Language Policy and the Role of English in Brussels: A Study on Language Use and Attitudes

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Sveučilište u Zadru

Odjel za anglistiku

Diplomski sveučilišni studij anglistike; smjer: nastavnički (dvopredmetni)

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1. Introduction

This thesis delves into language policy and planning (LPP), examining its application in Belgium, particularly focusing on the role of English in Brussels. Researchers have proposed multiple definitions for LPP throughout the years. Baldauf and Kaplan (1997) define language planning as the process aimed at promoting organized linguistic changes, encompassing beliefs, practices, and laws, which they term as policy. They further clarify that language policy refers specifically to laws and regulations governing language use. Moreover, this distinction underscores the broader scope of language planning compared to policy. Tollefson (1991) supports this by viewing language policy as governmental language planning, while Ager (2001) highlights language planning as including informal influences by individuals and communities, reserving "language policy" for formal governmental influence.

This thesis will first explore the theoretical background of LPP, detailing its emergence as an academic field, the early foundational work, and the critical approaches that have shaped its development. It will also discuss how LPP has been historically intertwined with broader socioeconomic and political factors, including the influences of capitalism, colonialism, and the construction of nation-states. Following this theoretical exploration, the focus will shift to LPP in Belgium. This section will examine state reforms and language policies, highlighting crucial elements such as linguistic freedom, the distribution of competences, and the principle of territoriality. These factors impact how national language policies are created and put into practice in Brussels. Next, the analysis will explore English as a *lingua franca*, focusing on the concept of EuroEnglish and the specific role of English in Brussels. This part of the thesis will examine the increasing use of English among EU institutions and international professionals in Brussels, examining the implications for the city's linguistic profile and the potential benefits

and challenges of embracing English as an additional official language alongside French and Dutch.

Finally, the thesis will evaluate the perspectives of Brussels residents on the role of English. This section will present the aims and hypotheses of the research, the methodology, including the sample, instruments and procedures used, and the results. It will analyse personal information, attitudes towards English dominance, and the use of English in Brussels. The analysis will focus on key research questions: whether most participants acknowledge the practical benefits of English but also express concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities, and whether participants who use English to a greater extent are also more likely to support the increased use of English in Brussels and believe that making English an official language will not threaten local languages. These questions correspond to two hypotheses. H1, pertaining to research questions S1, S2, and S3, suggests that most participants will acknowledge the practical advantages of English while also expressing concerns about its potential effects on local languages. On the other hand, H2, connected to research questions S2 and S4, proposes that participants who use English to a greater extent will show stronger support for granting English official status in Brussels compared to those who use it less often.

By examining the use of English in Brussels and the perspectives of people living in Brussels, this thesis has the aim of providing a deeper understanding into language policy in a multilingual city. The findings will contribute to broader discussions on language policy and planning, particularly regarding the increase of global migration and the need for effective communication in diverse urban environments. This analysis will not only shed light on Brussels but also offer potential implications for other European capitals facing similar linguistic and demographic challenges.

2. Theoretical Introduction to LPP

Generally speaking, the concepts of *language planning* and *language policy* are often used interchangeably without a clear differentiation. However, their meanings reveal clear distinctions. Baldauf and Kaplan (1997, p. 11) define language planning as the process aimed at promoting organized linguistic changes, encompassing a spectrum of beliefs, practices, and laws, which they term as policy. They distinguish language planning as a broader concept compared to policy, the latter of which is solely about laws and regulations. This definition aligns with Tollefson's (1991, p. 16) perspective, where language policy is viewed as governmental language planning. Similarly, Ager (2001, p. 52) delineates language planning as encompassing any informal influence by individuals and communities, reserving the term "language policy" for formal, governmental influence.

According to Tollefson & Pérez-Milans (2018, p. 3), LPP activities existed before its formal establishment as an independent field of study. Moreover, they claim that the rise of LPP as a discipline was influenced by the creation of the Centre for Applied Linguistics by Charles Albert Ferguson in 1959, which identified the need for systematic research in LPP. Additionally, Phillipson (1992) claims that the historical frame of LPP reveals connections to capitalism and colonialism, shedding light on how socio-economic and political factors have shaped the development of LPP practices. Pennycook (1998, pp. 20-21) describes how, during the era of colonial expansion, certain European nations enforced their languages in their overseas territories to maintain authority and organize governance. Moreover, this process involved the suppression or marginalization of indigenous languages and the promotion of the colonizers' languages. Furthermore, Heller (2018, p. 38) claims that the influence of socioeconomic global conditions in LPP becomes clearer when considering its connection to capitalism and colonialism, particularly the creation of the nation-state by the bourgeoisie in 19th century Europe. During this period, the construction of the nation-state was strategically

employed to safeguard markets and trade. Central to this strategy was the creation of a homogeneous 'people', achieved through linguistic and communicative means. Therefore, one can argue that, before its official recognition, LPP was connected to the establishment of the liberal democratic nation-state, which underscores the importance of socioeconomic considerations in LPP.

Moreover, two distinct stages characterize the shaping of LPP: the foundational studies that formed in the early years of LPP's development and the transformative process which embraced critical perspectives and ethnographic methodologies. This evolution was not only a response to the complexity of language planning issues, but it was also a reflection of wider intellectual shifts within the social sciences (Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2018, p. 5). In the following subchapters, these two pivotal stages will be analyzed, highlighting their contribution to the understanding of LPP in contemporary settings.

2.1. The foundational studies of LPP

The first stage of LPP spans from 1950s to the end of 1960s, with two significant influences: the sociopolitical context and the epistemological climate (Ricento, 2000). Firstly, regarding the sociopolitical context, colonial empires started to dissolve during the latter part of the 20th century, leading to the establishment of numerous newly independent nations. As a result, the governments of these countries were faced with the task of determining their official languages, addressing the legacy of colonial languages, and selecting languages for educational instruction in their new contexts (Spolsky, 2017, p. 9-11). Furthermore, there was a focus on language planning directed towards the structure of language, known as corpus planning. The primary goal of corpus planning was standardization (Ferguson, 1968, as cited in Nekvapil, 2011, p. 875). In the process of standardization, linguists were tasked with developing dictionaries, grammars, and systems of writing for indigenous languages (Johnson, 2013). As the processes of decolonization and development unfolded, marking a period of restructuring

in state economies and international relations, LPP originated through two main pathways: the Western development of former colonies and the establishment of social welfare systems. Both pathways involved the development of various sectors, including nation-building which was rooted in literacy, the formation of a standard language, and education. Thus, the establishment of the field of LPP was tightly interwoven with socioeconomic concerns, with states and private foundations (such as the Rockefellers and Ford) emerging as key players (Heller, 2018, p. 39).

A crucial aspect of early LPP was the emphasis on using rational criteria in decision-making. Moreover, economic considerations played an important role in how language issues were addressed. Planning was perceived as a step-by-step process, involving tasks like data collection, goal setting, strategy formulation, implementation, and feedback assessment. Therefore, there was considerable focus on identifying the standards, principles, and types of information essential for decision-making (Nekvapil, 2011, p. 876). This approach was a part of a wider context in which socioeconomic implications in LPP were considered. These socioeconomic concerns at the foundation of LPP set the stage for a shift in which LPP would explicitly recognize language as a valuable economic resource. The multifaceted relationship between LPP, the nation-state, and socioeconomic conditions provides an insight into the evolving dynamics of LPP in subsequent years (Heller, 2018, p. 43). Some scholars suggested that structuralism, with its focus on language as a system governed by internal rules and structures, played a significant role in shaping early LPP (Clyne, 1992).

Moreover, early LPP was marked by pragmatism which focused on delivering practical tools to achieve tangible social and linguistic objectives, mainly economic development and political stability. Central to the early work in LPP was the assumption that languages possessed a distinct reality independent of the people who spoke them. Furthermore, linguistic classifications such as language vs. dialect, diglossia, and the notion of national identity were perceived as possessing fixed meanings and clear boundaries. The prevailing belief was in a

direct and unequivocal link between language and identity, neatly situating speakers within predefined ethnic and national categories. Therefore, LPP specialists concluded that the same predictable outcomes can be expected in different language development processes (Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2018, p. 5-6). Furthermore, Haugen's (1966) publication offers insights into the early conceptualization of fixed linguistic categories. Haugen's analysis of diglossia analyses the social dynamics and linguistic hierarchies that arise when two varieties of a language, high and low, obtain specific roles within a community. According to Cooper (1989), early language planners used language as a tool in shaping a collective sense of belonging and shared identity within a nation. Therefore, language policies were used to create a unifying national consciousness and strengthen the relations that connect diverse ethnic communities.

However, this pragmatic approach to LPP had its shortcomings. Early LPP efforts were criticized for being dominated by a structuralist or positivist approach and for neglecting the socio-political context in which language planning occurs (Johnson, 2013). It often neglected the potential consequences of sustaining systems of inequality and the position of speakers within those systems. Moreover, critics argued that early LPP was overly focused on accelerating modernization in developing countries, following the economic and political models of the US and Western Europe, which were not applicable to these contexts. This discrepancy only proved that the same predictable outcomes cannot be expected in different development contexts. The process of modernization in developing nations often included the transformation of indigenous languages in schools. Early LPP work extensively focused on non-standard and official varieties in schools, and educating linguistic minorities. The main goal was to rapidly implement programs teaching dominant languages to users of minority and indigenous languages (Tollefson & Tsui, 2014). It was in response to this dissonance that new approaches to LPP started to develop. The acknowledgement of the limitations inherent in the pragmatic approach introduced a nuanced perspective of the complex interplay between

language, power, and social dynamics (Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2018, p. 6). The next subchapter will delve into these alternative approaches, marking a crucial turning point in the evolution of LPP theory and practice.

2.2. The evolution of LPP

In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a notable shift away from optimistic views about progress. In many newly independent states, modernization and democratization were unsuccessful, which led to a rejection of Western solutions perceived as neo-colonialist. Similarly, in Western societies, there was a widespread debate on established institutions and hierarchical structures. This period saw a critical examination of research methodologies, with concerns raised about whether they reflected the perspectives of dominant groups. As a result, marginalized voices within the academic community aimed to develop inclusive and critical methodologies (Wright, 2016, p. 10). Johnson (2013) suggests that, during this period, the positivistic linguistic paradigms and structuralist concepts faced challenges across various fields. Moreover, numerous LPP academics started to doubt the effectiveness of previous models. Critical linguistics and sociolinguistics emerged as key players during this era, criticizing approaches that separated linguistic data from its sociocultural context. These advancements have had a notable impact on the field of LPP and continue to influence the field today.

In LPP, the emphasis shifted away from solely examining the linguistic aspects of modernization and nation-building. Instead, researchers began to explore the broader social, economic, and political impacts in contexts where people speaking different languages come into contact and influence each other (Wright, 2016, p. 11). This shift served as a direct critique of early LPP, particularly the early work that focused on implementing language policies at the national level. Such approaches often neglected community concerns and perpetuated existing power structures. Moreover, the critique extended to quantitative analyses which addressed

language policies in postcolonial nation-states. The need for transforming LPP practices led to the occurrence of ethnographically informed approaches. Ethnographic analysis has its roots in linguistic anthropology, notably ethnography of communication, an approach developed by Gumperz and Hymes in 1972 (as cited in Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2018, p. 7). Canagarajah (2006, p. 153) outlines the complex relationship between LPP and the ethnographic approach; whereas LPP aims to influence language behaviour deliberately, ethnography focuses on understanding language as it is spoken in specific, everyday contexts. Moreover, LPP operates from a top-down perspective, defining language relationships externally, whereas ethnography explores communities' own viewpoints. Whereas LPP is intentional and addresses macro-social levels, ethnography delves into micro-level interactions and covert community culture. Despite their differences, an increasing number of scholars began to view LPP and ethnography as complementary, with LPP benefitting from ethnographic methods to understand languages and communities better.

Moreover, ethnography of communication emphasizes exploring psychological and political contexts and how individual experiences are connected to ideology and policies. This immersion deepens the researcher's knowledge of an insider's perspective, which enables a better comprehension of certain power dynamics (Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2018, p. 8). In other words, the objective of critical ethnographers has two dimensions; to critique those in positions of power who perpetuate systems of inequality and to initiate a dialogue with the marginalized (Madison, 2005). The analytical spotlight shifted to understanding how ideology interplays with the daily practices of individuals and institutions (Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2018, p. 8). Generally, within the field of policymaking, there was a growing acknowledgment of the limitations of traditional rational or positivist approaches, which were grounded in the idea that policies can be formulated solely through objective evaluations. This recognition has

fueled a greater acceptance of ethnographic methods in policymaking, as they offer insights into aspects such as ideology and identity (Canagarajah, 2006, p. 154).

To elaborate, in the socio-economic context of the 1980s and the 1990s, the Cold War, the welfare state, and liberal democratic industrial capitalism paved the way for late capitalism, neoliberalism, and globalization. This period represents a shift in the role of the state, which aligns more with the expansion of capitalism and using language for political and economic interests. Governments in the Global North privatized public enterprises, reduced taxes, weakened labour unions, and attracted foreign investment, which prioritized productivity, efficiency, and profit. These changes significantly influenced how language is perceived, raising questions about its engineering, by whom, and for what purpose. Therefore, this transformative era assigned language certain economic significance. As governments embraced neoliberal policies, language evolved from a tool for communication to a valuable economic asset. In a neoliberal and capitalistic context, language proficiency is not just a cultural or personal enrichment but a crucial skill with economic implications (Heller, 2018, pp. 43-44). As the research explores English, a global *lingua franca*, this economic dimension underscores how language proficiency, particularly in English, becomes an essential asset for success and participation in a neoliberal, capitalistic world.

3. Language policy and planning in Belgium

Although language can serve to unify groups in the creation of countries, it can also be a cause of divide or political uproar. Belgium is frequently depicted as a nation where political discourse is heavily centered on language, which continues to cause socioeconomic and ideological divides. The complex topic of linguistic conflict in Belgium cannot be analyzed without understanding the historical processes that created Belgium as a federal constitutional monarchy. Once called Southern Netherlands, Belgium emerged as a separate nation in 1830,

when it gained independence from the Netherlands following a brief 15-year union. The historical development of the linguistic conflict can be categorized into four distinct phases: firstly, the domination of the Francophone elites; secondly, the progress of the Flemish movement; thirdly, the shift in roles regarding economic development; and lastly, the transformation of the institutional structure (Mnookin & Verbeke, 2009). Language was considered one of the main issues in the creation of Belgium; however, the distribution of linguistic groups within the country seems to be very similar to the current one. Data from the Belgian census of 1846 indicates that: "42.1 per cent reported French as the language they spoke most frequently, 57.0 per cent Dutch and 0.8 per cent German" (McRae, 1986, p. 36).

The first period of linguistic conflict started with the very creation of Belgium in 1830. Inspired by the French Revolution, the elites who came to power ruled Belgium as a Francophone state. French was spoken by the upper class and the bourgeoisie. A marker of social status, it was characterized as a sophisticated and elevated language, opposed to Dutch and German, which were spoken by people from the lower classes and were marked as provincial (Dassargues, Perrez & Reuchamps, 2014). Even though more than 50 percent of Belgians spoke Dutch, there were no signs of protest in the first years of the country's independence. However, a small group of middle-class intellectuals known as *flamingants* protested Belgium's language policy, starting what is today known as the Flemish movement. This movement marked the second period of linguistic conflict. Inspired by German romanticism, the *flamingants* advocated a Flemish spirit, identity and most importantly, Flemish language. However, there were debates within the movement regarding which language form should be considered official; Flemish variant based on dialects or official Dutch. Finally, Dutch became the official language in 1898 (Dewulf, 2012).

For a long time, the French-speaking South known as Wallonia prospered as a metallurgic force in the steel and mining industries. However, by the late 1800s Germany became an industrial competitor, which resulted in an economic shift from the South to the Dutch-speaking North that had access to the open sea. Following French defeat at the battle of Sedan in 1870, the French language and culture lost their prestige, whereas Germany and the Netherlands started to obtain a renowned reputation (Dewulf, 2012). There was also an ideological divide between the French-speaking South, where the Socialist party was prominent, and the Dutch-speaking North, where conservative Catholics defined political thought. Even today, the popular belief in Belgium is that the ancestors of the French-speaking communities were commonly involved in anti-Nazi activities whereas the Flemish were more frequently associated with collaboration during the world wars. This polarizing issue is still under debate in Belgian politics. Due to these affiliations and cooperation with the Nazi occupiers, German speakers faced discrimination, resulting in French becoming the language for governmental functions and schooling after World War II (Dewulf, 2009).

In 1921, Belgium settled on the principle of territoriality which stated that citizens have the right to speak the language of the region, instead of the personality principle, which allows citizens to have linguistic rights regardless of the region. Landmark laws were passed in 1932 and 1962. After WWII, the Flemish political parties requested more cultural and linguistic autonomy, whereas the French-speaking political parties requested more financial autonomy in order to develop the South's struggling economy. These requests resulted in an institutional transformation of Belgium. In 1962, a law which established a permanent linguistic border was enacted, dividing the area into three monolingual regions (Dutch, French, and German), while granting Brussels unique status as a bilingual city (Vos, 2002).

3.1. State reforms and language policies

Even though the Francophone South and the Dutch-speaking North in Belgium have a history of linguistic and political conflict, the language laws adopted in 1962 enforced territorial principles which may have settled the tensions. The principle of territoriality refers to a "way of institutionalizing multilingualism in which territories are allocated specific languages and all public services in a particular territory are only provided in that language irrespective of the language that individual inhabitants speak at home." (Hüning & Vogl, 2010, p. 229). In other words, only Dutch was official in the Flemish region and French in the Walloon region, even though there were French-speaking minorities in the Flemish region and Dutch-speaking minorities in the Walloon region. The members of these minority communities were expected to adapt and only a few villages on the linguistic border and around Brussels were granted the right to request municipal services in their language (Dewulf, 2012). However, a constitutional amendment in 1970 implemented arrangements for distributing authority between the Francophone and Dutch-speaking communities. One of these measures was regarding the members of the government in which there had to be the same number of ministers who speak Dutch and French (Vuye, 2010). Hooghe (2004, p. 81) claims that the 1970 constitutional revision marked the initial major institutional reaction to regional and national movement in Belgium.

According to Drooghenbroeck and Popelier (2022), Belgium underwent six state reforms in total: in 1970, 1980, 1988-89, 1993, 2001 and 2014. The first reform of 1970 established three cultural communities: the French, the Dutch, and the German cultural community. As was previously mentioned, the Flemish political parties requested more cultural and linguistic autonomy, whereas the French-speaking political parties requested more financial autonomy. This reform was a direct response to both demands. Moreover, Hooghe

(2004, p. 81) argues that, despite these changes, the reform aimed to prevent fragmentation of power. This means that while regions were granted more autonomy, the overarching authority of the Belgian state remained intact. The goal was to balance regional autonomy with the need for a cohesive and unified national government. The reform, as noted by Drooghenbroeck and Popelier (2022), granted communities control over broadcasting and the use of their language. This cultural autonomy was a key win for Flemish politicians. Also, the reform established three Regions in response to the French-speaking politicians advocating for financial autonomy. According to the reform, each Region has its own territory, and each is expected to be active in financial matters.

Moreover, the second state reform of 1980 granted more authority to cultural communities regarding personal matters, more specifically, health and social services. From this point, the cultural communities became known as just Communities. Additionally, both Communities and Regions were authorized to establish their own parliaments and governments (Vuye, 2010). However, the 1980 reform attempted to both separate and balance the central and regional spheres of authority while also trying to connect them and preserve some form of hierarchy. This led to the creation of an unstable system (Hooghe, 2004, p. 82). The third state reform of 1988/1989 granted the Brussels Region its own elected parliament and government, with the parliament organized into two language-based sections and the government consisting of an equivalent representation of Dutch and French-speaking ministers (Vuye, 2010). In 1989, the first direct election for the Brussels parliament occurred (Ceuninck &Reynaert, 2011, p. 1021). Additionally, the third reform granted the Communities increased authority over education, while the Regions were assigned responsibilities for transportation and public infrastructure. With the fourth state reform in 1993, Belgium was restructured into a federal entity. Therefore, the Constitution's first article was modified to declare: “Belgium is a Federal State, composed of Communities and Regions” (Vuye, 2010). The fifth and the sixth reform

went on to give more authority to Communities and Regions. Language has been key in the creation and evolution of Belgium as a country. The policymakers and judges constructed a compromise which is based on three pillars: linguistic freedom, the distribution of competences in language policy and the principle of territoriality (Drooghenbroeck & Popelier, 2022).

3.1.1. Linguistic freedom

The first pillar of the Belgian comprise is linguistic freedom. According to Article 30 in the Belgian Constitution, linguistic freedom is guaranteed to all citizens: “The use of languages spoken in Belgium is optional; only the law can rule on this matter, and only for acts of the public authorities and for judicial affairs.” (as cited in van der Jeught, 2017, pp. 183-184). Even though the Belgian Constitution laid the foundations of the Belgian national identity, it could be debated that there are some solutions between its lines that have also divided the country. Belgians are said to be divided for a number of reasons reflected in the Constitution, including religion, ideology, education and language. Struggles regarding language in general are reflected in Article 4 and struggles regarding linguistic freedoms are reflected in Article 30 cited above (Velaers, 2016). Certain politicians have been criticized for having a traditional or a restricted interpretation of Article 30, meaning that they restricted the scope of linguistic freedom guaranteed by the Article. A traditional understanding of the Article would refer only to the three "national" languages (French, Dutch and German); however, citizens are protected by certain Articles to speak other languages in the private spheres. These articles refer to fundamental rights regarding the Constitution, like Article 19, relating to the right to practice religion and Article 22, which relates to the protection of personal privacy and family integrity (Drooghenbroeck & Popelier, 2022).

Furthermore, another possible literal interpretation of Article 30 refers to the situation in which the freedom of language in the private sphere could not be subject to any limitation.

However, restricting the use of one language in this case would have to meet one of three conditions (Drooghenbroeck & Popelier, 2022, p. 8):

"1. It must be based on an international obligation or European law

2. It must meet a positive obligation to protect or guarantee other fundamental rights

3. It must respond to a compelling need to protect the interests of third parties to receive."

3.1.2. Distribution of competences and the principle of territoriality

The second pillar of the Belgian compromise is the distribution of competences. Moreover, the first revision of the Constitution in 1970 established the four linguistic regions, Dutch, French, German and the bilingual Brussels-Capital region, but it also granted decision-making authority to the French and Flemish communities regarding linguistic planning and usage. In terms of language-related laws, competencies are shared between the federal authority and the Councils of the Flemish and French communities (Drooghenbroeck & Popelier, 2022). The communities oversee cultural matters, language policy, education, health policy, and welfare, along with international cooperation in these domains. Federal responsibilities include military, legal systems, public safety, social welfare, and financial policies (Hooghe, 2004, p. 85).

Furthermore, the third pillar of the Belgian compromise is the principle of territoriality, which means that language use is linked to specific geographical areas, ensuring that each area contains or officially acknowledges only one linguistic group (De Schutter, 2008, p. 105). Found in Article 4 of the Belgian Constitution, the principle of linguistic territoriality refers to the four linguistic regions, however, these linguistic regions are not federal like Regions and communities (Witte, 1993). Moreover, due to intricate historical factors, the territoriality

principle still holds precedence within the Belgian state. However, the system takes on a mixed structure because of the presence of 27 municipalities that provide language accommodations for all three languages, showcasing a blend between the territoriality and personality language frameworks (Burckhardt, Coakley, & Marácz, 2021, p. 121). De Schutter (2008, p. 111) criticizes the territoriality principle and the assumption that each state neatly aligns with a single language and territory. He argues that this oversimplification fails to grasp the intricate reality of multilingualism and linguistic diversity. Instead, the world is characterized by overlapping linguistic areas, minorities within minorities, and situations of bilingualism and multilingualism. He underscores that assuming a straightforward link between language and territory overlooks the nuanced and diverse linguistic landscape of Belgium. On the other hand, Van Parijs (2011, pp.146–149) advocates for the territorial system by arguing that, in the context of Belgium, it allows each language to hold a prominent position within its designated area. This ensures the preservation of the cultural identity tied to each language, as they serve as the official language of the community residing within that territory.

Furthermore, efforts to consistently apply the territorial principle have repeatedly been obstructed by the individual and linguistic definitions of the Communities. One of the areas of issue is the combined area of the Brussels-Capital Region where the territoriality principle cannot be applied in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, principles of personalized collective rights and individual bilingualism are applied. It could also be argued that Brussels was granted the status of an exception in order to act as a middle-ground in the long dispute between the Francophone and Dutch-speaking communities. As an intermediary between Flanders and Wallonia, Brussels also gained an institutional dimension in this conflict because members of the community governments are included in the meetings of Brussels executive bodies (Witte, 1993).

4. English as a *Lingua Franca*

In the context of a globalized and interconnected world, English is often viewed as a linguistic phenomenon. According to Motschenbacher (2013, p. 1), the widespread use of English can be analysed as an outcome of two major waves of expansion, historical and contemporary. Firstly, within the historical context, British colonialists spread the English language across various regions globally. Secondly, English functions as a universal language facilitating communication among people with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, according to Seidlhofer (2011, p. 463), while it is important to examine the context and the underlying reasons for the spread of English, there should also be a focus on the sociolinguistic effects that English has in international contexts, otherwise known as English as an international language (EIL). Furthermore, a distinction is made between localized EIL and globalized EIL. Whereas localized EIL refers to the widespread use of English in postcolonial settings (Indian English, Nigerian English, etc.), globalized EIL is used by individuals who do not speak the same language and therefore who shift to English as a medium of effective communication. Therefore, one may conclude that the historical expansion of English yielded localized EIL, whereas the ongoing contemporary expansion brought about globalized EIL.

Motschenbacher (2013, p. 1) claims that the research focusing on globalized EIL is a rapidly growing field which is evolving away from traditional approaches to understanding the linguistic diversity within the broader category of English. According to Crystal (2008, p. 6), the analysis of this contemporary expansion is challenging because the worldwide count of English speakers cannot be precisely estimated. However, two facts within the contemporary context are widely accepted; that English is the global language of communication and that the "ownership" of English has shifted from the native speaker to the non-native speaker. Moreover, it is claimed that the non-native speaker community represents a great majority of

English speakers, and this number will only continue to rise in the future. Crystal (2003, p. 13) claims that this rise is connected to the growth of international organizations and political groups, such as the European Union, and the increasing need for English language skills on the job market.

Generally speaking, it is recognized that multilingualism is a phenomenon found all over the globe, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. However, when analysing a multilingual macro-context which is specific to a certain territory, it is essential to consider all the relevant details. Transitioning to the exploration of EuroEnglish, the following subchapter delves into how English, in historical and contemporary waves, intertwines with the diverse linguistic landscape of Europe. The subchapter unfolds with an examination of two contrasting viewpoints. One perspective aligns with linguistic human rights, positioning English as an imperialistic force threatening European linguistic diversity. Conversely, an alternative stance supports EuroEnglish as a practical language of communication, highlighting its potential for facilitating effective interaction across Europe. In the second subchapter, this idea is developed by focusing on the linguistic situation in Brussels. Here, it is analysed how English is gradually asserting itself, potentially reshaping linguistic dynamics in a city which represents European identity and the EU policy of multilingualism and diversity. In this context, Brussels is represented as a microcosm providing insights into broader trends unfolding across the continent.

4.1. EuroEnglish

Regarding the European context, since the Iron Curtain has fallen, English has progressively gained significance (House, 2003, p. 556). English gradually started replacing German and French as the primary foreign language, particularly in Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and later in France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. Conversely, in Eastern Europe, Russian was obligatory post-World War II until the late 1980s, after which English gained

prominence, competing with German in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic, while both English and French maintained widespread teaching in Romania (Fodor & Peluau, 2001). Moreover, the requirements for English extend to higher education and employment (Phillipson, 2007, p. 2). However, the prevalence of English in Europe is not exclusive to education and employment as it manifests itself in various contexts of everyday life, such as pop culture, business, tourism, media, and so on (Breiteneder, Pitzl & Seidlhofer, 2006, p. 1). In other words, English in Europe spreads not only through top-down processes like education but also through individual, bottom-up processes.

Generally speaking, Europe is considered to be the cradle of nationalism and has a long tradition of making languages one of the main elements of nation-building. Therefore, the European context is historically marked by a rich diversity of languages and unique multilingualism (Motschenbacher, 2013, p. 1). However, according to Motschenbacher (2013, p. 5), European multilingualism is also marked by "national orientations to societal monolingualism" which cause a "hierarchization of languages". In other words, despite the linguistic diversity found across Europe, national perspectives still emphasize the idea of a monolingual society, which leads to linguistic hierarchization, and some languages being viewed as less significant. Moreover, scholars like Brutt-Griffler (2002, as cited in Phillipson 2004, p. 74) argue that English is believed to diminish linguistic hierarchies, allowing non-Western nations to actively participate in shaping the global ecocultural system and its linguistic expression. However, Phillipson (2004) critiques Brutt-Griffler's perspective, highlighting the dominance of the US and the UK in the global market and the prevailing socio-political influence of English. Likewise, Motschenbacher (2013, p. 5) argues that English is currently at the top of the hierarchy because an increasing number of Europeans with different linguistic backgrounds choose to communicate in English.

According to Phillipson (2007, p. 3), in the European continental context, the debate surrounding English revolves around the dichotomy of linguistic imperialism versus its role as a tool for effective communication. Motschenbacher (2013, p. 6) claims that the former is also known as the linguistic rights approach which advocates the protection of the human right of speakers to communicate in their L1. Moreover, Phillipson (2008, p. 124) claims that English should not be labelled as a neutral *lingua franca* used for effective communication because that classification entails a narrative which is void of ideology. In other words, he argues that using English which is detached from its native speakers does not mean that it is culturally or ideologically neutral or that it is merely a middle ground for international communication. Even though English is often promoted as a language of development and progress, by invoking the notion of agency, Phillipson suggests that how a language is used depends on the choices and actions of its speakers and wider socioeconomic conditions.

Furthermore, Phillipson (2008, p. 125) invokes the notion of agency with the concept of *lingua frankensteinia* that draws parallels with Mary Shelley's novel "Frankenstein", where the term refers to the creator of the monster, not the monster itself. This comparison underscores the notion of agency in language use, implying that English, much like Frankenstein's creation, can be moulded and directed by those who control it. In the case of English, Phillipson (2003) claims that precisely British and US linguistic imperialism leads to cultural homogenization. However, Motschenbacher (2013, p. 9) notes that while English endangers minority languages in Anglophone countries (e.g., Welsh in the UK), minority languages in non-Anglophone countries face greater threats from their own national languages than from English (e.g., Galician in Spain). Therefore, European national languages are generally unlikely to be replaced by English at the national level. On the transnational European level, only a few languages, such as French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish, face

challenges due to the spread of English, while smaller language communities are less concerned.

Therefore, scholars like Jenkins (2009) offer an alternative perspective, emphasizing the English as a medium for effective interaction, detached from cultural imperialism. According to Motschenbacher (2013, p. 6), whereas the linguistic rights approach has proven to be effective for increasing the rights of linguistic minorities on national and EU levels, its application in transnational European contexts does not seem to be effective. To elaborate, when speakers strongly assert their own L1 for communication in transnational settings, it can create barriers for effective communication. Moreover, this insistence could be seen as problematic because it may emphasize national identity, hindering the process of Europeanization, which is the establishment of a common European spirit of unity and cooperation. Moreover, House (2003, p. 557) suggests that, viewed from an anthropological perspective, the varieties of English spreading in Europe may be less imperialistic than what linguistic human rights scholars argue. Likewise, Pennycook (2003) contends that the growing prevalence of English globally does not implicate the adoption of an Anglo-American mindset. Instead, English as *lingua franca* (ELF) is used as a tool to express various identities and cultural models.

According to House (2003, p. 559), a clear difference should be made between "languages of communication" and "languages of identification". To elaborate, English can be perceived as a valuable means of communication in global interactions and speakers will unlikely perceive it as a part of their identity. In fact, it is their L1 which may determine their linguistic identity, which also has an emotional dimension. Moreover, House (2003, p. 560) argues that since ELF is not a national language and there is not a defined group of ELF speakers, they cannot assign linguistic identification to it. By differentiating languages used for communication and those serving as markers of identity, House (2003, p. 562) contends that

there would not be a rivalry between them. Thus, they can coexist without invading each other's domains. She continues to oppose the linguistic imperialism and linguistic rights approaches by arguing that ELF speakers should not be undermined and perceived as passive objects in an imperialistic game, in which the former military forces execute their power through language. Moreover, these approaches may be viewed as condescending towards ELF speakers because it is implied that they are not responsible for or not aware of their own linguistic choices.

In conclusion, the multifaceted role of English in Europe, encompassing historical shifts and debates on linguistic hierarchy, reflects diverse and opposing perspectives on its impact. The subsequent subchapter explores the case of Brussels, examining how English shapes linguistic dynamics on a micro level within Europe, considering the contrasting linguistic rights and effective communication approaches.

4.2. English in Brussels

It is widely known that Brussels has become the unofficial capital of Europe since the decision to make it the seat of the EU institutions in 1997. However, Brussels has long been a city of socioeconomic, ideological, and linguistic conflict. The tension between the Francophone and the Dutch-speaking communities has marked the capital of Belgium for the most part of the nineteenth and twentieth century, which resulted in a compromised bilingual model. However, globalization and immigration have challenged the capital's linguistic structure. Therefore, the traditional discussion based on the binary identification of the city's population no longer correlates to the reality of Brussels' everyday life. In 1989, French and Dutch were declared official languages in Brussels, making the capital of the country bilingual. However, this status does not accurately represent the linguistic diversity of the capital city, where more than 100 languages are spoken. This is evidenced by the BRIO language barometer, which has monitored language use and proficiency in Brussels for the past 20 years (Janssens, 2013).

Released in December 2018, the outcomes of the fourth and currently last language barometer (LB) conducted by the Vrije Universiteit Brussels (VUB) build upon the earlier surveys conducted in 2001, 2007, and 2013. The findings were derived from a representative group of Brussels residents. From 2000 to 2017, the percentage of Brussels residents claiming higher proficiency in French dropped from 96% to 87%, and a steeper drop for Dutch (33% to 16%). Among the ten most spoken languages in 2000, including Arabic and Berber, almost all experienced a decline. The sole language which had an increase of use was English, from 33% to 34% (Janssens, 2018). According to Van Parijs (2019), the main contributing factor to this shift is demographic. Following a long period of decline, the Brussels population has risen from 950,000 to 1,200,000 inhabitants since 2000. Concurrently, 1,200,000 individuals have migrated to Brussels during this timeframe, with the majority (800,000) arriving from abroad.

English has positioned itself on the global scene as the *lingua franca*; however, it gains a new dimension in Brussels. Even though the use of English is well documented in major capital cities of the world, Brussels is a particular case due to the presence of EU institutions and international organizations. Van Parijs (2007) claims that European institutions and the growing European civil society in Brussels are increasingly adopting English for their operations and communication. This includes journalists, lobbyists, consultants, law firms, and various associations. Moreover, Van Parijs (2007) contends that it is reasonable to anticipate a non-Bruxellois EU official, from Lithuania for example, to learn English for effective engagement within the European institutions. However, he questions the expectation for them to learn one or both of Brussels' official languages solely because Brussels became the political center of the European Union by chance. Additionally, he asserts that while Europeans have the right to consider Brussels their capital, it should not be regarded as their colony. Consequently, the population of “Europeans” in Brussels will continue to increase, but they are not, and will never be, the sole residents of the city.

Moreover, Van Parijs (2019) claims that only a small number of individuals arriving in Brussels are familiar with Dutch or French prior to their arrival. Conversely, a significant number of those departing from Brussels, whether they were native to the city or newcomers, leave with a proficiency in Dutch and/or French acquired during their time in Brussels. Consequently, the decline in language proficiency is not attributed to the lack of language learning activities in Brussels' childcare centers, schools, businesses, organizations, or communities. Instead, it is a result of the overwhelming demographic surge experienced by the city since the early 21st century. In April 2018, the rectors of both the Francophone ULB and the Dutch-speaking VUB Universities put forward a suggestion for trilingual schools that include English, which would replace the current arrangement of segregated Francophone and Dutch schools. Therefore, the divisions between French and Dutch speakers still exist, but some would argue that English has become the neutral third option.

In fact, the results from the 2013 BRIO language barometer demonstrate that the proportion of those with intermediate proficiency of English outnumbered speakers proficient in Dutch (Janssens, 2013). Moreover, according to Drooghenbroeck & Popelier (2022), the Belgian government intended to establish a Brussels International Business Court (BIBC), aimed at enhancing the city's appeal to the business community. This initiative would permit proceedings conducted entirely in English, as outlined in Bill 2018. However, despite initial intentions, the BIBC project failed to materialize. Nevertheless, this endeavour motivated the Council of State to examine the introduction of English into court proceedings. Therefore, the Council of State clarified that while public services, including the judiciary, should use official languages, they can use another language if necessary for service or general interest.

In fact, according to O'Sullivan (2013), the former Flemish Minister of Education Pascal Smet proposed in 2013 that Brussels should officially embrace English as a language for governance, education, and daily interactions. Additionally, Sven Gatz, the Minister for

Multilingualism in Brussels, stated in an interview with *The Brussels Times* (Walker, 2021) that the city "cannot ignore English" and advocated for more prevalence of the language, both within the city and in its legal framework. In 2019, Gatz presented a multilingual policy to the Brussels parliament, which was centered on the implementation of various measures to encourage the use of three languages—French, Dutch, and English—rather than just two, as these are the predominant languages in the city. However, the proposition can only be implemented by the Federal Chamber of Representatives or the Federal Chamber of the Government (Walker, 2021). Even though this proposition would be difficult to implement on a federal level, it is a clear indicator of the growing demand of English in formal interactions between politicians and the general public.

Furthermore, philosopher Philippe Van Parijs (2018) suggests giving English the same status in providing public services in Brussels as Dutch and French. However, he claims that this would mean changing the constitution regarding the territoriality principle outlined in Article 4. This proposition poses a significant risk because it involves a crucial aspect of the Belgian compromise. Additionally, there's concern that making English official could either decrease the use of French and Dutch in Brussels or stop new residents from learning them, as these are important for building strong social connections. Moreover, it has the potential to exacerbate the already tense relations between French and Dutch speakers in Brussels.

For example, in 2023, the Flemish liberal party (Open VLD) suggested adding English as a third administrative language in Brussels. However, this idea drew criticism from the nationalist party in Flanders, the New Flemish Alliance (N-VA). The proposal, part of Open VLD's plans for the 2024 Belgian federal elections, seeks to grant English similar importance as Dutch and French without making it an official language. The party clarified that while citizens could communicate orally in English with government services, official documents would remain in Dutch or French. According to Brussels Minister for Multilingualism Sven

Gatz and State Secretary for Budget Alexia Bertrand, this change is aimed at welcoming people who do not speak Dutch or French. However, a 1966 law in the Brussels region mandates that administration officials must be fluent in either French or Dutch, the region's two official languages (Camut, Moens & Jochecová, 2023). According to Politico, this proposition was already implemented on a municipal level. On January 4, 2022, the town hall of one of Brussels' 19 municipalities, Schaerbeek, officially decided to provide assistance in English upon demand. Schaerbeek's official in charge of citizen affairs and population, Quentin van den Hove, mentioned that officials at the town hall had already provided assistance in English unofficially ("Schaerbeek town hall officially allows English - and other languages", 2022).

It could be argued that the EU cannot fulfil its necessary functions without a more cohesive European population. This cohesion is not based on an *ethnos*, characterized by a single community tied to a native language. Instead, it depends on a *demos*, a collective shaped by the exchange of information and negotiations that constitute a shared agora-an open space for dialogue and interaction. In other words, instead of emphasizing ideology or ethnic homogeneity, the focus should be on fostering connections and exchanging ideas among the diverse populations within the EU. Facilitating this space demands an affordable and efficient means of communication, necessitating a *lingua franca*. In the EU context, the status of English as *lingua franca* becomes even more pronounced post-Brexit, as English assumes a more neutral position, no longer being the official language of a core EU member state (Van Parijs, 2019). To conclude, it could be argued that Brussels serves as a microcosm of shifting language policies across Europe in response to labour and migration challenges, potentially foreshadowing similar adaptations in other capital cities. In the following chapter, the research on English usage in Brussels will provide valuable insights into these complex dynamics, prompting broader discussions on language policy and societal integration.

5. Language Policy and Perspectives in the Brussels Community: Evaluating the Role of English

The focus of this research on English in Brussels stems from the recognition of a critical gap in existing studies. While comprehensive research, such as the BRIO language barometer (Janssens, 2018), has diligently tracked language use and knowledge in Brussels over the past two decades, none has specifically delved into the implications of English on European and global language policies. This omission is significant, given Brussels' unique position as a microcosm of shifting language policies across Europe, particularly in response to labour and migration challenges. By exploring the use and attitudes towards English in Brussels, this study seeks to shed light on potential ramifications for language policies globally. In essence, it aims to anticipate the outcomes of instituting English as the third official language in Brussels against the backdrop of Europe's ongoing and future migration dynamics, thereby providing insights into the potential need for similar adaptations in other European capitals who may follow suit.

5.1. Aim and Hypotheses

This research seeks to explore the implications of English language policies and initiatives in Brussels by examining the use and the attitudes towards English within the Brussels community. Specifically, the research aims to explore the extent to which people living in Brussels perceive English as potentially impacting the preservation of local languages and identities in Brussels, and how they reconcile this perception with the practical benefits of English use. In addition, this study seeks to evaluate the necessity for policies such as the ones proposed by Sven Gatz and the Flemish liberal party, which propose giving English more importance in Brussels. In other words, the aim is to explore whether people living in Brussels perceive the influence of English as something negative or positive, if it is a killer language as proposed by Phillipson (1992) or whether it is a language which provides benefits in the

employment sector and everyday life (Witte, 1993). Moreover, if House's framework (2003) is applied to the case of Brussels, English is a language of communication while languages like French and Dutch are languages of identification. In theory, since there is a separation of function, French and Dutch should not face serious threat in the face of English because it has a different domain. Therefore, the use and attitudes towards English will be analysed in order to examine these theories. Accordingly, the research will focus on key research questions: whether most participants acknowledge the practical benefits of English but also express concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities (S1, S2, S3), and whether participants who use English to a greater extent are also more likely to support increased English usage in Brussels (S2) and believe that making English an official language will not threaten local languages (S4). These research questions lead to two corresponding hypotheses:

H1: Most participants will acknowledge the practical benefits of English in Brussels but also express concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities.

H2: Participants who use English to a greater extent will be more likely to support making English the third official language in Brussels compared to those who use English less frequently.

5.2. Method

In this part of the thesis, the research methodology will be discussed. It includes the analysis of the research sample based on gender, age, native residency status in Brussels, and mother tongue. Furthermore, the instruments used, and the steps of the research process will be described.

5.2.1. Sample

The research included 55 participants, all currently living in Brussels. Specifically, the sample comprised 38 females, 16 males, and one individual chose not to disclose their gender. Participants were, on average, 27.93 years old. Concerning their native residency status, 49 participants were not natives of Brussels, while 6 were. Regarding mother tongue, 12.73% declared French, 9.09% declared Dutch, 1.82% declared Flemish, and 80% declared other languages.

5.2.2. Procedure

For this study, participants living in Brussels completed a questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured in English and administered through Google Forms.[1]

The research questions were divided into three distinct sections: personal information, attitudes, and use. Firstly, participants provided general personal information, including gender, age, and self-assessed proficiency levels in English, French, and Dutch, using a 5-point Likert scale (from "Insufficient" to "Excellent"). Secondly, participants responded to four statements about their views on the dominance of English in Brussels. These statements were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, allowing participants to express the extent of their agreement or disagreement. Thirdly, participants responded to five questions pertaining to their frequency of English use in various contexts. Response options ranged from "never" to "every day".

5.3. Results

This section will outline the findings from the questionnaire. This section consists of three parts. The first part will analyse the personal information of the participants, including gender, age, native residency status in Brussels, mother tongue, and proficiency in English, French, and Dutch. Additionally, it will cover the periods in which the participants studied these

[1] The questionnaire is provided as an appendix in the final section of the paper.

languages, both formally and informally, and in which informal contexts. The second section will be dedicated to presenting the findings from the questionnaire that reveal attitudes towards English dominance. Lastly, the third segment will present the survey results regarding participants' English usage in Brussels.

5.3.1. Participants' profiles

This section provides general information about the participants, including gender, age, native residency status in Brussels, mother tongue, and proficiency in English, Dutch, and French. Specifically, the research included **55** participants living in Brussels, comprising 38 females, 16 males, and one individual who chose not to disclose their gender. Participants were, on average, 27.93 years old. Regarding native residency, 49 participants were not natives of Brussels, while 6 were. Significant effort was made to find native Brussels participants, including sending out the survey to professors at Brussels universities; nevertheless, most of the participants were not native to Brussels. In terms of mother tongue, 12.73% declared French, 9.09% declared Dutch, 1.82% declared Flemish, and **80%** declared other languages.

Participants rated their language proficiencies on a 5-point Likert scale (from "Insufficient" to "Excellent"). For **English** proficiency, 61.82% rated their English knowledge with the maximum score of 5 points, 34.55% rated it with a 4, and 3.64% rated it with a 3. For **French** proficiency, 20.00% rated their French knowledge with a 5, 5.45% rated it with a 4, 23.64% rated a 3, 12.73% rated a 2, and 38.18% rated a 1. For **Dutch** proficiency, 10.91% rated their Dutch knowledge with a 5, 3.64% rated it with a 4, 1.82% rated a 3, 3.64% rated a 2, and 80.00% rated a 1.The findings of this section of the questionnaire are showcased in Figure 1.

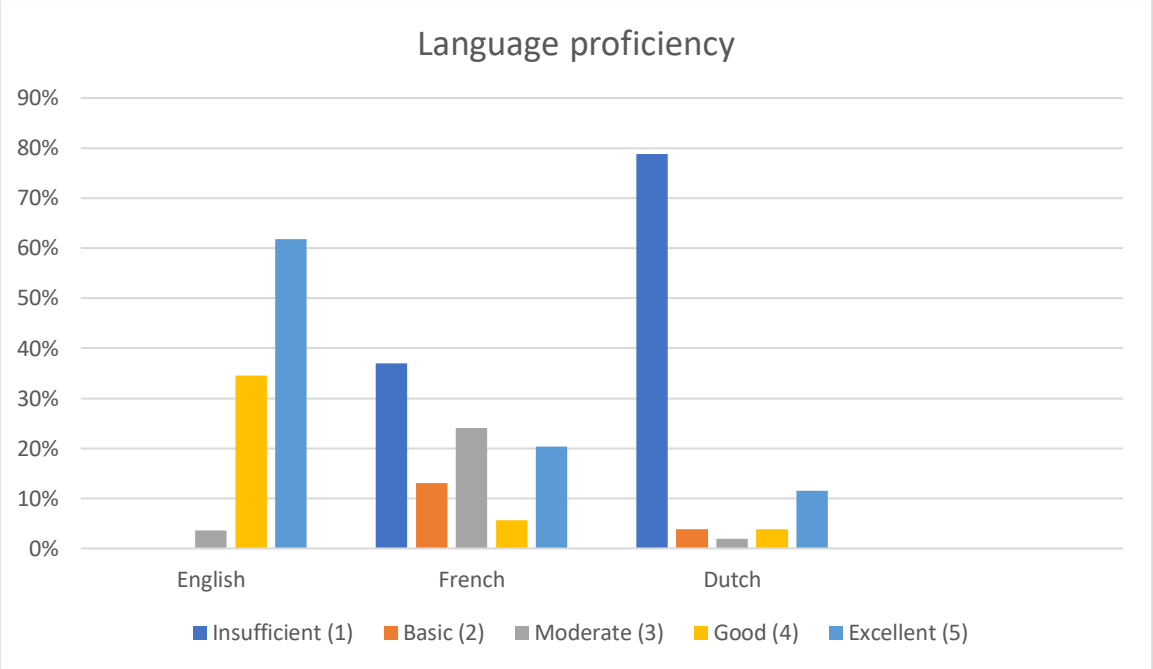

Figure 1. Participants' proficiency in English, French, and Dutch

On average, participants formally studied **English** for 10.7 years and informally for 9.8 years. The contexts for informal English learning mostly included work (16.36%), living abroad (21.82%), and media consumption (21.82%). Participants who speak **French** studied it formally for an average of 6.8 years and informally for 5.4 years, mostly through Erasmus exchange, work, and self-study. Lastly, participants who speak **Dutch** studied it formally for an average of 7.2 years and informally for 8.8 years through interactions with family, traveling, and living abroad.[2] The findings of this section of the questionnaire are showcased in Figure 2.

[2] Percentages for informal language learning contexts are not provided due to the limited number of responses for each category.

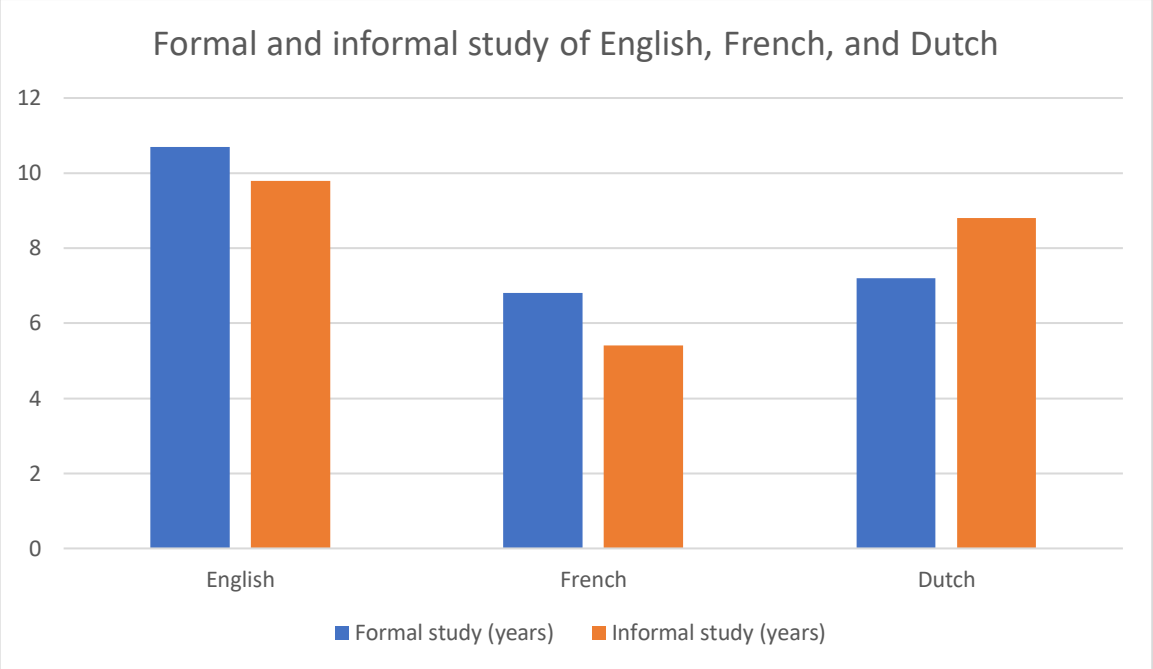

Figure 2. Participants' formal and informal studies of English, French, and Dutch

5.3.2. Attitudes Towards English Dominance

The participants were presented with four statements and were asked to choose one option from a 5-point Likert scale to indicate their level of agreement.

The first statement was: "*I see English as a language to be used only when necessary for the purpose of effective communication, while I regard my mother tongue as an expression of my identity*". In response, **21.8% of the participants strongly disagreed**, 14.5% disagreed, 20% neither agreed nor disagreed, 21.8% agreed, and **21.8% of them strongly agreed** with the statement. The mean value (M) of feedback was 3.07, which shows a neutral stance on the statement. This suggests that participants neither strongly agree nor disagree with the presented perspective, showcasing the complexity of their views on English language use and its relation to personal identity in a multilingual context.

The second statement was: "*English should be used to a greater extent in Brussels*". The majority of the participants (29.1%) were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Specifically, 9.1% strongly disagreed, 9.1% disagreed, **29.1% neither agreed nor disagreed**, 25.5% agreed, and 27.3% strongly agreed with the statement (M=3.53). The mean value (M=3.53) leans towards agreement, suggesting that although not overwhelmingly endorsed, there is a notable inclination among participants to increase English usage in Brussels, likely for practical reasons. This suggests a recognition of English as a valuable tool for communication and integration within Brussels.

The third statement was: "*Making English an official language in Brussels may prioritize the needs of international communities who don't speak French/Dutch over those who do*". The majority of the participants (30.9%) agreed. Specifically, 12.7% strongly disagreed, 20% disagreed, 16.4% neither agreed nor disagreed, **30.9% agreed**, and 20% strongly agreed with the statement (M=3.25). The mean value (3.25) shows a somewhat mixed but leaning towards agreement stance. This indicates concern among participants about potential prioritization of international communities with the adoption of English as an official language, though not strongly opposed.

The fourth statement was: "*Making English an official language in Brussels could threaten local languages (French and Dutch)*". The results showed that 20% strongly disagreed**, 30.9% disagreed**, 16.4% neither agreed nor disagreed, 20% agreed, and 12.7% strongly agreed with the statement (M=2.74). The mean value reveals that participants are somewhat cautious but not overwhelmingly convinced that making English an official language would pose a threat to French and Dutch in Brussels. The findings of this section of the questionnaire are showcased in Figure 3.

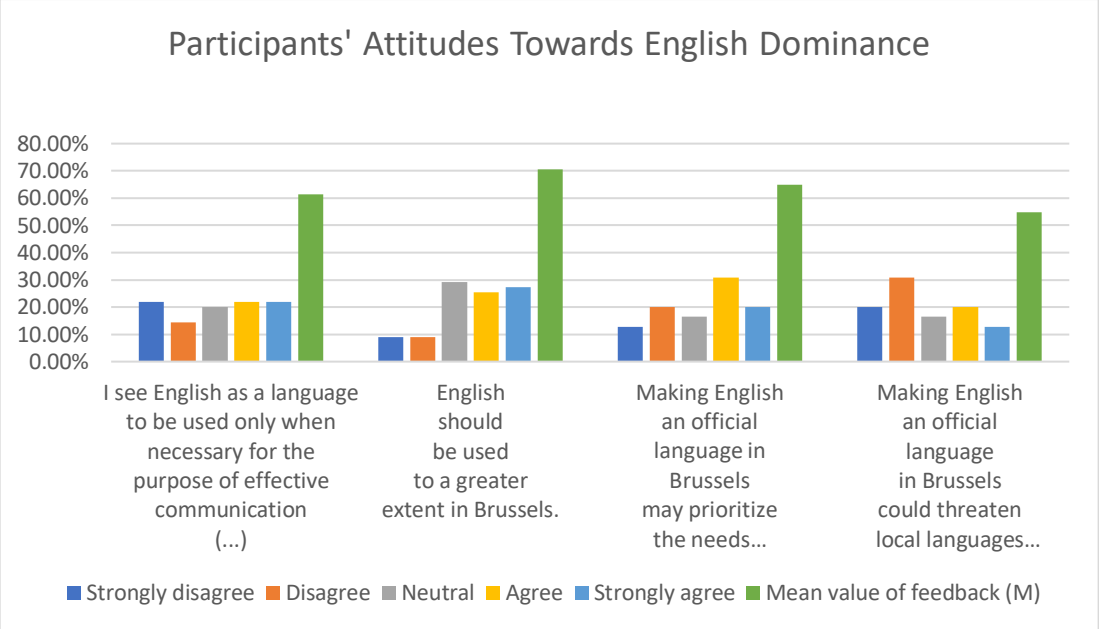

Figure 3. Participants' Attitudes Towards English Dominance

To conclude, the attitudes towards English dominance in Brussels demonstrate a nuanced perspective, reflecting the city's multicultural and multilingual environment. Still, there is considerable recognition of English as a practical means of communication and integration, as indicated by the positive responses to the idea of increasing its use (Statement 2). Additionally, most participants believed that making English an official language would not undermine the prominence or usage of French and Dutch in Brussels. (Statement 4). However, there is also an attachment to native languages and cultural identity, as evident from the varied responses to the perception of English (Statement 1). Also, most participants expressed concerns over prioritizing international communities (Statement 3). This dichotomy suggests that while English is important for effective communication, there is a simultaneous desire to preserve linguistic diversity and heritage. Concerns over the potential prioritization of international communities (Statement 3) further underscore the complexity of language dynamics in Brussels. These findings emphasize the need for language policies that balance

the cultivation of English as a *lingua franca* with preserving linguistic diversity and cultural identity within the city.

5.3.3. Use of English in Brussels

Participants were asked to rate their agreement with five statements on a 5-point Likert scale. This scale ranged from "never" to "always."

The fifth statement was: "*I use English in my workplace or professional environment*". In response, 3.60% indicated they never used English in their workplace, 1.80% rarely did so, 12.70% sometimes did, 16.40% often did, and **65.50% always used English** in their workplace (M=4.38). These findings underscore a widespread adoption of English in professional settings, with the majority consistently employing it in their workplace. This prevalence demonstrates the key role of English within professional environments in Brussels, according to the participants.

The sixth statement was: "*I use English for educational purposes, such as attending courses or workshops*". In response, 1.82% indicated they never used English for educational purposes, 3.64% rarely did so, 0% sometimes did, 32.73% often did, and **63.64% always used English** for educational purposes (M=4.58). The results reveal a substantial reliance on English for education, with the vast majority consistently using it for courses or workshops.

The seventh statement was: "*I use English for accessing information or services in Brussels (public transport, directions, etc.)*". The results show that 0% never used English for accessing information or services in Brussels, 3.6% rarely did so, 14.5% sometimes did, 29.1% often did, and **52.7% always used English** for accessing information or services in Brussels (M=4.31). The findings underscore a prevalent reliance on English for accessing information or services in Brussels, with over half of the participants consistently employing it for such

purposes. This widespread use of English underscores its value for everyday communication and accessing information and services.

The eighth statement was: "*I use English in social interactions or gatherings*". In response, **0%** indicated they never used English in social interactions, 3.6% rarely did so, 10.9% sometimes did, 30.9% often did, and **52.7% always used English** in social interactions or gatherings (M=4.27). The mean reveals a significant predominance of English usage in social interactions or gatherings among the participants, with over half of them consistently employing English in such contexts.

The ninth statement was, "*I use English at home*". The results show that **25.5% never used English** at home, **25.5% rarely** did so, 14.5% sometimes did, 12.7% often did, and 21.8% always used English at home (M=2.80). This distribution suggests a diverse linguistic picture in private domains, with strong attachment to other languages. The findings of this section of the questionnaire are showcased in Figure 4.

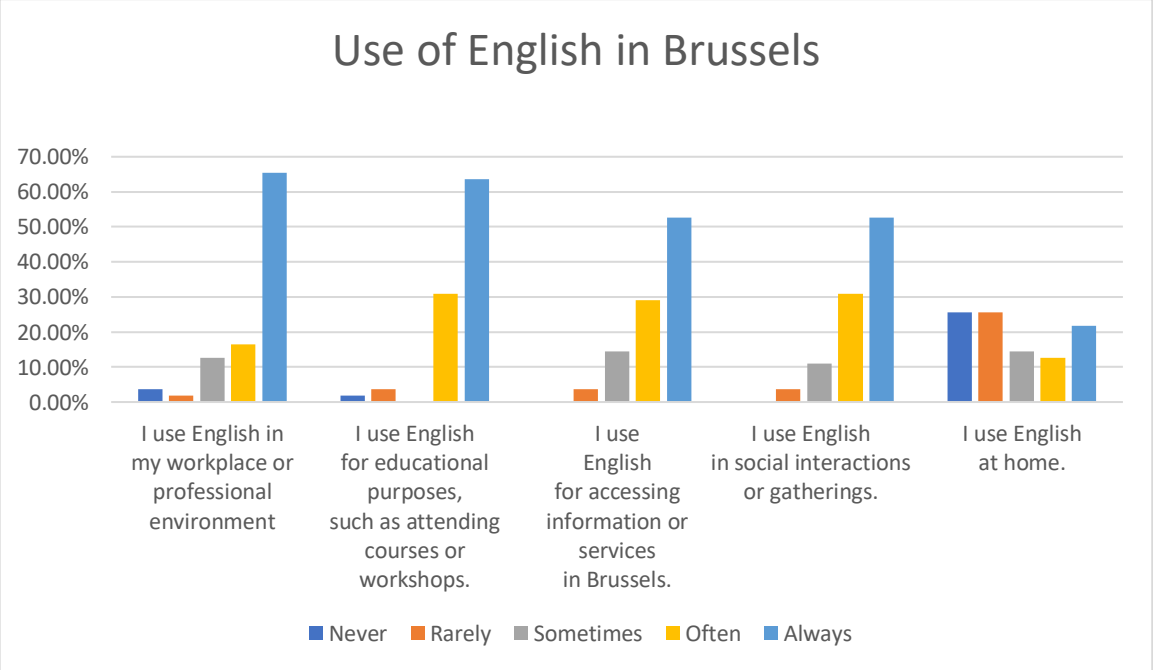

Figure 4. Participants' use of English in Brussels

The data on the use of English in various domains in Brussels unveils a multifaceted picture of language dynamics in the city. Across workplace and professional environments (Statement 5), there is a clear dominance of English, with a substantial majority consistently using it, highlighting its integral role in professional communication. Similarly, in educational settings (Statement 6), English emerges as a primary medium of communication, with the vast majority relying on it for courses and workshops. Additionally, the prevalent use of English for accessing information or services (Statement 7) underscores its importance as a means of communication and resource access in daily life. In social interactions or gatherings (Statement 8), English also holds significance, facilitating communication and interaction within diverse social settings. However, the use of English at home (Statement 9) presents a more nuanced picture, with a notable proportion reporting infrequent or rare use alongside those who use it regularly. This diversity suggests a complex linguistic picture within households, where English coexists alongside other languages. Overall, these findings underscore the prevalent presence of English across various domains in Brussels, reflecting its function as a *lingua franca* in the city's multicultural environment.

5.4. Evaluation of the Research Hypotheses

The analysis of survey responses revealed attitudes towards English in Brussels, as well as its patterns of use within the community. While a balanced perspective emerges regarding the practical benefits of English and concerns about its impact on local languages (H1), the data also reveals differences in usage patterns and attitudes, particularly in relation to its potential expanded role in the city (H2). This subchapter examines these findings, examining the interplay between language usage, practical advantages of English and concerns about its impact on the linguistic communities of Brussels.

5.4.1. Evaluation of H1: *Most participants will acknowledge the practical benefits of English in Brussels but also express concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities*

The first hypothesis posits that most participants will acknowledge the practical advantages of English in the city while simultaneously expressing concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities. To investigate this hypothesis, the study analysed responses to statements assessing perceptions of English as a practical tool (S1, S2) and concerns regarding its impact on the local language community (S3). The results show a nuanced perspective regarding the practical benefits of English. Regarding S1: "I see English as a language to be used only when necessary for effective communication, while I regard my mother tongue as an expression of my identity," 21.8% of the participants strongly agreed, while another 21.8% agreed. Therefore, **43.6%** of participants (the sum of those who strongly agreed and agreed) acknowledged the practical benefits of English for communication purposes and the significance of their mother tongue for personal identity. In contrast, **36.3%** of participants (the sum of those who strongly disagreed and disagreed) did not fully align with the statement, suggesting that they might not view English solely as a tool for communication and might not place as much emphasis on their mother tongue as an expression of identity. These findings highlight a balanced perspective among participants, with many recognizing the practical value of English while also holding their mother tongue in high regard for its connection to personal and cultural identity. The mean value of 3.07, leaning slightly towards agreement, further supports this notion of a generally neutral stance.

Regarding S2, "English should be used to a greater extent in Brussels," a similar proportion (21.8%) of participants strongly agreed, with an additional 25.5% agreeing with the statement. Therefore, a total of **47.3%** of participants (the sum of those who strongly agreed and agreed) expressed a desire for increased English usage in the city. In contrast, only **18.2%**

of participants (the sum of those who strongly disagreed and disagreed) opposed the increased use of English. These results reveal a clear inclination towards a more prominent role for English in Brussels, with the **majority** of positive responses outweighing negative ones. The mean value of feedback for S2 was **3.53**, indicating agreement with increasing English usage in the city. These results **confirm the hypothesis** by revealing a clear inclination towards a more prominent role for English in Brussels, with the majority of positive responses outweighing negative ones.

Moreover, these practical considerations coexist with significant concerns about the potential negative impacts of English. Regarding concerns about the potential marginalization of local communities due to English, the responses to **S3**: "Making English an official language in Brussels may prioritize the needs of international communities who don't speak French/Dutch over those who do," reveal a significant concern among participants. A combined **50.9%** of participants either agreed (30.9%) or strongly agreed (20%) with the concern, demonstrating that this concern is a prevalent sentiment among the majority of respondents. While 20% disagreed and 12.7% strongly disagreed with this statement, this combined **32.7%** is outweighed by the majority expressing concern about potential prioritization of international communities. The mean value of feedback for S3 was **3.25**, indicating a neutral stance and **confirming the hypothesis** regarding the concerns associated with the practical benefits of English, particularly in relation to the potential marginalization of local linguistic and cultural identities.

5.4.2. Evaluation of H2: *Participants who use English to a greater extent will be more likely to support increased use of English in Brussels and believe that making English an official language will not threaten local languages*

This subchapter investigates the relationship between English language usage and attitudes toward its potential expanded status in Brussels. The second hypothesis posits that participants who use English to a greater extent will be more likely to support both its increased use and the concept of instituting English as an official language, without perceiving it as a threat to local languages. To test this hypothesis, responses to two statements from the questionnaire were analysed (S2 and S4). These statements explore perceptions of the potential increased use of English in Brussels and concerns about its impact on local languages and communities.

It is crucial to acknowledge that the sample sizes of frequent and less frequent English users were combined for more comprehensive analysis. Participants were categorized based on their responses to two statements regarding their frequency of English use:

S5: "I use English in my workplace or professional environment."

S8: "I use English in social interactions or gatherings."

Participants who indicated using English "Always" or "Often" in both domains were classified as frequent users, while those who reported "Sometimes," "Rarely," or "Never" in either or both domains were classified as non-frequent users. There were 39 frequent users of English and 16 less frequent users of English. Participants provided their opinions on the following statements, indicating whether they agreed or disagreed:

S2: "English should be used to a greater extent in Brussels."

S4: "Making English an official language in Brussels could threaten local languages (French and Dutch)."

Therefore, these statements were used to test the following hypothesis:

H2: Participants who use English to a greater extent will be more likely to support increased use of English in Brussels and believe that making English an official language will not threaten local languages.

By calculating and comparing the mean scores (M) for frequent and non-frequent English users, we aimed to identify potential differences in their perspectives regarding the role of English in Brussels and the implications of its official recognition.

The analysis of responses, using the variable of frequent vs. non-frequent users, revealed nuanced differences in attitudes regarding the role of English in Brussels and the implications of making it an official language. Regarding **S2** ("English should be used to a greater extent in Brussels"), frequent users expressed notably stronger support (**M=3.85**) compared to less frequent users (**M=2.75**). Among less frequent users, 5 agreed, 5 neutral, 3 disagreed, 3 strongly disagreed. On the other hand, frequent users revealed different opinions with 15 strongly agreeing, 9 agreeing, 11 neutral, 2 disagreeing, and 2 strongly disagreeing.

Regarding **S4** ("Making English an official language in Brussels could threaten local languages (French and Dutch)"), less frequent users expressed a higher concern (**M=3.0**) compared to frequent users (**M=2.64**). The less frequent users expressed a range of opinions, with 5 strongly agreeing, 3 neutral, 6 disagreeing, and 2 strongly disagreeing. Among frequent users, 2 strongly agreed, 11 agreed, 6 were neutral, 11 disagreed, and 9 strongly disagreed. This suggests that individuals who use English less frequently in their daily lives may be more

sensitive to the potential negative impacts of English on the existing linguistic environment in Brussels.

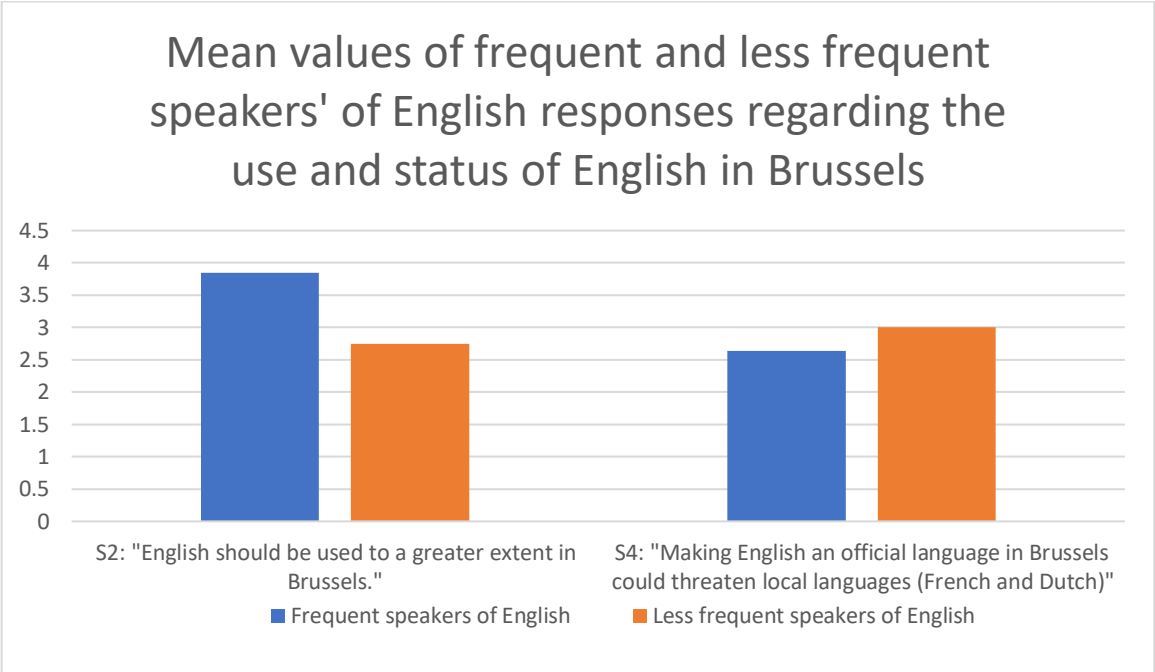

Figure 5. Attitudes of frequent and less frequent speakers of English regarding the use and status of English in Brussels

These findings, based on the categorization using **S5** and **S8**, highlight the multifaceted nature of language attitudes in Brussels. While participants who use English to a greater extent generally demonstrate a more positive attitude towards the increased use of English, concerns about the potential negative impacts on local communities and languages are still present. The differences in attitudes between the two groups underscore the importance of considering the diverse perspectives and needs of both frequent and less frequent English users in the shaping of language policies in Brussels.

The analysis of responses confirms the hypothesis (**H2**): *Participants who use English to a greater extent will be more likely to support increased use of English in Brussels and believe that making English an official language will not threaten local languages*. The data

indicates a clear pattern: those who use English more frequently in their professional and social lives are more likely to advocate for its expanded role in the city, as evidenced by their higher mean value on **S2** ("English should be used to a greater extent in Brussels"). This finding aligns with the expectation that individuals who regularly engage with English may perceive it as a valuable tool for communication, integration, and access to opportunities in a multilingual environment like Brussels.

Moreover, the results also reveal that less frequent English users are more likely to express concerns about the potential negative consequences of elevating English to an official language status. This is evident in their higher mean value on **S4** ("Making English an official language in Brussels could threaten local languages (French and Dutch)"), suggesting a heightened awareness of the potential for English to marginalize or diminish the status of the existing official languages. This finding highlights the importance of considering the perspectives of less frequent English users, who may be more sensitive to the potential effects of language policy changes on linguistic diversity and cultural identity in Brussels.

5.5. Discussion

This subchapter explores the multifaceted usage patterns and attitudes towards English in Brussels, as revealed through the survey responses. The analysis not only confirms certain hypotheses but also uncovers nuanced complexities and underlying concerns that suggest careful consideration in the formulation of language policy.

5.5.1. Discussion of H1*: Most participants will acknowledge the practical benefits of English in Brussels but also express concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities*

The findings regarding the first hypothesis revealed a nuanced perspective on the role of English in Brussels. Many participants acknowledged the practical benefits of English for

communication and the value of their mother tongue for identity, and, although there was a clear inclination towards a more prominent role of English in the city, concerns about the potential marginalization of local communities due to English were also prevalent. These results confirm the hypothesis, highlighting the coexistence of acknowledging the practical benefits of English alongside apprehensions about its potential effects on local languages and cultural heritage.

It is important to mention that a significant number of neutral responses in the data further contributes to the nuanced understanding of attitudes towards English in Brussels. This indicates that a significant proportion of the population may not hold strong opinions on the role of English in relation to their mother tongue or its desired level of usage in the city. While these neutral responses do not explicitly support the hypothesis, they could indicate a gap in knowledge about the possible implications of English language policies. The presence of neutral responses across these statements highlights the need for providing education and information about the multifaceted implications of language policy in Brussels. The 20% of neutral responses regarding S1 and S2, regarding the role of English and its desired level of usage, could indicate that a large number of respondents may not have fully considered the complex interplay between language, identity, and community. They may not have actively engaged with the potential consequences of increased English usage for the status and vitality of local languages. Similarly, the 16.4% of neutral responses regarding S3, that deals with the potential marginalization of local communities, could suggest a lack of awareness of the potential social and cultural impacts of making English an official language. This could result from a lack of information or exposure to the perspectives of different linguistic communities within Brussels.

Therefore, these neutral responses highlight the importance of public discourse and education regarding language policy in Brussels. By raising awareness about the potential benefits and drawbacks of different language policies, policymakers can empower residents to make informed decisions and participate actively in shaping the linguistic environment of their city. This could involve creating opportunities for open discussions among residents from diverse linguistic backgrounds to share their perspectives and concerns through public consultations and forums. Furthermore, it could prove useful to develop educational materials and initiatives that encourage an understanding of the value of linguistic diversity and how language policies can affect various communities. This measure could also include providing information and resources in multiple languages to guarantee that all residents can access relevant information about language policy issues. By encouraging a more informed and engaged community in the city, policymakers can create a more inclusive language policy framework that reflects the needs of all residents of Brussels. This would not only contribute to the preservation of the city's linguistic heritage but also promote social cohesion among its diverse communities.

5.5.2. Discussion of H2: *Participants who use English to a greater extent will be more likely to support increased use of English in Brussels and believe that making English an official language will not threaten local languages*

The findings regarding the second hypothesis revealed distinct differences in attitudes towards the use and status of English in Brussels between frequent and less frequent English users. As hypothesized, those who use English to a greater extent expressed greater support for its increased use in the city (evidenced by higher mean scores on S2) and were less likely to perceive it as a threat to local languages (lower mean scores on S4). In contrast, less frequent English users demonstrated more concerns regarding the potential negative impact of elevating the status of English, particularly concerning the marginalization of local languages. These

results highlight the multifaceted nature of language attitudes in Brussels, where perspectives are influenced by the extent of individuals' daily English usage.

Overall, the analysis provides evidence for the hypothesis that frequent English speakers will be more likely to support increased use of English in Brussels and believe that making English an official language will not threaten local languages. These findings provide implications for language policy discussions in Brussels, emphasizing the need for inclusive approaches that consider the diverse perspectives and needs of all residents, irrespective of their English language abilities.

The analysis of responses to statements S2 and S4, specifically examining the perspectives of frequent and less frequent English users, underscores the need for a nuanced approach to language policy in Brussels. The divide in attitudes between these two groups highlights the importance of acknowledging the diverse needs and concerns of the population when formulating language policies. While frequent English users may advocate the increased use of English due to its benefits for communication and integration, less frequent users raise concerns about the potential marginalization of local languages.

Therefore, any effective language policy must strike a balance. This involves not only recognizing the practical advantages of English but also being aware of the potential risks of marginalization and language loss. Policymakers should aim to create a multilingual environment that encourages the use of all three languages (English, French, and Dutch) in official communications, education, and public spaces. This could involve providing resources and opportunities for residents to learn and maintain proficiency in both local languages, thereby encouraging a sense of linguistic and cultural pride. Additionally, promoting cultural events and initiatives that celebrate the linguistic diversity of Brussels and encourage the use of French and Dutch could further strengthen the position of these languages.

It is crucial that the perspectives of both frequent and less frequent English users are represented in language policy discussions and decision-making processes. This will ensure that the implemented policies are inclusive and address the concerns of all residents, ultimately promoting a more cohesive society in Brussels. By acknowledging and addressing the diverse perspectives within the community, policymakers can develop a language policy framework that balances the benefits of English with the preservation of local languages and cultural identity.

5.6. Limitations of the study

This thesis represents my first experience with conducting research, as my earlier academic work involved mostly theoretical analysis. While the process of writing the theoretical section was familiar terrain, the methodological aspects and practical execution of the research presented certain challenges. The topic itself was chosen due to a prior interest in the linguistic situation in Brussels, prompted by a previous seminar paper and personal experiences in the city. Recognizing Brussels' status as the European capital, often serving as an example for other capitals in matters of municipal policy, I was particularly intrigued by the potential implications of its language policy. If Brussels were to adapt its language policy to accommodate migration policy and address labour shortages, it could set a precedent for other European capitals to follow suit. Observing a similar scenario unfolding in Zagreb, with many natives accommodating short-term workers by speaking English, further sparked my interest in examining this topic. Anticipating a return to Brussels, I decided to expand on the seminar paper and develop it into my Master's thesis.

However, the research process revealed several challenges. Although I was aware of the demographic diversity in Brussels, the actual data collection phase brought certain obstacles. The lack of native Brussels residents in the city was particularly striking. Despite attempts to

reach out to personal contacts and collaborate with universities, the majority of respondents were not born and raised in the city. Moreover, many individuals born in Brussels had relocated to nearby towns or villages and thus were not eligible to take part in the research anymore. This created a paradoxical situation where the voices of newcomers were more readily accessible than those of the native population, many of whom may have left the city precisely because it no longer reflects their community, their absence now further amplifying the underrepresentation of their perspectives.

Additionally, as anticipated, the data confirmed the existing imbalance between French and Dutch speakers in Brussels. While prior research like the BRIO language barometer and demographic trends had already indicated this disparity, the significantly higher number of French-speaking participants in this study limited the ability to conduct a comparative analysis of attitudes between the two language groups. This obstacle underscores the ongoing challenges in documenting the full spectrum of perspectives within Brussels' complex linguistic landscape, particularly concerning the less represented Dutch-speaking community.

Finally, the sensitive and often politically charged nature of language policy and identity in Brussels elicited a strong response from some participants. They expressed a desire to engage more deeply with the research topic, feeling that a short survey could not adequately capture the nuances and complexities of their views. This highlights the potential value of incorporating qualitative research methods, such as interviews, which could offer deeper insights into individual perspectives and experiences in relation to language use and attitudes in the city.

6. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to bridge a critical gap in existing literature by analysing the use and attitudes towards English in Brussels, specifically within the field of language policy and planning (LPP). The study drew upon theoretical frameworks from foundational LPP studies

and its evolution, as well as an examination of LPP developments in Belgium, particularly concerning linguistic freedom and territoriality. Additionally, it explored the concept of *EuroEnglish* and the unique linguistic landscape of Brussels.

In order to analyze the use and attitudes towards English in Brussels, a questionnaire was administered to 55 people living in the city, gathering data on their language proficiency, attitudes towards English dominance, and frequency of English use in different domains. The analysis of responses led to several key findings, confirming two hypotheses.

Firstly, it was found that most participants acknowledged the practical benefits of English in Brussels but also expressed concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities. This indicates a balanced view where English is seen as a valuable tool for communication and integration, yet there is an awareness of the risks to local languages. Secondly, frequent English speakers were more likely to support the increased use of English in Brussels and believed that making English an official language would not threaten local languages. This suggests that regular users of English see it as beneficial for their daily interactions and integration, while those who use it less frequently are more concerned about the potential negative impacts on linguistic and cultural identity.

Overall, this thesis contributes to the understanding of language policy and planning in a multilingual and international context like Brussels. It sheds light on the interplay between language use, attitudes, and identity, and it provides insights for policymakers grappling with the complexities of multilingualism and social cohesion. The findings emphasize the necessity of nuanced and inclusive language policies that balance the promotion of English as a *lingua franca* while preserving linguistic diversity and cultural heritage.

By highlighting the perspectives of both native and non-native residents, French/Dutch speakers, and non-speakers of French/Dutch, as well as frequent and less frequent English

users, this research provides a clearer insight into language attitudes in Brussels. This knowledge can inform future research on language policy and planning, as well as contribute to the development of more effective language policies in Brussels and other multilingual contexts around the world. Given the increasing influx of short-term workers in Croatia, many of whom do not speak Croatian, this research is particularly relevant as Croatia may soon face a similar situation regarding the role of English in its own evolving linguistic landscape. Understanding the dynamics of language use and attitudes in response to changing labour market needs and migration patterns can help inform future language policy decisions across Europe, ensuring that they are both effective and respectful of the country's linguistic identity and cultural heritage.

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8. Appendix : Questionnaire

1) Personal Information:

Q1: What is your gender?

Q2: How old are you?

Q3: Are you a native resident of Brussels or you moved here?

Q3: What is your mother tongue?

Q4: How would you rate your proficiency in English?

Q5: How would you rate your proficiency in French? (if applicable)

Q6: How would you rate your proficiency in Dutch? (if applicable)

Q7: How many years have you formally studied English?

Q8: How many years have you informally studied English and in which contexts?

Q9: How many years have you formally studied French? (If applicable)

Q10: How many years have you informally studied French and in which contexts?

Q11: How many years have you formally studied Dutch? (If applicable)

Q12: How many years have you informally studied Dutch and in which contexts?

2) **Attitudes Towards English Dominance:**

S1: I see English as a language to be used only when necessary for the purpose of effective communication, while I regard my mother tongue as an expression of my identity.

S2: English should be used to a greater extent in Brussels.

S3: Making English an official language in Brussels may prioritize the needs of international communities over those of local residents.

S4: Making English an official language in Brussels could threaten local languages (French and Dutch).

3) **Use of English in Brussels**

S5: I use English in my workplace or professional environment.

S6: I use English for educational purposes, such as attending courses or workshops.

S7: I use English for accessing information or services in Brussels.

S8: I use English in social interactions or gatherings.

S9: I use English at home.

S10: Are there any other ways in which you use English in Brussels that were not covered in the previous questions? Please specify.

9. Abstract

Language Policy and the Role of English in Brussels: A Study on Language Use and Attitudes

This thesis examines the language policy and the role of English in Brussels, incorporating a small-scale study on language use and attitudes among people living in the city. The first part explores the theoretical background of language policy and planning (LPP), covering its emergence, evolution, and critical approaches. It also delves into LPP in Belgium, focusing on state reforms, linguistic freedom, and the principle of territoriality. Additionally, it discusses the concept of EuroEnglish and the unique linguistic context of Brussels, particularly regarding the increasing use of English due to globalization and immigration. The second part analyses the results of a questionnaire filled out by 55 Brussels residents. The questionnaire focused on the participants' language proficiency, attitudes towards English dominance, and frequency of English use in various domains. The study revealed that most participants acknowledged the practical benefits of English in Brussels but also expressed concerns about its potential to marginalize local language communities. Additionally, the frequency of English use was a predictor of support for the increased use of English in Brussels and the belief that making English an official language would not threaten local languages. Those who frequently used English expressed greater support for its expanded role in Brussels, viewing it as a valuable tool for communication and integration. Participants who used English more often were more inclined to support its increased use and official recognition, which underscores the pragmatic nature of language attitudes in a multilingual city like Brussels.

Key words: language policy and planning, Brussels, the English language, linguistic diversity, globalization.

10. Sažetak

Jezična politika i uloga engleskoga jezika u Bruxellesu: istraživanje o uporabi jezika i stavovima

Ovaj diplomski rad istražuje jezičnu politiku i ulogu engleskog jezika u Bruxellesu, uključujući istraživanje manjeg opsega o uporabi jezika i stavovima među stanovnicima grada. Prvi dio istražuje teorijsku pozadinu jezične politike i planiranja, uključujući nastanak, razvoj i kritičke pristupe. Obrađuje se i jezična politika i planiranje u Belgiji, s fokusom na državne reforme, jezičnu slobodu i načelo teritorijalnosti. Također, u prvome se dijelu analizira koncept *EuroEnglish* i jedinstveni jezični kontekst Bruxellesa, posebice u vezi sa sve većom uporabom engleskoga jezika zbog globalizacije i imigracije. Drugi dio analizira rezultate upitnika provedenog među 55 stanovnika Bruxellesa. Cilj upitnika bio je otkriti jezične sposobnosti sudionika, stavove prema dominaciji engleskoga jezika i učestalost njegovog korištenja u raznim domenama. Istraživanje je pokazalo da većina sudionika prepoznaje praktične prednosti engleskoga jezika u Bruxellesu, ali da također izražava zabrinutost zbog njegovog potencijala da marginalizira lokalne jezične zajednice. Također, učestalost korištenja engleskoga jezika bila je prediktor podrške povećanoj upotrebi engleskog jezika u Bruxellesu i uvjerenja da proglašenje engleskog službenim jezikom ne bi ugrozilo lokalne jezike. Oni koji često koriste engleski jezik izrazili su veću podršku za njegovu proširenu ulogu u Bruxellesu, smatrajući ga vrijednim sredstvom komunikacije i integracije. Sudionici koji češće koriste engleski jezik bili su skloniji podržati njegovu povećanu uporabu i službeno priznavanje, što upućuje na pragmatičnu prirodu jezičnih stavova u višejezičnom gradu poput Bruxellesa.

Ključne riječi: jezična politika i planiranje, Bruxelles, engleski jezik, jezična raznolikost, globalizacija