



Plurilingualism and the circulation of knowledge, imaginations, and skills. What are the dynamics and vulnerabilities?

Call for papers

Version 11.4

Argument

The 7th edition of the European Conference on Plurilingualism will take place in Paris on May 20, 21, and 22, 2026, more than twenty years after the first edition (Paris, October 2005).

In *L'économie du 20e siècle (The Economy of the 20th Century)*, French economist, historian and philosopher François Perroux stated that "we do not have a comprehensive, coherent and usable theory of what I propose to call the 'domination effect'" (Perroux, 1961: 27).

Why talk about relations of *domination* when we are dealing with the circulation of knowledge, imaginaries, and skills in relation to linguistic diversity? When there is circulation, movement, transfer, there are differences in level, which means that knowledge, imaginations and skills do not emerge everywhere at the same time and in the same way, giving rise to differences, imbalances and potential conflicts.

Thus, rather than considering domination as evil and embarking on a futile quest for equality, it is better to consider it as a fact that conditions all personal and social life and is regulated by social life. From then on, the circulation of knowledge, imaginaries, and skills becomes intelligible.

Another fundamental dimension for understanding the circulation of knowledge, imaginations, and skills is the *linguistic dimension*. It is generally neglected due to monolingual bias.

From a monolingual perspective, information is imagined as being conveyed by a single language. This is the theoretical vision of the market and pure and perfect competition, in which language is simply "a means of communication"¹, and what is communicated is information. Therefore, the more homogeneous the language is and the better it is understood by everyone, the better information circulates. Once culture itself is reduced to information, there is no point in having, using, or working with multiple languages.

This commercial view can be countered by one that emphasizes local identity, community, and irreducible differences, which are considered to be part of the essence of a context or a place. From this perspective, there is no exchange; there is only insularity, self-identification in the non-recognition of the other, negation of otherness, diversity being perceived as a threat, and this identitarian or identitarian individualism leading to the endless reproduction of the same. This vision is a different kind of monolingualism, but monolingualism nonetheless.

¹ expression taken from an educational document from the Cité internationale de Villers-Cotterêts, which shows that the worm sometimes hides where you least expect it.

Between these opposites lies dynamic identity, which is constructed in relation to others and one's environment. Diversity is experienced as richness rather than danger, and the world is perceived as an infinity to be discovered rather than a limit to be circumscribed. It means knowing one's own language better by discovering other languages. This is the vision of multilingualism.

Domination is not a one-sided phenomenon. Superiority through military force does not necessarily lead to cultural superiority.

In geographical terms, there are no limits. When Heinz Wisman sees Nietzsche as the most French of German philosophers, we are in this field.

Domination inevitably implies vulnerability. From a synchronic point of view, the way is wide open for phenomena revolving around linguistic insecurity, questioned identities, and social cohesion, which is increasingly under threat.

A student who enters middle school without having acquired the fundamentals in elementary school that will enable them to follow a normal school curriculum is placed in a situation of linguistic insecurity or fragility that may weigh on them throughout their life. This highlights the "centrality of language" in the sense given to this concept by Tullio De Mauro (De Mauro, 1975), namely that while not everything can be reduced to language, language acquisition is nevertheless at the heart of the system, something that a whole generation of educators has failed to recognize. We grow up with language and are largely shaped by language.

The field is wide open. We believe that multilingual and intercultural education is a decisive factor in reducing linguistic insecurity and strengthening social cohesion.

The educational dimension, from nursery school to higher education, is fundamental in more ways than one because school is a place of transmission, socialization, openness to others, and emancipation. Higher education is no exception as a place for deepening knowledge, specialization, professionalization, research, the development and circulation of knowledge and ideas, and internationalization, while at the same time putting down roots in a territory.

Particular attention must be paid to inter-university alliances, now referred to as "European universities."

Other dimensions should be taken into consideration without necessarily being developed here, such as technological, geopolitical, and geolinguistic dimensions. Nevertheless, particular attention should be paid to the mobility of individuals, cultures, and skills.

During this conference, we believe it would be desirable to focus our discussions on several areas, including but not limited to the following:

- Education
- Research
- Media and publishing
- Digital education
- Training for trainers
- Sustainable development
- European awareness
- Europe-Africa relations
- Language areas
- Mobility of individuals and skills

Various issues can be addressed within these areas, as indicated below:

Knowledge economy and language economy:

- the asymmetrical nature of all linguistic relationships
- languages and value creation

- the economics of linguistic exchange
- theories of linguistic borrowing
- theories of translation: the influence of the source language on the target language
- linguistic and cultural asymmetries and creativity
- translation economics and scientific publishing
- dominant languages, dominated languages, visible languages, invisible languages, additive learning, subtractive learning
- heritage, minority languages, and issues of linguistic hybridity
- transculturation theory and developments
- diasporas and transnational migrations: deterritorialization and reterritorialization
- mobility, employability, and entrepreneurship

Psycholinguistics, didactics, and pedagogy

- multilingual practices and cognition
- theories of complexity and chaos from the perspective of linguistic hybridity
- multilingual and intercultural education
- questioning monolingual and assimilationist education policies for migrants
- the issue of bilingual and multilingual education in Africa, Haiti, etc.
- questioning monolingual habitus in school literacy

Key dates

Call for papers: August 2025

Deadline for submission of proposals: December 20, 2025

Notification of selected proposals: February 15, 2026

Registration for speakers and non-speaking participants: February 15, 2025

Publication of preliminary program: April 30, 2025

Deadline for submission of full papers: July 31, **2026**, maximum 10 pages in A5 format or 20,000 characters including spaces. (A template is provided online in the appendix to the publication guidelines.)

Practical details

Dates: May 20-22, 2026

Venue: Paris.

Respond to this call on the dedicated website (fr, de, en, es, ro):

<https://assises.observatoireplurilinguisme.eu/en-us/home-2>

assises@observatoireplurilinguisme.eu

Practical information

Oral presentations will be limited to 15 minutes. Slideshow presentations will be possible.

Abstracts of proposed papers (maximum half a page or 2,000 characters including spaces) must be submitted on the platform **before December 20, 2025**.

These abstracts will be used to select candidates and to publish the preliminary proceedings in the participant's file.

Texts for publication will be produced within two months of the event and submitted to the dedicated website using the article template available for download (see "publication numbers").

Catering:

Accommodation: not provided (recommended hotels)

Image rights: the event will be recorded and may be photographed or filmed. Anyone who does not wish to be recognized in photos or videos is asked to notify the organizers.

Registration fees (speakers and participants)

- Online registration required (from 15th February 2026)

	Until 30th of April 2026	After 1st of May 2026
Speakers	135 €	€170
Participants, accompanying persons	€70	€10
Students	€35	€
Remote participants	€70	€70
Master's and PhD students from partner universities	Free, subject to availability	Free, subject to availability

Speakers are invited to register on the directory of researchers and research teams working on multilingualism and linguistic and cultural diversity set up by the OEP, the POCLANDE network, ACAREF and OPA (<https://annuaire.observatoireplurilinguisme.eu/>).

Proceedings

The participant's file will include pre-proceedings comprising abstracts of the papers.

The proceedings will be available on the OEP website in digital and paper format, depending on the deadline for submission of papers by speakers.

They will subsequently be published in book form.

Language

Languages of the conference: French, Spanish, German, English, Italian.

Plenary sessions will be interpreted into at least two languages, with the final choice depending on the languages of the presentations and the language skills of the participants.

In the case of slide presentations, it is strongly recommended that the slides be in a language other than that used for the oral presentation.

Publication standards: specific section to be consulted on the conference website.

Co-organizing partners

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