* space for LST is considered than current courses that explicitly mention LST. The partners suggested one to six suitable obligatory courses in which it would be possible to add aspects of LST, thus helping in mainstreaming MPs for all students. The potential course names are listed in Table 3.

All ITE programmes were reported to provide obligatory courses that, in one way or another, could support the more explicit implementation of LST and MPs in the ITE curriculum. Two major tendencies stand out. The first is the mentioning of courses that are listed under obligatory courses mentioning LST in other locations: general pedagogical and professional knowledge (Belgium/Flanders, Finland/Finnish medium, Finland/Swedish medium, France, Portugal and Slovenia); language didactics (Belgium/Flanders, Finland/Swedish-medium and Lithuania); subject didactics (Belgium/Flanders and France); interculturalism (Slovenia and Spain/Basque Country); and pluri-/multilingualism (Finland/Finnish). The second tendency is that courses have a clear relationship with the various social contexts of the classroom-learning environment and aim to develop a more critical awareness about them among student teachers. These contexts are the family and local

Table 3. Obligatory initial teacher education (ITE) courses in the nine study cases with a potential implementational space for linguistically sensitive teaching (LST).

Country/region	Obligatory ITE courses with potential implementational space for LST
Belgium/Flemish Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Didactics Dutch and Mathematics (Primary Level, Years 1/2) – Didactic Themes (Primary Level, Years 1/2/3) – School as a Community (Primary Level, Year 3) – School and Society (Primary Level, Year 3) – General Didactics (Secondary Level, Years 1/2/3)
Finland/Swedish-medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Didactics I (Year 1, Basic Studies in Education) – School Didactics II (Year 3, Intermediate studies in Education) – School Development and Cooperation (Year 4 (Advanced Studies in Education) teacher oriented) – Communication and Group Processes – Teacherhood and Professional Community – Practicum II and IV (year 3 and 5)
Finland/Finnish-medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Finnish Language and Literature I – Finnish Language and Literature II – Education, Society and Change – Interaction and Collaboration – Knowledge and Expertise: Teaching Practice I – Interaction and Learning – Collaboration and Society
France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – General Didactics – Interdisciplinary Project (Master 1 and 2) – Design and Analysis of Teaching and Learning Situation in the subjects (Master 2)
Lithuania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Didactics and Psychology – Foreign Language Teaching
Portugal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Introduction to Professional Practice (Year 1) – Supervised Teaching Practices (Year 2) – Educational Policies (Year 1)
Slovenia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Didactics with Pedagogical Practice I (Year 1) – Theory of Education with Pedagogical Practice II (Year 2) – Philosophy of Education (Year 4) – Sociology of Education (Year 4)
Spain/Basque Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Intercultural Communication
Spain/Catalonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Centre Language Project and Plurilingualism (Year 3, general) – Practicum IV and V (Year 4)

communities (Finland/Finnish medium), school (Finland/Swedish medium), professional community (Finland/Swedish medium and Slovenia) and society (Belgium/Flanders and Finland/Swedish-medium). All these contexts are collated in the Sociology of Education course mentioned in the Slovenian case (see below). The most common subjects (mentioned more than once) are the following in descending order: general pedagogical and professional knowledge (8); social contexts (6); teachers' professional identity (6); language didactics (3); interculturalism (2); and subject didactics (2).

As indicated above, the Sociology of Education offered at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, is an example of an obligatory course with a potential implementational space for LST. In this course, student teachers learn about and understand the role of child education as one of the social

Table 4. Explicit/implicit linguistically sensitive teaching (LST) in (sub)national policies.

Country/region	Ideological space for LST in (sub)national education policy
Belgium/Flemish Community	<i>Explicit</i> requirement for LST, plurilingualism and diversity in teacher education (Decree Flemish Government 2018) <i>Explicit</i> requirement for LST and diversity is stipulated in the legally defined teacher competences (2018)
Finland/Swedish-medium	<i>Explicit</i> (national core curriculum)
Finland/Finnish-medium	<i>Explicit</i> (national core curriculum)
France	<i>Explicit</i> in some circulars and instructions – Educational recommendations 2019 for Kindergarten – Language curriculum 2020 for the final two years of High school
Lithuania	<i>Implicit</i>
Portugal	<i>Implicit</i> : clear indications of inclusion but LST is not explicitly referred to
Slovenia	<i>Implicit</i>
Spain/Basque Country	<i>Explicit</i> : LST is mentioned in the Basque educational curriculum as a separate section
Spain/Catalonia	<i>Explicit</i> (plurilingual and intercultural dimension)

subsystems. They try to understand the complexity of ‘school’ as an element of social reproduction and, in doing so, reflect on the possibility of upholding values. They understand the concepts of society, democracy and human and children’s rights. They reflect upon the reproduction of inequality, the coexistence of different cultures and the right to be different. They consider and critically evaluate different pedagogical experiences and current events in society and at school. Similarly, after completing the advanced course School Development and Cooperation at the Swedish-medium Åbo Akademi University, Finland, students are expected to be able to discuss and analyse aspects of the collaboration between schools and guardians, be aware of current school development projects and be able to describe the premises for school development and change management, learn the foundations for national and local core curriculum work and describe how they can be conducted at a local level, and with specific relevance to the current study, be able to describe the effect of the development of society on the school organisation and obtain insights into legislation that affects teachers’ work. Another example is the Intercultural Communication course, which is part of the ITE programme at the University Basque Country, Spain. It has a slightly different kind of focus compared with the other examples mentioned above. In this course, several research models of intercultural communication are studied, and they are related to different focuses that have emerged in the Basque educational context. Concepts, abilities and attitudes in intercultural communication are taken into account, and critical thinking is encouraged towards the Basque and other contexts. Projects that analyse and present concrete proposals directed at developing intercultural abilities are examined.

RQ2. Alignment of (sub)national and local levels

Table 4 shows whether the (sub)national policies support the idea of mainstreaming MPs by providing an ideological space for LST in education policies in the different studied contexts.

As required knowledge and skill for teachers in (sub)national education policies, LST was mentioned in the core curriculum or other legal prescriptive documents at the (sub)national level in five locations: Belgium/Flanders; Finland/Finnish medium; Finland/Swedish medium; Spain/Basque Country; and Spain/Catalonia. For example, the concept of LST is included in the national core

curriculum in Finland on multiple occasions. One of these is the description of language-aware operational culture, where the following, among other things, is stated:

One manifestation of cultural diversity is multilingualism. Each community and community member is multilingual. Parallel use of various languages in the school's daily life is seen as natural, and languages are appreciated. A community with language-awareness discusses attitudes towards languages and linguistic communities and understands the key importance of language for learning, interaction and cooperation and for the building of identities and socialisation. Each subject has its own language, textual practices and concepts. The languages and symbol systems of different fields of knowledge open up different viewpoints to the same phenomenon. The instruction progresses from everyday language to the language of conceptual thinking. In a language-aware school, each adult is a linguistic model and also a teacher of the language typical of the subject he or she teaches. (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016).

In Flemish Belgium, LST and plurilingualism are considered requirements for future teachers and are stipulated in the new decree on teacher education issued by the Flemish Government. LST is also mentioned as a separate section in the Basque Country educational curriculum. In Catalonia, plurilingual and intercultural dimensions are mentioned. In the four remaining locations (France, Lithuania, Portugal and Slovenia), LST is implicitly mentioned, for example, through indirect indications of the inclusion of minority students in education in Portugal.

Attending to the vertical axis of comparison (Bartlett and Vavras, 2017), which is part of the current multi-sited case study, we examined the relationship between the (sub)national and local levels, particularly in addressing whether (sub)national policies and local ITE curriculum development are indeed aligned. Our data showed that the (sub)national language-in-education policies and the local ITE curricula seemed to be aligned in five cases (Belgium/Flanders, Finland/Finnish medium, Finland/Swedish medium, Spain/Basque Country and Spain/Catalonia). In these cases, the explicit mentioning of LST at the (sub)national level went hand in hand with curriculum development and adaptation at the local level. In the case of Lithuania, the national policy and the local ITE curriculum were aligned by giving only limited attention to LST and MPs. In three cases, the (sub)national policies and local ITE curricula were not consistent with one another. In the case of France, the explicit mention of LST at the national policy level was not reflected in the local curricula. The remaining two cases of Portugal and Slovenia showed a reverse situation, in which LST was present in the local ITE curricula but was only indirectly addressed at the national policy level.

Discussion

This study aimed to map the ideological and implementational spaces for mainstreaming inclusive, equity-centred MPs in the current ITE policies and curricula across the EU. Using a multi-sited comparative case study, data were collected in nine different sites using a method based on the comparative case study approach (Bartlett and Vavrus, 2017).

RQ1. Ideological spaces and implementational spaces

According to the data on the (sub)national education policy level, LST was explicitly mentioned in six sites and indirectly mentioned in three sites. This result reveals a trend of ideological spaces for MPs in the current language-in-education policies at the (sub)national level in most countries.

The factors that may explain this are linguistic demography and linguistic ecology, especially the societal status of linguistic minorities. The four cases from Finland (Finnish and Swedish) and

Spain (Basque Country and Catalonia) clearly represent the (sub)national policy context, in which there is a notable ideological space for accommodating multilingualism in education. The presence of regional and national languages with an official status (i.e., Basque Country, Catalonia, and Swedish in Finland) in this context has resulted in well-established mother tongue and/or bilingual/multilingual education arrangements. Arguably, this has created opportunities to promote a more inclusive view of MPs that encourages the use of various student languages in all classrooms and for all teachers and subjects across the curriculum. The language-in-education policies in the contexts of Flemish Belgium and France show a predominantly monolingual ideology and a more restrictive stance towards the large-scale establishment of bilingual/multilingual education programmes, including those targeting high-status languages. However, the long-standing settlement of large immigrant language minorities has brought linguistic diversity to such high levels of magnitude and complexity, especially in urban areas. Therefore, national education ministries in France and Flemish Belgium have started to pay attention to inclusive approaches to multilingualism in education in accordance with European educational policies. The limited or indirect attention to LST in the French and Flemish ITE cases may be due to the recent nature of the current (sub) national policies, which may take some time to trickle down to the meso-level. Incidentally, the increasing number of immigrant groups in Catalonia, the Basque Country and Finland could also have been a factor in stimulating the attention to more inclusive MPs at the subnational policy levels.

Linguistically sensitive teaching was mentioned in obligatory ITE courses in seven of the nine examined sites. This result shows the emergence of implementational spaces for LST and MPs as a general tendency in all the studied cases. The subjects that contributed the most in mentioning LST in obligatory courses are those related to language didactics and the different types of social diversity (i.e., linguistic, ethnic, cultural and socio-economic). This is noteworthy, as the partners were asked to exclude language didactics in their data. However, in the analysis all the suggested obligatory courses were included. Despite of this unexpected focus on language didactics, it is important to underscore that LST and MPs were brought up in a wide range of subjects or were linked to a variety of educational themes. Evidently, ITE curriculum developers and teacher educators in most of the local institutional contexts under study appeared to find ways to integrate MP issues into the existing ITE curricula without recourse to extra modules or separate courses.

The obligatory courses with the greatest potential in creating implementational spaces for MPs addressed three key subjects: general pedagogical and professional knowledge; a sociolinguistic contextual perspective; and teacher identity and profession. Interestingly, this feature represents the core of the LISTIAC project, as this is where positive changes are expected to take place. This finding suggests that from the perspectives of linguistic inclusion and social equity, the implementation of MPs in ITE will depend on equipping future teachers and teacher educators in the EU with knowledge and perspectives that can help them transcend a one-sided or narrow focus on language didactics. These perspectives refer particularly to general pedagogical and sociolinguistic knowledge as part of their cognitive abilities and professional beliefs as part of their affective-motivational dispositions (Blömeke and Delaney, 2012). In sum, the findings highlight the importance of a synergic and holistic approach to the mainstreaming of MPs that consider the linguistic dimensions in all subjects and curricula on different levels of education in an interconnected, transversal and transferable manner (Cenoz and Gorter, 2011; Piccardo, 2013).

RQ2. Alignment of the (sub)national and local levels

The result of the data analysis is only partially in accordance with Hornberger's (2005) assertion that the ideological spaces opened by new language-in-education policies enable the emergence of

MPs at the local level of ITE institutions. Our study included a number of sites where such alignment between the (sub)national and local levels was not observed. An explanation of this pattern will probably depend more on detailed individual case studies of the local sites and (sub)national contexts examined in this study. However, we assume that the organisational structure of education systems is a factor that affects the interplay between the macro and meso levels with regard to the implementation of MPs in ITE. This refers to the governance and administration of education and to how responsibilities and decision-making are distributed across distinct policy levels. A well-known key feature is the degree of decentralisation of education systems (see McGinn and Welsh, 1999) and, more specifically, the effect it has on the extent of professional agency that teachers and school administrators have in shaping their pedagogies and in managing their institutions, respectively. Clearly, centralised education systems (e.g., France, Lithuania and Portugal) tend to raise obstacles for the local development of ITE curricula and pedagogies, whereas decentralised education systems (e.g., Finland, Flemish Belgium and Slovenia) offer more structural opportunities for bottom-up approaches and autonomous decisions taken by ITE institutions, which are potentially responsive to local contexts and needs. The fact that there will be more leeway for institutional agency to enact autonomous ITE curriculum development in decentralised education systems speaks for itself. Therefore, changes at the meso-level may contribute to the creation of the ideological spaces required to bring change to the political discourse and action at the macro-level. However, examining the differential effect of this factor on the implementation of MPs in ITE is beyond the scope of this study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of macro-level policies and (sub)national core curricula show that existing policies both allow and promote the idea of LST. We have interpreted this as an open ideological space for LST.

This is not only in the contexts that have already dealt with local multilingual practices due to the strong presence of minority languages in education but also in the contexts that have recently been exposed to multilingual practices due to the increasing immigrant population. Therefore, (sub)national education policies seem to be more aware of the importance of LST.

The fact that practices at the meso-level do not always seem to align with policies at the macro-level further supports the need for policy reform. Although in most cases, policy and curricula are aligned in terms of LST, the macro and meso levels are not aligned in other cases because either LST is included in the macro-level policy but not reflected in ITE curricula or the other way around. These cases call for the need to pay attention to LST in both bottom-up and bottom-down approaches, creating consistency in policy and practice.

Furthermore, it is important to underline that at the meso-level, implementational space was already identified in obligatory courses in different contexts. However, the majority of these courses being related to language didactics emphasises the idea that LST is usually seen as part of language teaching only. The potential implementation space being indicated in courses related to the more general aspects of teaching advocates for LST to be taught as part of the core curriculum, reaching not only language teachers but also all teachers of various subjects.

In sum, the European context studied in this paper shows an increasingly emerging ideological space for LST in the (sub)national education policies. Although many contexts show the alignment of education policies with ITE curricula at the meso-level, several contexts do not show this alignment. Therefore, policy reform that includes LST at meso and macro levels is required. Clearly, LST should not only be included as part of the language teaching curriculum, which is the case in most of the European contexts studied, but also extended as a more cross-curricular element in the

general pedagogy, making it an intrinsic part of the professional identity of teachers working in a diverse sociolinguistic context.

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