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# Multilingual or Failed? Is the Trilingual Luxembourgish Public Education System a Failure or a Success Story?

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to describe and explain the Luxembourgish trilingual public education system and, consequently, to determine whether the Luxembourgish trilingual public education system is a system of success or of failure. The aim is to determine whether people in Luxembourg and the rest of the world have a positive or negative opinion towards the trilingual public education system in place, or if they rather would prefer a bilingual public education system, or any other combination of languages of instruction in education. 154 questionnaires were collected and 36 interviews conducted among (1) Luxembourgers with Luxembourgish Nationality (Lux.Nat.), (2) Luxembourg residents including Lux.Nat. and foreigners who reside in Luxembourg (Lux.All.), and (3) the rest of the world (World). More specifically cross-cultural management theories by Hofstede et al. (2010), Hofstede (2001) and House et al. (2004), in combination with language theories by Lewis (2006), Blackledge and Ceece (2010), (Cummins (2000), García (2014, 2009), and language and management theories by Brannen, Piekari & Tietze (2014) serve as basis for the language as identifier theory (Schinzel, 2013a). There is a high failure rate of school students who tend to not understand the language of instruction especially in mathematics, biology, chemistry, and history, and the command of the English language in schools is insufficient. The results indicate that most respondents prefer integration not separation of the population, the system should maintain its instruction in the three official languages of the country: Luxembourgish, French, German. Residents should adopt a geocentric approach residing in a multilingual and multicultural reality in Luxembourg. Some of the interviews are reprinted; discussion, implications, and recommendations for future research follow.

**Key words:** language and management; Hofstede, education; cross-cultural management; international business; language; trilingual public education system; Luxembourg

**JEL code:** F

## 1. Introduction

The language situation in Luxembourg has been subject to numerous researches, publications, discussions, debates (Fehlen, 1998a; Maurer-Hetto, 2009; Horner, 2007; Weber, 2008; Weber & Horner, 2010), and reforms (FGIL, 2012; Kurschat, 2014, pp. 4-9), involving even the OECD (Carey and Ernst, 2006). Despite these efforts a solution to the complexity of the situation — integration versus separation (Fehlen et al., 1998b) — seems a remote, unattainable goal. Plurilingual school education (Maurer-Hetto, 2008; Maurer-Hetto & Roth-Dury, 2008)

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goes in parallel with conflicts (Elcheroth, 2010, p. 40), and reflects the complexities and paradoxes of a multicultural national identity shaped by history (Kraemer, 1995, pp. 74-75).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Luxembourg

The language situation in Luxembourg's schools is deeply anchored in the specific place the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg takes in Europe and in the world. With its small size of only 2,586 km<sup>2</sup>, 82 km long and 57 km wide at its longest and widest points it is one of the smallest European countries. Its borders are with Germany (138 km), France (73 km), and Belgium (148 km) (The World Factbook). The resident population as of 1 January 2014 (Statec, 2014) included 90,764 Portuguese, 37,158 French, 18,773 Italians, 18,159 Belgians, and 12,659 Germans. Cross-border workers make the specific situation (Statec, 2013): Luxembourg's total population consisted of 537,000 inhabitants of whom 298,200 (55.53%) were Luxembourgers and 238,800 (44.47%) were foreigners. Domestic employment was 379,000. During the daytime, 156,900 cross-border workers came to Luxembourg to work, 39% of the domestic employment: 77,800 from France, 39,500 from Belgium, and 39,600 from Germany (Schinzel, 2013a, 2013b). You have to genuinely understand the meaning of "*Mir wëllebleiwe, watmir sin*" ("*We want to remain what we are*") (Berg, 1993).

The national language is Luxembourgish (Lëtzebuergesch), and administrative languages are French, German, Luxembourgish (Statec, 2013). Citizenship is only awarded to people who speak Luxembourgish (Spizzo, 1995). The language defines the in-group (Briley et al., 2005) and the out-group. Those who speak Luxembourgish are part of the in-group and those who do not speak the language are part of the out-group.

### 2.2 Management Scholars

Management scholars, such as Hofstede (2001), Hofstede et al. (2010) and House et al. (2004) have acknowledged that language has indeed an impact on culture. Hofstede (2001) defines culture as the "collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another". This explains the author's choice of 3 different groups for the present research: Lux.Nat., Lux.All., World. This research does not investigate Hofstede's 6 dimensions of culture, but rather the murky field of language and management, it tests their theory of culture across languages rather than across national borders, which is what above mentioned management scholars do. Hofstede et al.'s (2002) criticism of his own theory goes, among others: "Nations are not the best units for studying cultures". Table 1 (Schinzel, 2012) shows Hofstede's cultural dimensions of Lux.Nat., and Lux.All., Hofstede's estimates on Luxembourg, his data for France, Germany, the UK, Belgium FR, Belgium NL, Italy, the Netherlands, China, the USA, and Japan, where the cultural differences become clear.

**Table 1 Cultural Comparisons: The author's Luxembourg, Lux.Nat. in Comparison with Hofstede's UK–BelgiumFR–Belgium NL–Italy–the Netherlands NL–China–USA–Japan (on a scale from 1-100, 1 being the lowest and 100 the highest score)**

	The author's Lux.Nat.	The author's Lux.All.	Hofstede's estimates on Luxbg	Hofstede's France	Hofstede's Germany	UK	Belgium FR	Belgium NL	Italy	NL	China	USA	Japan
PDI	29	36	40	68	35	35	68	61	50	38	80	40	54
UAI	95	97	70	86	65	35	93	97	75	53	30	46	92
IDV	34	51.5	60	71	67	89	71	78	76	80	20	91	46
MAS	54	47	50	43	66	66	60	43	70	14	66	62	95
LTO	65	69	64	63	83	51	82	82	61	67	87	26	88
IVR	55	53.5	56	48	40	69	57	57	30	68	24	68	42
MON	24	10	-	16.5	9.9	35.4	-	-	35.2	11.9	0	57.2	4.0

### 2.3 The Luxembourgish Public School System

Kraemer (1995) describes the situation in multilingual Luxembourg as follows: the language issue starts already in pre-school, as the instruction language is Luxembourgish, which represents a problem for foreign children, who often speak French or Portuguese. Luxembourgish is given the “integration” function, preparing foreign children for an alphabetization in German in primary school. Later, French will replace German progressively to become the main language instruction in secondary school (Weber & Horner, 2008).

To cite Weber and Horner (2008, p. 89): “Moreover, there are few alternatives for parents whose children cannot cope with the state school system. The small number of private, religious (i.e., Catholic) schools follows the state school curricula and students take exactly the same examinations, including the Secondary School Leaving Examination. The only alternatives are the Lycée Vauban, the Waldorf School, the European School and the International School, but they tend to charge high fees and to cater for an international elite. As a result, the only other option taken up by 3.6% of the school population is to attend schools just across the border mostly in Belgium or France (Berg & Weis, 2005, p. 58).”

In his 2014 publication “Quellepolitiquelinguistique pour l’écoleluxembourgeoise?”, Weber suggests several new models to reform the current system (Weber, 2014a, pp. 10-11). He suggests a first reform system: in Cycle 1 (préscolaire), all languages should be tolerated, as children in pre-primary education with migration backgrounds experience difficulties with the Luxembourgish (Christmann & Sunnen, 2007; Bodé & Content, 2011). In Cycle 2 alphabetisation should be in a language known by the pupils: Luxembourgish, French or Portuguese. However he suggests 2 parallel systems: the French speaking and the German speaking. On the other hand, the second reform system would consist in a simultaneous bilingual alphabetisation where half of the subjects would be taught in Luxembourgish and the other half in French. English would be introduced from the 3rd or 4th cycle on, in the “lycées” a fourth language would be introduced from the 6th on, i.e., German, Portuguese, Spanish or Italian. From 4th and 3rd cycle on some subjects would be taught in English (Weber, 2014a, pp. 10-11). See also Weber 2014b.

The 1984 legislation on language made Luxembourgish the official language together with French and German. Despite the growing number of foreign children, Luxembourgish is the language of instruction in pre-school (age 3-6): “précoce” and “préscolaire”, with the aim to prepare pupils for the alphabetization in German in primary school (age 6-12). In secondary school (age 12-19), German as language of instruction will be replaced by French, until French is near mother tongue level (Kurschat, 2014b).

Fernand Fehlen, whose research focus is on the language situation in Luxembourg (Fehlen, 1997, 2002), published his first “Baleine” study in 1998 (La Baleine/In English: The Whale), followed by a second “Baleine” study in 2009 (Fehlen, 2009). With these he drew attention to the fact that Luxembourg needs to concrete an integrative education system and a language policy that prevents the loss in multilingualism (Houtsch, 2010). Fehlen, with his studies, attempts an explanation of the role of the Luxembourgish language. He shows, despite its smallness, the complexity of the country and its society. The Grand Duchy hosts people who have been living in Luxembourg for a long time, or who just moved, or who moved several years ago, who work in different companies, in different jobs, from lowest to highest qualifications, with the specific situation of the cross-border workers, and workers who are sent to or from Luxembourg for work only for a few years. However, he explains, Luxembourgish is mostly used as a spoken language. Its use as written language is limited, with the result that German is mostly used as a written language. The instruction in French in secondary school is responsible for the

high failure rate of pupils, following Fehlen (Houtsch, 2010). If you only speak Luxembourgish, you will fail on the job market, states Fehlen. He further asks: How can somebody who doesn't master his mother tongue, master another language? He states further: the Luxembourger who speaks in another language, always lacks content in his speech, as he has to concentrate on the form (the language).

#### **2.4 Hypotheses**

There are more issues to the research subject besides the five main themes (1) integration not separation of the population, (2) learn the three official languages of the country: Luxembourgish, French, German, (3) be prepared for the multilingual and multicultural reality in Luxembourg, (4) high failure rate given the fact that children do not understand the language of instruction especially in mathematics, biology, chemistry, history, and (5) pupils do not learn English well enough.

The author formulates the following three hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 1: Lux.Nat. will highly favor trilingualism. Lux.All. will be less in favor of trilingualism. The rest of the world will be afraid of trilingualism in education.*

*Hypothesis 2: Lux.Nat. will be against bilingualism. Lux.All. will be less against bilingualism. The rest of the world will favor bilingualism.*

*Hypothesis 3: The other school options will be equally less preferred by all three categories: Lux.Nat., Lux.All., World.*

Investigating the above formulated three hypotheses is the content of this research. The deployed methods, instruments, processes are described in the following chapters, providing the respective results from questionnaires, questionnaire's open questions and interviews. The objective is to validate the above formulated hypotheses and to come up with implications and discussions.

### **3. Methods and Instruments**

The first instrument was a questionnaire developed by the author in English, translated by mother tongue speakers into German and French and back translated for validity check. A five-point Likert-type scale was employed to indicate responses that ranged from 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. The first part of the questionnaire investigated the advantages of the trilingual public education system, the actual system. See the questions in the tables below. In a second part, the advantages and disadvantages of one of the proposed reform systems was investigated. See the questions in the tables below. In a third part, the respondents' personal opinion was questioned, respectively if they prefer the trilingual current public system, a bilingual system or rather any other education system. Some open questions are reprinted hereafter. The second instrument was the interviews. Semi-structured interviews were carried out during fall, winter 2014 and spring, summer 2014. Respondents were from the three categories: Lux.Nat. (6), Lux.All. (22), World (8). Interviews were carried out in Luxembourgish, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. They were by phone, via skype or in person and lasted between 15 and 60 minutes. For confidentiality reasons, interviews were not taped, nor recorded or filmed. Instead in-depth notes were taken during the interviews. After the interviews, the respondents were presented the summary of the interview and their consent was asked. Interviews in Luxembourgish, French, German, Italian or Spanish were translated into English. Some interviews are reprinted hereafter.

## 4. Results and Data Analyses — Questionnaire's Closed Questions

### 4.1 Questionnaire Respondents

Business men and women in Luxembourg and all over the world were asked to fill in the questionnaire. Companies in Luxembourg and worldwide were chosen and not more than 10 respondents per company considered, allowing a representative view on the situation. The questionnaire was completed by a total of 154 respondents, divided into three categories, Lux.Nat, Lux.All., World, as follows: 110 residents of Luxembourg, out of them 62 Luxembourgers with Luxembourgish nationality (Lux.Nat.). Other nationalities among the Luxembourg residents were Italians (19), French (13), Portuguese (11), Spanish (3), Germans (2), Dutch (2), Belgians (2), Polish (1), Czech (1), Slovak (1), Greek (1), and Kazakh (1). 152 questionnaires were usable, 2 were not filled in completely.

The 42 residents outside of Luxembourg (from the rest of the World) came from Canada (13), France (8), Italy (3), Germany (2), Greece (2), Belgium (2), Switzerland (2), China (1), Israel (1), the USA (1), Turkey (4), from Spain (1), and the UK (1).

The languages are native languages: Luxembourgish (52), French (24), Italian (19), Portuguese (13), German (6), English (5), Russian (5), Turkish (4) and Spanish (4). Other mother tongues among the respondents were: Turkish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese, Creole, Hebrew, Czech, Greek, Dutch, Vietnamese, Polish, Arabic, Slovak and Catalan, each accounting for 1 respondent.

Out of the 154 respondents, only 1 person indicated having 3 mother tongues: Portuguese, German and English. 2 respondents speak seven languages, 13 speak 6 languages, 22 speak 5 languages, 49 speak 4 languages, 33 speak 3 languages, 24 speak 2 languages, and only 6 respondents speak just one language. In general it can be said: most Lux.Nat. speak Luxembourgish, German, French, English, some in addition speak Portuguese, Italian and/or Spanish. Most French speak just French, some with a little English. Most Portuguese living in Luxembourg speak Portuguese, Luxembourgish, German, French, and some English. In general, English native speakers just speak English, without any other foreign language notions, some with a little Spanish.

Interestingly, only eight people indicated having 2 mother tongues.

Out of the 154 respondents, 13 have double nationality, and 17 changed their birth nationality into another nationality.

In total the 154 respondents come from 29 different countries and speak 22 different languages.

The respondents' age categories were age 0-19 (2), age 20-24 (13), age 25-29 (11), age 30-34 (14), age 35-39 (16), age 40-49 (40), age 50-59 (35), over age 60 (20).

38% of the respondents were males, 62% females.

There is an equal distribution of all diplomas among the respondents: A-level (33), professional education (19), undergraduate degree (16), master's degree (43), doctorate (29), other (10).

Concerning job type, the distribution consists of 18 civil servants, 41 teachers/professors, 18 employees, 9 assistant/secretaries, 4 consultants/HR, 9 bank managers, 6 manual workers, 14 retired, 2 house wives, 5 commercials/economists, 8 hospital workers, 3 IT managers, 2 lawyers, 1 architect and 11 students.

The industry sectors of the respondents are: the state/government (24), education (53), bank/finance (34), hospital/medical (5), construction (3), none (12), industry (2), IT/high tech (4), and services/commerce (12).

The respondents' migration background is as follows: out of the 152 valid respondents 66 moved from a birth country to another country, respectively 43%. Among these migrations is the migration stream to Luxembourg: 14

moved from France to Luxembourg, 14 from Italy, 9 from Portugal, 4 from Germany, 3 from Spain, 3 from Belgium, 1 from Guadeloupe, 1 from Greece, 1 from Poland, 1 from Kazakhstan, 1 from Russia. Other migrations among the respondents from and to other countries in the world are: 3 from the Netherlands to Germany, 1 from the Netherlands to Belgium, 1 from Austria to Switzerland, 1 from Israel to the USA, 1 from Jordan to France. The migration stream to Canada is: 1 from Mexico, 1 from Russia, 1 from Ukraine, 1 from China, and 1 from Taiwan.

Following the above initial preparations of the data basis the calculation of the questionnaire's results provided the following results:

**Table 2 What Are the Advantages of this Trilingual Public Education System (The Current Education System)?**

		Total	Lux.Nat.	Lux.All.	World
		N = 152	N = 62	N = 110	N = 42
1.1.	<b>Integration</b> of all children into the multicultural, multilingual, multinational environment in Luxembourg.	4.01	4.02	4.06	3.90
1.2.	Children <b>learn 3 languages</b> and have the opportunity to study in L, G, F.	4.13	4.31	4.13	4.17
1.3.	Children are educated following the <b>multicultural education</b> in Luxembourg.	3.82	3.88	3.85	3.69
1.4.	Children are <b>prepared</b> for the multilingual reality of Luxembourg, for the future, for work, for life.	4.05	3.97	4.04	4.05
1.5.	L+G+F is to be seen as ONE language, not three, we add English, Spanish as foreign language.	2.75	2.53	2.69	3.02
1.6.	Often, none of the three languages (L+G+F) is the mother tongue of the children at home, but it is Portuguese, Italian, ..., what allows pupils an alphabetisation in L+G+F.	3.54	3.54	3.62	3.38

Regarding the advantages of the current trilingual public education system, the scores among the 152 total valid respondents divided into the three categories Lux.Nat, Lux.All., World were as above.

The above numbers demonstrate that the World has a different view of the current situation than Lux.Nat. of themselves, or Lux.All. in general of the country they are living in.

**Table 3 What Are the Disadvantages of This Trilingual Public Education System (The Current Education System)?**

		Total	Lux.Nat.	Lux. All.	World
		N = 152	N = 62	N = 110	N = 42
2.1.	Pupils do not understand the language of education and therefore cannot follow the content in, e.g., biology, mathematics, chemistry...	3.30	3.42	3.35	3.19
2.2.	Pupils are not performing well in the field of study (e.g., biology, mathematics, chemistry...), because they don't understand the language.	3.29	3.53	3.34	3.14
2.3.	This causes a high failure rate.	3.17	3.46	3.33	2.76
2.5.	Loss of identity in terms of culture. Language is not only a method of communication but also determines my cultural identity, my: who am I?!	2.93	2.81	2.99	2.79
2.6.	Pupils do not learn English well enough. English is neglected. L+G+F favoured.	3.05	3.00	3.01	3.29

Regarding the disadvantages of the current trilingual public education system, the scores among the 152 total valid respondents divided into the three categories Lux.Nat., Lux.All., World were as follows:

The differences in scores were not so big, as "Pupils do not understand the language of education and therefore cannot follow the content in, i.e., biology, mathematics, chemistry..." scored highest among Lux.Nat. (3.42), followed closely by Lux.All. (3.35), and third by World (3.19), etc.

The above numbers demonstrate that the World has a different view of the current situation than Lux.Nat. of themselves, or Lux.All. in general of the country they are living in.

**Table 4 What Would be the Advantages of this Bilingual Public Education System (The Discussed Proposed but Contested Reform-System: In Kindergarten the Language of Education Would Remain Luxembourgish. But Then the Child Would Have the Choice between A Full Education (Primary And Secondary) in German Language of Instruction, or in French)?**

		Total	Lux.Nat.	Lux.All.	World
		N = 152	N = 62	N = 110	N = 42
3.1.	All children still would learn Luxembourgish in Kindergarten.	3.91	3.85	3.87	<u>3.95</u>
3.2.	The choice of one language of instruction for primary and secondary education allows that children <b>understand the content</b> of instruction (e.g., biology, mathematics, chemistry...).	3.69	3.68	3.65	3.74
3.3.	The <b>failure rate</b> would decline.	3.30	3.27	3.36	<u>3.19</u>
3.4.	Children could better <b>concentrate on the content</b> of instruction than on the language of instruction.	3.66	3.69	3.70	3.55
3.5.	<b>Better motivation</b> of children who will be more motivated to learn the different subjects thanks to the taught language.	3.43	3.44	3.44	3.43
3.6.	Pupils could concentrate better on learning <b>English</b> .	3.24	3.21	3.20	3.48

Regarding the advantages of the bilingual public reform system, the scores among the 152 total valid respondents divided into the three categories Lux.Nat., Lux.All., World were as follows:

The differences in scores were not significant, as “All children still would learn Luxembourgish in Kindergarten” was answered nearly identically by all three categories: Lux.Nat. (3.95), Lux.All. (3.87), the World (3.89), etc.

**Table 5 What Would Be the Disadvantages of This Bilingual Public Education System (The Discussed Proposed But Contested Reform-System)?**

		Total	Lux.Nat.	Lux. All.	World
		N = 152	N = 62	N = 110	N = 42
4.1.	This reform system would be a <b>separator of the population</b> – those who speak German — divided from those who speak French.	3.60	3.86	3.67	3.40
4.2.	This <b>separation in 2 different languages</b> would divide the society into different levels.	3.36	3.60	3.46	3.12
4.3.	Children/Pupils would not be prepared for the <b>multilingual reality</b> in Luxembourg, where at least L, G, F are needed in everyday situations.	3.62	<u>3.95</u>	3.75	3.31
4.4.	There might not be <b>enough teachers</b> in Luxembourg capable of teaching and/or in German and/or in French in <u>primary and</u> secondary school.	2.88	2.88	<u>2.78</u>	3.19
4.5.	There would be an <b>administrative</b> problem, because this division would duplicate all classes, new school rooms would be needed, new schools would need to be constructed.	3.44	3.57	3.46	3.48
4.6.	This language division (in German or French) would re-enforce the <b>cultural</b> division into German or French <b>culture</b> .	3.58	3.76	3.63	3.50
4.7.	<b>Other countries</b> (Germany, France,) also experience the same problem with immigrant children not understanding the language of instruction in class.	3.29	3.31	3.22	3.52

Regarding the disadvantages of the bilingual public reform system, the scores among the 152 total valid respondents divided into the three categories Lux.Nat., Lux.All., World were as follows:

This reform system would be a separator of the population — those who speak German — divided from those who speak French’ scores highest among Lux.Nat. (3.86), followed by Lux.All. (3.67), and third by the World (3.40), etc.

**Table 6 What Is Your Personal Opinion. Which System Would You Prefer?**

		Total	Lux.Nat.	Lux.All.	World	
		N = 152	N = 62	N = 110	N = 42	
5.1.1	I prefer the <b>trilingual public</b> education system (the actual system: in Kindergarten Luxembourgish as language of education, in primary school German, and in secondary school French)?	yes no Total	98 54 152	53 (84%) 9 (16%) 62 (100%)	77 (65%) 33 (21%) 110 (100%)	22 (52%) 20 (48%) 42 (100%)
5.1.2	I prefer the <b>lingual public</b> education system (the system under discussion, where children decide which language of education they chose for both primary and secondary school: German or French)?	yes no	45 105	9 (16%) 53 (84%)	27 (24%) 82 (66%)	19 (45%) 23 (55%)
5.1.3	<b>I prefer other options:</b> (please complete the three questions below only if you answered this question with yes)	yes no	56 92	23 (36%) 37 (64%)	41 (37%) 67 (63%)	15 (34%) 26 (63%)
	5.1.3.1 There is the choice to go to <b>European School</b> for an education in your mother tongue.	Average	2.93	2.73	2.95	2.81
	5.1.3.2 There is the choice to go to <b>International School, or St. George</b> , for a full education in English.	Average	2.62	2.49	2.48	3.11
	5.1.3.3 There is the choice to go to <b>LycéeFrançais</b> for a full education in French.	Average	2.67	2.51	2.55	3.13

In the category “All respondents” out of a total of 152 valid respondents 98 were pro trilingualism, which corresponds to 64%. Only 54 were against, corresponding to 35%. Bilingualism was favored by 45 (30%), with 105 (69%) voices against. Other schools (European School, International School, LycéeFrançais) were favored by 56 (37%), and 92 (61%) were against.

In the category “Lux.Nat” these equations change. Out of a total of 62 Lux.Nat. the trilingual public education system was preferred by 53 (84%), with only 9 (16%) voices against it. Regarding the bilingual reform system, only 9 (16%) were for it, whilst 53 (84%) were against it. Other schools were considered positively by 23 (36%), but negatively by 37 (64%).

In the category “Luxembourg including all nationalities” these results change again. Out of a total of 110, still 77 (69%) are pro the current trilingual public education system, but this is less than the 84% from the Lux.Nat. 33 (21%) are against it, which is more than the 16% Lux.Nat.. The bilingual system is preferred by 27 (24%), and rejected by 82 (66%). Other schools are preferred by 41 (37%) with 67 (63%) against them.

In the category “Rest of the world” the distributions change once again. Out of a total of 42 respondents 20 (52%) are pro the current trilingual system, 20 (48%) are against. The bilingual system would be preferred by 19 (45%), but rejected by 23 (55%). Other schools are favored by 15 (37%), while 26 (63%) are against.

The rest of the world mainly is afraid of the challenges that comprehend the three languages to be learnt by the child and ideally by the parents.

84% of the Lux.Nat are pro trilingualism, whereas the percentage decreases to only 69% for “Luxembourg including all nationalities”, and a small majority of 52% pro trilingualism for the rest of the world.

On the other hand, the percentage in favor of bilingualism increases from a weak 16% pro bilingualism among Lux.Nat., to a 24% pro bilingualism among “Luxembourg including all nationalities”, and a strong 45% pro bilingualism for the rest of the world.

Taking the three categories together by summing them up, trilingualism is preferred by a total of 65% of all the respondents of this research, with 84% by Lux.Nat., 69% LuxAll, 52% rest of the world.

The other school’s option was equally chosen by the 3 categories: 36%, 37%, 37%, totaling up to 37% in the total batch of all respondents.



## 5. Results — Questionnaire’s Open Questions

Open questions aimed at providing deeper insights besides the above discussed categories (1) integration not separation of the population, (2) learn the three official languages of the country: L+D+F, (3) be prepared for the multilingual and multicultural reality in Luxembourg, (4) high failure rate given the fact that they do not understand the language of instruction especially in mathematics, biology, chemistry, history, and (5) pupils do not learn English well enough.

By keeping the three categories, (1) Lux.Nat., (2) Lux.All., (3) World, the open questions’ responses provided in-depth insight into serious reflections of directly concerned parents, whose children follow the Luxembourgish trilingual education system, or who consider doing so or who hypothesize in case of an eventual move to Luxembourg. Besides the above mentioned categories of advantages/opportunities and disadvantages/fears, here is what some of the respondents said:

<b>Lux.Nat.</b> respondent who is <b>for</b> the trilingual system	<i>“I followed the Luxembourgish school system and today I am very happy to have done it (as my origins are Portuguese). I must admit that it was very hard: German lessons and some matters (biology/geography) were given in German. I felt alone as nobody (my parents) could support me on a day to day basis with my homework. My child is in the Luxembourgish school system. I speak Luxembourgish, Portuguese and French with my own child...”</i>
<b>Lux.Nat.</b> respondent who is <b>against</b> the system:	<i>“... The Luxembourgish education system is not the best, pupils don’t have enough knowledge, following the PISA results, especially in sciences, biology, physics, chemistry, philosophy. They only learn these matters by heart without any generation of own ideas or any creativity. ... Motivation in general is low. ... School teachers lack knowledge themselves and teach frontally without any inspiration ... What misses at their language level is the mastering of one language. Pupils express themselves badly in written and orally in all languages. ... Pupils’ only wish is to become school teacher or civil servant because of the fringe benefits. There is no real motivation, nor enthusiasm ...”</i>
<b>Lux.All.</b> respondent who is <b>for</b> the trilingual system:	<i>“... It is an enormous chance for our children to be given the possibility of learning three languages. ... Knowing to speak three languages opens up their mind for other languages, cultures and knowledge ... Yet, we should teach better our teachers. ... Today my son speaks five languages, despite the initial problems with German, he had needed extra tutorial lessons ...”</i>
<b>Lux.All.</b> respondent who is <b>against</b> the trilingual system:	<i>“... The requirements are too high. Strong pupils are able to follow, weaker not. Languages should be taught differently. French and German should be taught together from primary school on, and additionally offer extra tuition classes for weaker pupils. ... Luxembourg pupils have problems with French, whereas others with German. ... European School, International School, St. George ... are no public schools and therefore not for free ...”</i>
<b>“World”</b> respondent who is <b>for</b> the trilingual system:	<i>“I think a trilingual system best prepares a child for the realities of Luxembourg and Europe. However, as a teacher, I would certainly think there would be issues switching from one language in primary to a second language in secondary. It would be better to study in German and French all the way through. My husband and I are both bilingual English and Spanish, however, we tend to speak mostly in English out of habit ...”(Respondent from Canada)</i>
<b>“World”</b> respondent who is <b>against</b> the trilingual system:	<i>“I think the current system is too complicated to be followed by a Chinese family, because we were taught English in China, so it is very difficult to learn 3 new languages, not only for the child but also for the parents. I just feel this is too complicated ... Hope someday I will have the opportunity to visit Luxembourg with my child to experience the education system of your country.”(Respondent from China)</i>

## 6. Results — Interviews

Among the 36 interview responses the main themes already mentioned and questioned above re-appeared. (1) integration not separation of the population, (2) learn the three official languages of the country: Luxembourgish, French, German, (3) be prepared for the multilingual and multicultural reality in Luxembourg, (4) high failure rate given the fact that children do not understand the language of instruction especially in mathematics, biology, chemistry, history, and (5) pupils do not learn English well enough. Other themes were discussed. The interview responses were categorized into the three categories: (1) Lux.Nat., (2) Lux.All. and (3) World and following if

they are pro or contra the trilingual education system.

<b>Lux.Nat.</b> respondent who is <b>for</b> the trilingual system:	<i>"We absolutely have to stick to our trilingualism. This is our identity, our culture. It represents a challenge and at the same time our wealth. In France, in Alsace, there is a similar situation: they also have trilingualism: French, German, Alsatian, and the Alsations also speak well English"</i>
<b>Lux.Nat.</b> respondent who is <b>against</b> the trilingual system:	<i>"The main issue is the division into 'Lycée Classique' and 'Lycée Technique' Integration is a complicated matter. The integration of the Portuguese children is lagging behind. The reality is that the good Luxembourgers go to 'Lycée Classique' where they speak Luxembourgish and German, but the bad Portuguese and French attend 'Lycée Technique' where they speak French"</i>
<b>Lux.All.</b> respondent who is <b>for</b> the trilingual system:	<i>"... We have to keep trilingualism at all costs. When I started going to school, I spoke only Italian as my parents only spoke Italian with me. I rapidly learned Luxembourgish, French and German and later English. But mathematics is a matter I just don't understand, in whatever language ... It's fantastic, with my language knowledge, I can travel everywhere in the world ... We have to continue to have our children develop in a multilingual society ..."</i> (Respondent: Italian living in Luxembourg)
<b>Lux.All.</b> respondent who is <b>against</b> the trilingual system:	<i>"... Time spent with the instruction of three languages is at the detriment of the matter of its own. At the moment children in Albania or in France study 'history' or 'mathematics', the real content of it, because the linguistic problems are not given. Here the language is dominant, not the content ..."</i> (Respondent: Albanian living in Luxembourg)
<b>"World"</b> respondent who is <b>for</b> the trilingual system:	Future research is needed to get an interview in this category. So far none has occurred.
<b>"World"</b> respondent who is <b>against</b> the trilingual system:	<i>"... Language is a highly contested subject in Québec in general and particularly in Montréal. I always refused that my children learn English at low age, because it is important that they master their mother tongue first before learning other languages ..."</i> (Respondent from Quebec, Canada)

## 7. Conclusion, Discussion Implication and Future Research

This research has brought light to the particular elements of trilingualism in Luxembourg. A huge majority respondents from Lux.Nat., Lux.All., and the rest of the world provided astonishingly similar answers. From the questionnaires, the written open questions and the interviews no significant differences in the results emerge. Only one question regarding preference of the system showed significant differences between Lux.Nat., Lux.All., and the rest of the world. Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 were validated. Trilingualism is part of the Luxembourgish constitution, namely Luxembourgish, French and German are the three official languages of the country. It is the characteristics of the country, it is its culture, its collective programming of their mind (Hofstede et al., 2010). While Cummins (2000) researches Canada's language situation-French-English-and García (2009, 2014) in the USA-Spanish-English — tends to translanguaging, Blackledge and Creese (2010) situate linguistic practices in their respective social, historical, cultural and political contexts, Brannen, Piekkari and Tietze (2014) combine language and management and Schinzel (2013) uses language as identifier.

This research paths the way for more studies in the field of multilingualism and multiculturalism. In a world of increasing separation, conflict, crisis and war, the integrative, tolerant system of Luxembourg may serve as an example for peace, integration, tolerance, and harmonious coexistence.

Luxembourg is searching for new visions. Right in the heart of Europe, Luxembourg fights for peace, integration, tolerance, harmonious coexistence among people from different race, color, and mother tongue, qualities that are becoming increasingly rare in today's world. Future research could investigate into a comparison with Canada, Alsace, Switzerland, China, combining language and management.

In conclusion, even though the language situation in Luxembourg has been subject to many discussions, debates and reforms, numerous questions concerning future developments remain unanswered: What will the future of Luxembourg look like? Where does Luxembourg go? Where does the current developments lead to? Will it be the multilingual integrative direction (Maurer-Hetto, 2008; Maurer-Hetto & Roth-Dury, 2008), or will it be

the monolingual, separatist direction? The ongoing continuous changes reflect the mood of modification that reigns. Luxembourg searches for its visionaries, just like Europe, in memory of Victor Hugo, Winston Churchill, Alcide de Gasperi, Robert Schumann, Jean Monnet, and Altiero Spinelli (Bumb, 2014, pp. 2-3).

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