

# Minority language education from an economic perspective

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# Some important areas of research in the economics of minority languages

## 1. *The economics of language policy*

- Evaluation of language policy and planning (LPP): Benefits, costs, effectiveness
- Optimal language regimes

## 2. *Language dynamics*

- Evolution of language status
- Determinants of language learning / use (e.g. incentives)

## 3. *Languages and the labour market*

- Languages → individuals' income
- Languages → employment

## 4. *Languages and economic activities*

- Sharing a common language → trade
- Language skills → GDP

# Some results from research (1)

## *1. The costs of language policies aimed at supporting RMLS*

- The bilingualisation of a school system can be shown to cost an extra 4% to 5% on top of current education cost in a unilingual system (see Grin & Vaillancourt 1999 as for other results)
- The promotion of the Frisian language in the Dutch province of Fryslân is estimated to cost 17,5 Euros per Frisian speaker and per year (Grin & Moring 2002 as for other results)
- The Canadian governments' policy of promoting official bilingualism costs 2 ¢ per Canadian and per year programme (in the areas of competence of the Canadian federal government) (Grin et al. 2003)

## *2. Language dynamics*

- New dynamic language competition models to evaluate the impact of education in the minority language on linguistic vitality (Templin *et al* 2016., Templin 2018)

# Some results from research (1)

## *3. Languages and the labour market in Catalonia, Ireland and Wales*

- All other things being equal, the likelihood of workers with some knowledge of Irish being in PMT (professional, managerial, or technical) occupations was higher by 5.8 points compared to workers with no Irish (Borooah, Dineen, Lynch, 2009)
- Welsh speakers in Wales experience lower unemployment rates than those only able to speak English (Drinkwater, O'Leary, 1997)
- Return to knowledge of Catalan for first- and second-generation immigrants: estimated 7.5%-18% increase in earnings (Di Paolo-Raymond, 2011)
- The probability of being employed increases between 3% and 5% if individuals know how to read and speak Catalan (Rendon 2007)

## *4. Languages and economic activities*

- The economic impact of various activities linked to the Basque language can be estimated at 4.2% of the Regional GDP of the Autonomous Community (Gobierno vasco 2016).

# Research priorities on the economics of RMLs

1. Estimating the benefits of linguistic diversity on the basis of individuals' willingness-to-pay (and not only the costs of such diversity)
2. Identifying and characterising the distributive effects of language policies and language dynamics (fairness)
3. Language and protection of consumers (labeling), health services and access to education (talent)
4. Multilingualism and creativity

Thank you for your attention

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